

THE AMBER ADVOCATE

NATIONAL MISSING CHILDREN'S DAY EDITION

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MOTHER OF SAMANTHA RUNNION ISSUES CHALLENGE AT NATIONAL MISSING CHILDREN'S DAY CEREMONY



National Missing Children's Day Ceremony, Washington, D.C. ≈

Law enforcement did everything they could to save her daughter's life, but it wasn't enough, said Erin Runnion, an advocate for the prevention of child sexual abuse and abduction and the guest speaker at the National Missing Children's Day Ceremony in Washington, D.C. on May 21.

Samantha Runnion, a 6-year-old child was brutally murdered July 15, 2002 after a man abducted her from her front yard in Orange County, Calif. However, her death is not in vain, as Erin Runnion has made it her life's mission to ensure Samantha's tragic death is a catalyst for positive change. As the founder and director of the Joyful Child Foundation, Runnion is motivating concerned citizens to be

pro-active in their responsibility to protect children from sexual abuse and abduction.

"It should not take a tragedy to unite a community," said Runnion. "But it does take a community to keep our children safe."

Samantha's death did prompt the governor of California to immediately begin a statewide AMBER Alert program. But Runnion said her daughter's death has not stopped the "pandemic" of missing kids.

"We need to give law enforcement the tools they need to bring these children home," said Runnion. "I want us to be prepared so we are not scared."

The Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs honored law enforcement officers and citizens at the ceremony who showed a tremendous amount of courage to save missing children. Deputy Attorney General David W. Ogden provided more tools for law enforcement by announcing that \$50 million in

Laurie O. Robinson, »
Acting Assistant Attorney General and National AMBER Alert Coordinator



Recovery Act funds would go to the Internet Crimes Against Children (ICAC) program. Since ICAC started in 1998 agents have handled more than 100,000 complaints of child sexual victimization.

"These perpetrators violate every notion of decency we have," said Ogden.



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Ed Smart & Erin Runnion ≈

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NATIONAL MISSING CHILDREN'S DAY

NURSE FOLLOWS HER INSTINCTS TO SAVE CHILD

Her instincts told her something wasn't quite right.

After 25 years as a critical care nurse, Julie Mosbacher, the recipient of the 2009 Missing Children's Day Citizens Award said it takes a lot to "rattle my cage."

This held true in March 2007 when Mosbacher was working an early morning shift at the West Park Hospital in Cody,

Wyo. and a man came in making strange requests and acting psychotically.

"I just knew something wasn't right," said Mosbacher, who was recognized May 21 by the Department of Justice at the National Missing Children's Day Ceremony in Washington, D.C. for her efforts in helping to recover the abducted child.

The man eventually brought a baby boy into the hospital wearing only a diaper. The boy had been

left in the suspect's vehicle for a considerable time and it was only 20 degrees outside. "The boy was scared. He didn't know what was going on," said Mosbacher.

Based on her "gut feeling" Mosbacher called the police and learned that an 18-month-old child had been kidnapped after a double murder 60 miles away in Red Lodge, Mont.

"I'm just a nurse doing my job and following my instincts," said Mosbacher. ☺

DETECTIVE GOES UNDERCOVER TO STOP FATHERS FROM ABUSING CHILDREN

What happens in Internet chat rooms can sometimes leave the most hardened investigators cold.

Detective Neal Spector, Florida's St. Lucie County Sheriff's Office, received the 2009 Child Protection Award May 21 at the National Missing Children's Day Ceremony in Washington, D.C. for his undercover efforts in helping to apprehend child sex offenders.

Spector posed online as a father and began chatting with Lonnie Waite from Ashland, Mass. who said he was interested in sexually

abusing children, including his own daughter. Waite also confided that Dominic Pace, a New Hampshire father, sent him videos of himself having sex with his 4-year-old daughter. Waite admitted he had also sexually abused his daughter. He then sent the detective videos showing him having sex with another girl under the age of twelve.

Spector was concerned that the child abuse was ongoing and worked with the Massachusetts State Police to arrange a time when Waite would be online at home.

"The end result is the greatest reward - when you rescue a child," said Spector. "You have to work as a team to save a child."

