



# What About Me?

**COPING WITH THE ABDUCTION OF A BROTHER OR SISTER**

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

There are so many individuals and organizations that helped make this guide a reality. Their guidance and belief in the guide not only helped us, the authors of the guide, deal with very real and difficult issues but also paved the way for siblings to finally feel a sense of understanding and support. To everyone who helped to make this guide a reality, we cannot thank you enough. We will forever be grateful for your compassion and generosity.

There are several individuals we would like to personally thank for their contributions. Their vision and compassion made this guide come to life. Our thanks go to Ron Laney, Associate Administrator of the Child Protection Division, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, U.S. Department of Justice; Helen Connelly and Tom Weeden of Fox Valley Technical College; Lynn Miller from Lockheed Martin; Katherine Lenard from FasterKitty, LLC; and Dan Rock from FirstPic, Inc.

Several other individuals also helped to make this guide a reality, including Helen Fitzgerald from the American Hospice Foundation; Ann Figura and Harriet Heiberg from Fox Valley Technical College; Andrea Lange and Tom Cullen from Lockheed Martin; Lori St. Onge from Child Find PEI; Liss Hart-Haviv from Take Root; Nancy Sabin from the Jacob Wetterling Foundation; and Julie Kenniston.

Finally, we wish to express our greatest thanks to a number of organizations that, through their financial support and generosity, made this document a reality. We especially want to recognize the following individuals and organizations for their generosity:

- Mr. Tom Petters
- Oshkosh B'Gosh, Inc.
- Time Warner Cable
- Enterprise Rent-A-Car Foundation
- Xerox Corporation

A special thank you also goes to Kimpton Hotels, Fox World Travel, Datawatch, Skyline Technologies, Inc., and Corporate Express for their contributions to this project.

**U.S. Department of Justice  
Office of Justice Programs**

810 Seventh Street, NW.  
Washington, DC 20531

**Alberto R. Gonzales**

*Attorney General*

**Regina B. Schofield**

*Assistant Attorney General*

**J. Robert Flores**

*Administrator*

*Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention*

**Office of Justice Programs**

Innovation • Partnerships • Safer Neighborhoods  
[www.ojp.usdoj.gov](http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov)

**Office of Juvenile Justice and  
Delinquency Prevention**

[www.ojp.usdoj.gov/ojjdp](http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/ojjdp)

This document was prepared by Fox Valley Technical College under cooperative agreement number 2005–MC–CX–K116 from the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP), Office of Justice Programs (OJP), U.S. Department of Justice.

Points of view or opinions expressed in this document are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official positions or policies of OJJDP or the U.S. Department of Justice.

The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention is a component of the Office of Justice Programs, which also includes the Bureau of Justice Assistance, the Bureau of Justice Statistics, the National Institute of Justice, and the Office for Victims of Crime.

This edition is the first printing.

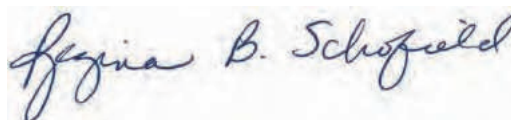
TABLE OF CONTENTS

Preface	i
Foreword	ii
Introduction	1
Home	5
Family	7
Law Enforcement	11
The Media	14
School & Work	18
Holidays & Anniversaries	23
When Your Brother or Sister Comes Home	27
A New Normal	29
Messages of Hope	32
Words You May Not Know	36
Where To Find More Help	37
A Message For Parents Or Older Siblings	39
Activities	40

Each year, there are more than 58,000 non-family abductions and more than 1 million children are reported missing. This is a staggering number, but it doesn't include the other young victims—the sisters and brothers of those who have been abducted. These overlooked children suffer the loss of their sibling. Their lives are turned asunder, and family patterns are irrevocably changed.

This publication is the effort of those who have lived the nightmare of losing a sister or brother. Eight siblings joined with the Office of Justice Programs to write this guide. During its creation, these siblings spoke eloquently and from their hearts about the need for a resource for left-behind children whose needs are often overlooked. At the time of the abduction, these siblings said they felt isolated and overwhelmed by their emotions. They rarely found the support they needed to deal with the gaping loss they faced. Their determination to prevent other young people from experiencing this trauma is to be applauded. In every page of this guide, their compassion shines through.

The U.S. Department of Justice, through its Office of Justice Programs, is honored to support this valuable effort for the population of siblings who have been left behind. I feel certain that the words of encouragement and insight the authors of this guide have shared will be meaningful to these children.



Regina B. Schofield  
Assistant Attorney General



# FOREWORD

Whether we have been personally touched by the horrors of child abduction, read about it in the newspaper, or heard announcements on TV, we know instinctively that this is a devastating occurrence. By the same token, we have also shared in the joy of parent and child reunion. Yet even when the ending is a happy one, the event has irrevocably changed the lives of those whom it touched.

At such a time, we so often think of the parents of the abducted child, but, unquestionably, the sisters and brothers of that child have also had their lives turned upside down. This guide is for them. It is to let them know others have shared their plight and have survived. It is to let them know that others understand their fears and, nonetheless, have gone on to live productive lives. It is to let them know that others have cried but, eventually, have moved on to laugh again. The sisters and brothers of abducted children have written this guide for their counterparts throughout the country. These young authors wanted to tell those left-behind children who say, "What about me?," that they are not forgotten.

When the idea of this guide was presented to me, I recognized there were no resources available for the siblings of children who were abducted. After reading the guide, I knew that the writing was truly a labor of love. I am proud to know these young authors, and I am touched by the strength, courage, and wisdom they have demonstrated in the words on these pages.

My hope is that you, or someone you know, never needs this book. However, if abduction strikes someone you know and love, please take the time to read this book with them or for them. It may be a first step back on the path to positive emotional health.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "J. Flores", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

J. Robert Flores  
Administrator  
Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention

Many children rely upon the Internet to look for information and resources. For children who may be searching for help on the Web, visit [www.fvtc.edu/childsurvivalguide](http://www.fvtc.edu/childsurvivalguide) to find more information about how to support yourself through these trying times.

This guide may contain many words that are unfamiliar to you. These words are found in **bold, colored type** throughout the guide. You can find definitions of these words on page 36.

# What About Me?

## COPING WITH THE ABDUCTION OF A BROTHER OR SISTER

If you are reading this because your brother or sister was abducted, **this guide is for you.**

If you are reading this because someone you know—a friend, a classmate, or a neighbor has been abducted, **this guide is for you.**

If you feel that nobody could possibly understand what you're going through, **this guide is for you.**

Yesterday, your brother or sister was abducted. Today, it seems like your life will never be the same again. Your thoughts are spinning around in your head. You may be thinking:

"I can't believe this is happening to me."

"Things like this only happen on TV."

"I feel like I'm having a nightmare—only I can't wake up."

"What about me? I'm afraid the same thing might happen to me!"

That's just the beginning. You probably have a million questions but are not sure where to find the answers. Where can you find support and encouragement? Who might help you feel better? What can you do to help find your **sibling**? When will life feel normal again? Has anyone else ever felt this way before?

**Yes. The people who wrote this book understand what you are going through.**

## A MESSAGE FROM THE AUTHORS OF THIS GUIDE

Like you, we are the brothers and sisters of children who were **kidnapped**. We felt frightened and confused, as you probably do now. Sometimes, we still do.

We wrote this guide because when our brother or sister was taken, we didn't have anyone to talk to. No one totally understood our feelings. No one really listened, and no one could really help us cope. We couldn't find answers to the millions of questions we had or people who could make us feel better. We felt alone.

You are not alone. We wrote this guide to give you some answers and to let you know there are people who really do understand a lot of what you're going through. We wanted to give you some idea of what you can expect to happen in this situation in the days and weeks—and maybe even the months—ahead. We wanted to help answer some questions, like:

- What feelings will I have?
- What might happen from day to day?
- What can I do to make myself feel better?

When we were asked to write this guide, it was the first time we had met other brothers and sisters who had gone through the same things we had. Finally, we felt we were not alone. And it finally felt good!

We also realized that we had learned some useful lessons—things to say and things to do that would help other children whose siblings had been **abducted**. We wrote this guide to help you deal with a situation that seems unreal and **abnormal**. We wrote it to

let you know that you can and will get through this, no matter how hard it may seem.

We wrote this guide for brothers and sisters like us, but in the process, we realized that it may also be helpful for the friends who are trying to support you, the teachers and counselors in school who want to help you, and the family members and even parents who are also struggling with how to cope. We wrote this guide to give you hope and encouragement.

**We may not have all the answers, but we do understand a lot of what you're going through. One thing is for sure: it's not easy.**

As you read this guide, remember that these are our thoughts and ideas about what might help you cope with this terrible ordeal. We found things that worked for us and things to think about. We also found things to avoid. We went through experiences similar to yours and, in the process, learned a lot.