Waite pleaded guilty and was sentenced to 20 years in Federal prison and Pace was sentenced to 40 years in Federal prison. ☺

AGENT RECOGNIZED FOR CREATING PROGRAM TO FIND CHILD PROSTITUTION VICTIMS

A 15-year-old girl was being advertised for prostitution on Craigslist. FBI agents in Washington, D.C. knew that every second that passed put the girl's life at greater risk for harm.

FBI Special Agent Greg Ryman, the recipient of the 2009 Missing Children's Day Law Enforcement Award, received the recognition for his development of Childfinder, which is a program that analyzes phone numbers, nicknames, physical characteris-

tics and other key words listed in advertisements. The program also allows agents to be notified when an ad matches their case. Only 19 hours after the software was up and running a match was made on the 15-year-old girl. Agents quickly set up an undercover operation and safely recovered the victim.

"It's humbling," said Ryman of the award, which he received May 21 at the National Missing Children's Day Ceremony in Washington, D.C. "I met a couple of the parents here today who lost children. They reminded me why we do what we do."

The FBI agents believed the girl would have been moved from city to city and knew it would have been impossible to quickly analyze the erotic service advertisements listed on the website in more than 300 cities.

"There are a lot of girls out there," said Ryman. "The faster they can be found, the faster we can get them off that lifestyle, and the quicker they can be returned to a normal functioning life."

The Childfinder software is now being used by other offices and has already recovered four juvenile victims. ☺



CEREMONY IN WASHINGTON, D.C.

ICAC TEAM HONORED FOR STOPPING ABUSIVE SWIMMING COACH

Florida's swimming coach of the year had a secret. Robert Caragol was a well respected leader in the community but no one knew that he also collected child pornography or that he was sexually abusing some of his young swimmers. The South Florida ICAC Task Force received the 2009 Attorney General's Special Commendation Award on May 21 at the National Missing Children's Day Ceremony in Washington, D.C. for investigating and prosecuting the perpetrator who betrayed a community's trust.

"We were glad to take a child predator out," said FBI Special Agent Alexis Carpenteri. "Parents trusted their children with him because he was supposed to be trusted."

"I'm happy to be able to protect kids and I am honored to get this award," added FBI Special Agent Michael D. Levrock. Assistant U.S. Attorney Brent Tantillo said he was humbled by the award. "It's terrific



South Florida ICAC Task Force

to receive this award with agents who I admire greatly."

The case was a team effort involving several federal and local law enforcement agencies and an Internet company. "All the different agencies came together with the same goal to accomplish the same mission: protect children," said Immigrations and Customs Enforcement (ICE) Special Agent Mike Bentolila.

It began when America Online sent a Cybertip to NCMCEC that Caragol might be sending child pornography over the Internet.

ICE Agent Bentolila and Broward County Sheriff's Detective Jennifer Montgomery made the initial contact with the suspect at his home in Plantation, Florida. Caragol eventually admitted to sharing hundreds of child pornography images and sexually abusing five boys he met through coaching.

"I'm glad this guy isn't in a position to hurt any more kids," said Montgomery. Ironically Caragol's May 21 sentence hearing had to be postponed because everyone involved in the case was at the ceremony. ☺

POSTER CONTEST WINNER HAS A HEART FOR MISSING CHILDREN

Dakota-Rae Brown found out there was a Missing Children's Day Poster Contest the day before the poster was due. The fifth grader at Henderson Elementary in Cheyenne, Wyo. went immediately to work.

"I made the poster that night," said Brown, the 2009 Missing Children's Day Poster Contest winner. "I put ribbons with the names of missing children on it. There's a home with a heart to show we miss them."

Brown said she was surprised when she found out her last minute entry was selected over posters from students in 43 states and the District of Columbia. She hopes her poster will make a difference.

"I hope people realize there are children missing and they want to come back to their home and see

their family," Brown added. Brown attended the National Missing Children's Day Ceremony May 21 with her family and her teacher. She is the tenth winner since the poster contest was started. Before the ceremony Brown talked about the importance of the AMBER Alert when children are abducted.

"I think the AMBER Alert is a good idea," said Brown. "We know there's someone out there looking for missing children." ☺

**(Above) Dakota-Rae Brown is honored at National Missing Children's Day
(Below) Brown's Winning Entry in the Missing Children's Day Poster Contest »**



AMBER ALERT AND DCJS MISSING CHILD ALERT QUICK REFERENCE

AMBER Alert activation can occur when an investigating police agency **confirms** that:

1. An abduction of a child (under age 18) has occurred, **AND**
2. The child is believed to be in danger of serious bodily harm or death.