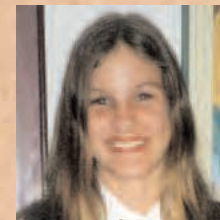
We are not trained mental health professionals. We are compassionate brothers and sisters. If you feel like you are in a rut or feel that you cannot cope, please talk with your parents, another trusted adult, or a professional counselor or therapist. Professional help has been a part of all of our lives. It can help you get through each day.



Heather

"I hate that I am scared all the time. I hate feeling crazy. I hate this!"

"I have no answers, but questions and the need for reassurance. I feel so different from everyone else."



Martha

"Don't blame yourself for what's happening now. Don't blame yourself."

## ABOUT FEELINGS

Here are some positive things you can do with your feelings:

- Talk to someone you trust about your feelings. Don't be afraid to let them out. You may feel better getting things off your chest.
- Write down your feelings. Keep a **journal** for when you have something to say but no one there to listen. Sometimes things that are hard to say are easier to write.
- You may want to keep your journal private, or you may want to share it with a trusted adult. They may help you cope. It's all up to you.
- Know that your feelings may change from day to day or even from minute to minute. That's natural. There's nothing wrong with it.
- Give yourself permission to take a break from feeling bad. It's okay to do something fun. It's okay to laugh.
- Do something that takes your mind off it. See a movie. Listen to music. Hang out with your friends. Don't feel like you have to think about the abduction every minute.

Right now you may be feeling:

- Scared.
- Confused.
- Worried.
- Angry.
- Guilty.
- Numb.
- Helpless.
- Out of control.
- Or all kinds of other things.

Maybe the best advice we can give you is not to be too hard on yourself. When it comes to feelings, there is no right or wrong way to feel. Your feelings are your own, and whatever they are, they're okay.

We can't tell you what to feel or do for every situation. Everybody's situation is different and unique. Maybe the best thing you can do is acknowledge your feelings and try to release them in a positive way.

We hope your brother or sister returns home safely and soon. But you should prepare yourself that this situation may go on for days, weeks, or months. And the outcome may not be what you expect. We are not

saying this to worry or scare you. There are many different outcomes, and as you read our stories, you will find that each one ended differently.

Take a look at the picture below. That's the eight of us today. We're all older now than when our brother or sister was abducted, and we've learned that, in many ways, this is a forever kind of process. We're still going through feelings about what happened. But a lot has changed, too. We hope that we can help you begin to put your life back together again, and give you some support. And we hope we give you the courage and help you need to get through this and find the positives in your lives.



Back row: Marcus, Martha, Trevor, Amy, and Robin.  
Front row: Ericka, Heather, and Carmen.



## ONE LAST THING

You have a lot on your mind now. When you pick up this guide, you may realize that you cannot read it from cover to cover. That's okay. We've written the guide to help you deal with different situations and circumstances. You can read it in any order and at any time. You may want to read one chapter at a time or just leaf through it. You may want to ask someone to read it to you. You may want to read parts of it aloud to your younger brothers and sisters. However you decide to use it, this guide is for you.

We know that children of all ages may face the abduction of a sibling. We were all different ages when this happened to us. The first part of the guide is for children who can read and understand our words. The second part is for children who are either too young to read or who choose not to read the guide right now. It contains activity pages for children of all ages with the understanding that they are meant to be introduced by a parent, adult, or even an older brother or sister, for younger children

*Here is some space for you to write about your thoughts.*





"All of a sudden, home is where all the food is. The media are waiting outside, and people have left flowers there. Home is where the craziness is." – Marcus

"No one explained to me what happened. I came home from school and everyone was sitting in the living room being quiet. No one told me what was going on." – Trevor

Dorothy said it in *The Wizard of Oz*: There's no place like home. But home, as you have always known it, has changed. Your home may be full of people: family, friends, media, and law enforcement. People may just walk through the front door without knocking. They may walk all over your house, even in your own room. In fact, it may no longer feel like *your* home, and that's a very unsettling feeling.

Most of us feel best when things stay the same, when we are surrounded by familiar things and people. But home can now seem like an unfamiliar place.