"Confirms" means having reasonable cause to believe that a child has been abducted. Confirmation can be established through eyewitness accounts **OR** by eliminating other possibilities.

Familial abductions qualify if a child is endangered by the actions of the abducting family member. (Threats or use of violence while taking a child and a history of abuse against a child, spouse or partner should be considered.)

ACTIVATION PROCEDURES CHECKLIST

1. Conduct a preliminary investigation to determine if abduction has occurred.
2. Call the NYSP COMSEC at (518) 457-6811 to request activation if abduction is confirmed.
3. Complete the "AMBER Alert Submission Form" and immediately forward to COMSEC via fax (518-457-3207), NYSPIN (form "AMBER") or the eJusticeNY Portal.
4. Obtain photographs or digital images of the child and abductor (if known) and submit to missingchildren@dcjs.state.ny.us AND commop@troopers.state.ny.us
5. Send a File 6 (MENT) missing person entry ("involuntary," "endangered" or "disability") and a File 11A (F11a) abduction message.
6. NOTE: When a missing child or college student is endangered, but the case does not meet AMBER Alert activation criteria, the case may be eligible for a DCJS Missing Child/College Student Alert. Call the NYS DCJS Missing & Exploited Children Clearinghouse at 1-800-FIND-KID (1-800-346-3543).



New York AMBER Alert Patrol Cards

PROFILE: Gary Kelly

GARY KELLY WANTS ABDUCTED CHILDREN SAVED IN A NEW YORK MINUTE

New York AMBER Alert Coordinator Gary Kelly knows what is at stake when a child is abducted. Before taking the AMBER Alert position he spent years investigating child abuse and kidnapping cases for the New York State Police.

"I know firsthand the violence that can happen in homes and kids are vulnerable," said Kelly. He said that experience drives him to make sure New York's AMBER Alert Plan works.

"The AMBER Alert is designed to save and rescue kids."

Kelly is trying to use technology to make AMBER Alerts even more effective. New York now uses license plate readers and commercial electronic signs during AMBER Alerts. Soon the alerts will be broadcast on TV screens in all 13,000 taxi cabs in New York City.

"Between 400,000-600,000 people a day would see the alerts," said Kelly. "That would be huge to have all those eyes and ears looking for a child."

AMBER Alerts will also become part of New York's All Hazard and Emergency Alert notification system. The new computer system will greatly simplify activations. "We have up to five steps to activate and this will take it down to two steps," said Kelly. "We're really excited about this."

Kelly recently organized a webcast to help train broadcasters on the AMBER Alert. The nearly hour long training was put together quickly. A small group of people created an outline, modified previous power point presentations and then went to a public television station studio and simply started talking.

"All our primary AMBER partners were invited to attend," said Kelly.

"The State Broadcasters Association got the ball rolling." Viewers were able to e-mail questions during the webcast and the broadcast was recorded in case anyone missed it.

Now Kelly is planning a webcast for law enforcement. This program will be divided into five-minute segments so officers

can view each segment during roll calls. All New York law enforcement officers have already received patrol cards containing the criteria and needed information to issue an AMBER Alert.

All of the innovation, Kelly said, is driven by the commitment of the State AMBER Alert Committee. He said committee members meet in person with the activating law enforcement agency after each alert. New York has had 24 AMBER Alert activations for 29 children since the plan started in 2002.

"This is a team effort in New York. It's not a one-person show by any means," said Kelly. "Everyone on this committee is passionate about what they do. That helps me."

Does Kelly take his job as AMBER Alert coordinator personally?

"Definitely," he answered. He said that is because he is the father of a 9-year-old girl and an infant son. Kelly is even the soccer coach and the "Girl Scout Cookie" dad for his daughter.

His only regret is that he cannot devote more time to the AMBER Alert plan. "I've been pushing for this to be a full-time position," said Kelly. "I don't think we are doing enough." ☺



Gary Kelly,
New York AMBER Alert Coordinator

KANSAS STARTS STATE-WIDE CHILD ABDUCTION RESPONSE TEAM

Kansas Attorney General Steve Six launched the state's first Child Abduction Response Team (CART) on National Missing Children's Day, which will train community CARTs.

"By quickly distributing information to the public through an AMBER Alert and executing a coordinated search effort with CART, Kansas law enforcement can better respond to a child abduction," he said.

ON THE FRONT LINES: SOUTH CAROLINA

THE PRESSURE IS ON WHEN CHILD ABDUCTION BEGINS WITH GUNFIRE

It began with an ambush of a family as they were coming home from church in West Columbia, S.C. David Allen Dietz and an unidentified accomplice allegedly ordered his ex-girlfriend, and their 7-month-old son to get into his silver Ford Explorer.

Dietz allegedly fired shots as he sped away with Eva Arce Perez, and their son, Allim Dietz. South Carolina issued an AMBER Alert at 12:46 a.m. on Jan. 4 in a desperate attempt to recover the infant and his mother.

"It was just so tense," said Glenda Booth, South Carolina's AMBER Alert Coordinator for the past four years. "This was a very frightening AMBER Alert. I really thought we were going to lose our victims."

Dietz was a former law enforcement officer with a history of aggression. On the night of the abduction he was wearing a black t-shirt with the word "Police" on the sleeves and on the back of the shirt.

A small army of federal, state and local law enforcement officers quickly gathered at the command center. "Everyone was working on it together," said Booth. "It was a huge effort and it was going non-stop from Saturday night until Monday morning."

Near the beginning of the ordeal Booth called Lamar Advertising to see if the company could post an AMBER Alert on its electronic signs. The company offered to post the alerts on the signs for the next three hours. "Those types of partners are invaluable," said Booth.

A break came when a citizen saw the AMBER Alert and recognized

the suspect as someone she had seen with Jamie Burgess, a 17-year-old runaway. Law enforcement confirmed that Burgess was with Dietz during the abduction.

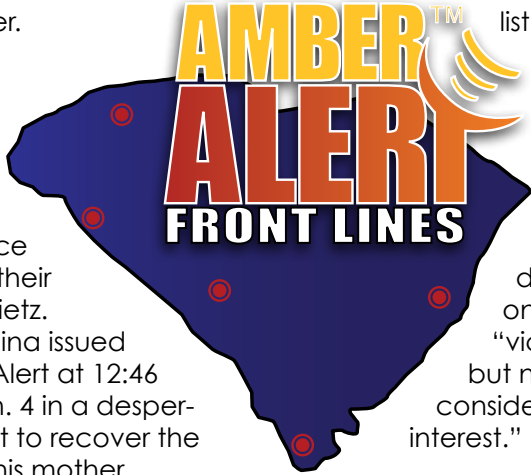
"We made the decision to list Burgess as a victim because law enforcement did not have enough information to charge her as an accomplice," said Booth. Her database screens only have fields for a "victim" or a "suspect" but now a field is being considered for a "person of interest."

Another break occurred when the female victim borrowed a phone and called her mother. Investigators traced the call to Madison, Ga. South Carolina cancelled its alert and an AMBER Alert was activated in Georgia.

A police officer located the suspect's vehicle and law enforcement officers surrounded a hotel for the next 13 hours until a negotiator convinced Dietz to give up. "I'm just so thankful the mother and child are safe," said a relieved Booth.

Looking back, Booth said they experienced a few problems with their IT and blast fax, plus questions about listing the accomplice. But the AMBER Alert still went out through the Emergency Alert System, National Weather Service and the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children.

South Carolina will start testing their plan monthly to correct any possible problems but Booth is pleased that once again the AMBER Alert worked. The public was notified, law enforcement received tips and a small baby and his mother are miraculously safe. ☺



David Allen Dietz



Eva Arce Perez and son Allim Dietz



Glenda Booth, South Carolina AMBER Alert Coordinator

AMBER ALERT FACT:

More than \$1.5 billion dollars in federal stimulus money has been earmarked for innovative road projects. Some states plan to use the money to install more electronic signs that can warn drivers about accidents and inform them about AMBER Alerts.

WINNIPEG REALTORS SIGN UP FOR AMBER ALERTS



When an AMBER Alert is issued in Winnipeg more than 1,000 real estate agents will get the message. The realtors in Manitoba registered to receive their alerts on their cell phones and pagers. "The more people we can get the message out to as quickly as possible, the more success we're going to have," said Winnipeg Police Chief Keith McCaskill. The agents receive the alerts through TouchBase, a database that is usually used by realtors to schedule home showings and to communicate with each other. The Realtors Association also agreed to use their billboard to publicize information about missing children.

JAMAICA LAUNCHES AMBER ALERT PLAN

Jamaica has started a child abduction alert plan based on the U.S. AMBER Alert Plan. The "Ananda Alert" is named after Ananda Dean, an 11-year-old schoolgirl who was found beheaded last year after missing for two weeks. The alert plan will rapidly notify the media, cell phone companies and parish councils.

IRELAND URGED TO START MISSING CHILDREN HOTLINE

Child activists and politicians are urging the Irish government to implement a hotline for missing children. The European Commission reserved the 116 000 phone number for alerts for missing children. A total of 10 countries are now using the number.

AMBER IN INDIAN COUNTRY: TRIBE RECEIVES BLOODHOUND TO HELP FIND CHILDREN

The newest member of the Laguna Pueblo Police Department keeps his head to the ground. His name is Jimmy and he is a 40-pound bloodhound with a knack for solving crimes - including child abductions. The Jimmy Ryce Center donated the bloodhound to the New Mexico tribal police department to help with efforts to protect children.



Jimmy, the newest member of the Laguna Pueblo Police Department

"People are really jazzed that the police department and agencies will have a dog dedicated to tracking people," said Laguna Pueblo Police Sgt. Steve Chavez. "What a blessing. Truthfully, we couldn't have gotten this off the ground without the Jimmy Ryce Center."

The Jimmy Ryce Center was started by the parents of a 9-year-old boy who was kidnapped at gunpoint after getting off a school bus on Sept. 11, 1995.

Jimmy Ryce was taken to a trailer, raped and was fatally shot in the back as he tried to run out of the trailer.

"Looking back on what happened to Jimmy, an AMBER Alert wouldn't have saved him," said Don Ryce, Jimmy's father. "He only had a few hours to live and I have since found out about bloodhounds and their amazing capabilities."

Don Ryce and the Jimmy Ryce Center have given more than 300 bloodhounds to law enforcement agencies to help strengthen their AMBER Alert plans. Ryce said he is glad that the Laguna Pueblo Police will be able to do more to find missing and abducted children. "I think it's great," he added.

The Laguna Pueblo Police Department has never had a bloodhound or a canine unit. Detention Supervisor Billy Emanuel has worked with dogs in the military and will receive training on using bloodhounds for searches. Jimmy is also the newest member of the Child Abduction Response Team that includes police departments from the Zuni, Acoma and Laguna Pueblo Tribes.



Jimmy serves as a member of the Zuni, Acoma, & Laguna Pueblo CART

"The Pueblos are a very tight knit community and this will show that we are offering more protection and that we are looking out for the community," said Sgt. Chavez.

Don Ryce was invited to visit the Tribe in May to help with the training and to be honored by tribal leaders. "I want him to realize how grateful we are," added Chavez.

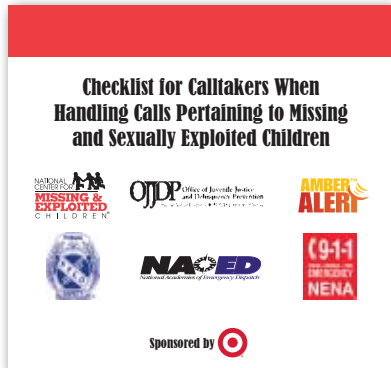
The Jimmy Ryce Center has more bloodhounds to donate to law enforcement agencies. More information can be found at www.jimmyryce.org.

TWO NEW MANUALS WILL HELP MAKE SURE AMBER ALERT CALLS COUNT

Two new manuals are available to help telecommunicators respond to AMBER Alerts and missing children cases. The Standard for Call Takers when Handling Calls Pertaining to Missing and Sexually Exploited Children is now available for download and printing on the AMBER Alert Extranet, www.amber-net.org and the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC) web sites. This comprehensive guide is for effective response by law enforcement telecommunications to missing, abducted and sexually exploited children incidents.

The Checklist for Public Safety Telecommunicators When Responding to Calls of Missing, Abducted and Sexually Exploited Children is also available at the Extranet, www.amber-net.org and NCMEC sites. This extensive guide outlines the critically important first responder role of

the telecommunicator, sets forth step-by-step call-intake protocols specific to each incident type (abduction, LIMS - lost/injured/otherwise missing, runaway, throwaway) and provides comprehensive descriptive and contact information regarding around the clock resources and support available throughout these types of investigations.



The Checklist is a companion to the new standards adopted by the Association of Public Safety Communications Officials (APCO) on Dec. 10, 2007. The U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs worked with numerous organizations and dispatchers during the past three years to help create the manuals. All three web sites also have information about Communications Center Manager training seminars and "Train the Trainer" sessions. ☺

INTERNATIONAL MISSING CHILDREN'S DAY PSA UNVEILED

In honor of International Missing Children's Day, a public service announcement was created by the Australian Federal Police for the Global Missing Children's Network and is now being shown by broadcasters in Europe. The campaign includes the release of balloons for 40 missing children from eight countries. You can watch the PSA at: <http://youtube.com/watch?v=oho8xaMsfsc>



Missing Children's Day, continued from page 1

"We can't fight this problem alone. All of you are partners. Every child who grows up safely is a tribute to you. Never give up."

This year's ceremony also marked the 25th anniversary of the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC). Ernie Allen, NCMEC President and CEO, said NCMEC has recovered more than 138,000 children during that time and the recovery rate has gone from 62 percent in 1990 to 96 percent today. But Allen noted that much of the change was due to personal tragedy.

"We have come light years," said

Allen. "America is better prepared and most of America's missing children are coming home. It has been a revolution that has taken place in our lifetime."

Laurie O. Robinson, the Acting Assistant Attorney General for the Department of Justice's Office of Justice Programs and the National AMBER Alert Coordinator, spoke at the ceremony about what motivated law enforcement and concerned citizens to get involved when a child goes missing.

"Out of compassion and concern each of these men and women worked quickly to remove a child

from imminent danger," said Robinson. "We know nothing but your child's return will make things right again. But you should know that others care deeply about your child and are working hard to bring your children home."

Deputy Attorney General David Ogden also thanked AMBER Alert partners for sharing in that compassion for missing children. "Our AMBER Alert partners continue to bring children home safely," noted Ogden. "National Missing Children's Day is not just one day--the work must continue every day." ☺

(Top) **Martin Pecina**, Czech Minister of the Interior, (Center) **Caroline Humer**, Program Manager for the International Centre for Missing & Exploited Children, (Bottom) Representatives from Netherlands and Greece

AMBER INTERNATIONAL

EUROPEANS GATHER FOR CHILD ALERT CONFERENCE

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Common ground was found and differences were discovered at the latest European conference on child abduction alerts, which was held May 19 in Prague, Czech Republic and featured presentations and participants from 12 countries.

Caroline Humer, Program Manager for the International Centre for Missing & Exploited Children, was one of the presenters and she was impressed with what was accomplished.

"The conference gave many European countries which are still establishing an alert system the opportunity to listen and learn from countries with existing programs," said Humer. "Many great ideas were exchanged and many realized the importance of using all technology available to reach as many people as possible."

Even though European child abduction alert plans are based on the U.S. AMBER Alert Plan, Humer learned some notable differences in some countries, including:

- France can only launch an alert when an eye witness can confirm it was an abduction.
- France does not show the abductor's photo to the public because of possible innocence.
- Netherlands and Greece do not include abduction in their criteria but use the wording "immediate danger" or "life threatening."

European countries are also facing some of the same issues that American states dealt with while setting up their AMBER Alert plans, such as:

- Data sharing: The Schengen Information System is a police database for 25 European countries but more promotion is needed so countries can share information during a cross border alert.
- Data protection: The Czech Republic is working to protect law enforcement data before the country launches its child abduction alert plan.
- Privacy: France is setting up secondary distribution of alerts through the Internet and cell phones but is trying to decide how to protect the victim's privacy after a child has been found.
- Cancellation: France only considers the alert to be in effect for the first three hours and does not send an automatic notice that an alert has been cancelled.

"The European countries are still struggling to share and cooperate between each other," added Humer. "They need to build a stronger national database and cross country relationships to help prevent abductions and protect children. Establishing a common toll free number 116 000 to report missing children is a beginning and it is operating in 10 European Union countries at the moment."

The conference included presentations from France, Netherlands, United Kingdom, Greece and the U.S. Participants also came from Czech Republic, Portugal, Spain, Cyprus, Switzerland, Italy and Poland. ☺