**Your thoughts and feelings about your missing brother or sister may bring up a lot of questions.**

## QUESTIONS YOU MIGHT HAVE:

- Is home still "home" without my sibling there?
- Do we still sit at the same places at the table?
- Can I still borrow my sibling's clothes or toys?
- What do we do on my missing sibling's birthday? Do we just ignore it?
- How do I answer the phone if it's for my missing brother or sister?
- What should we do with their mail?
- What about his or her room? Can I still go in there to find something? What if the police have blocked it off? Will it upset my parents if I go in there like I usually would?
- The police took some of the things that we shared—the computer, clothes, even a hairbrush. Will we ever get them back?

# HOME

There may not be good answers to all of these questions. You probably have a million more questions. It's perfectly natural to have them, and it's okay to ask them. Your parents may not have the answers, either. Remember, this situation is new and unfamiliar to them, too. Sometimes it helps just to ask the questions out loud rather than keeping them bottled up inside.

## Here are some other things you can do:

- Be patient. Things may not go back to the way they were before, but they may not keep feeling so strange, either.
- Sometimes home feels too intense. You may need to get away for a little while. Ask if you can spend a night sleeping over at a friend's house.
- Spend time with friends. Go for a bike ride. Go with your friends to the mall. Whatever you do, make sure to tell your parents where you are going so they don't worry about you.

- Don't be too hard on yourself or your family. Try to relax, even though it's a tough situation.
- Do something to take your mind off things. Read. Listen to music. Watch a video or a DVD. Go for a run.
- Try to do things that give your life structure. Join a club. Sign up for an afterschool activity. Keep a daily journal. Try out for a sport. Decide you're going to work out 3 days a week. Do something good for you.



# YOUR OWN SPACE

It can be really upsetting when your house is taken over by strangers and you feel like you don't have any privacy. When you feel like your life is being invaded, it's important to have some space of your own.

- Talk with your parents about needing some space of your own. Find a place in your house—a safe place just for you—that everyone else knows is off limits. No one can come in unless you say so.
- Hang a sign on your bedroom door that says “This is my personal space: keep out!” Know that while you're in your own space, you can think anything you want and feel anything you want.
- Think about a place where you've always felt happy, like the beach or your grandmother's house on Thanksgiving. Think about what it looks like and how it smells and tastes. Just traveling there in your mind may be comforting for a while.



Martha

"It would have helped

if people had explained to me why my parents were acting so differently. I would have liked to have known that, under the circumstances, their behavior was normal."

"Your parents are going to act differently. They're dealing with the situation in their own ways, which may be different from the way you think they should act."



Trevor

"People kept asking 'How

are your parents doing?' What about me? Don't they want to know how I'm doing?"

**While it is your brother or sister who was abducted, your whole family is experiencing the abduction—and in different ways. Life as your family has known it will change. Your parents, your other sisters and brothers, your relatives, and even close family friends are all in frightening new territory. It's hard enough handling your own feelings. How do you cope with their feelings, too?**

## YOUR PARENTS

There's no doubt about it: your parents are acting differently. Before the abduction, they may have been there for you and your siblings, supporting you through good and bad times. Now they seem so sad and distracted and angry that you don't recognize them anymore. All their energy is focused on finding your missing brother or sister. There doesn't seem to be much attention left for you. Sometimes you feel like you were pushed to the back burner.

You want your parents to act like your parents again. It's not always the big things that bother you. It's the little things, like getting a good grade on your math test and wanting them to get excited about it. It's things like your Mom forgetting that you have soccer practice and you need a ride or your Dad not making it to your baseball game. Your parents still live in your house like they always have, but, somehow, they are not there for you in the same way.

One minute you may feel angry at your parents for not giving you their full attention and the next minute feel guilty for being angry with them when they have so much to deal with. You may try to be the "perfect" child by getting all A's, cleaning your room, and acting cheerful even when you don't feel that way. Your parents may seem to not even notice, and you may resent them for it. You may find yourself being a parent to your parents—making sure they eat regularly or reminding them of doctors' appointments they've forgotten.

Remember that whatever you're feeling, it's okay. What is happening to you now is very, very hard on you. Your parents are still your parents, they still love you, and they care about your feelings—even if they can't show it right now. Don't be too hard on yourself, and don't be too hard on them.

"I remember harassing Mom until she actually cooked breakfast. To me, what was normal was Mom cooking." - Ericka



## In the meantime, here are some things you can do right now to cope:

- If you can, try to talk to your parents about the abduction and all the feelings it's stirred up in you. While you may be afraid it will make them even sadder, simply ask them if it's okay to talk about it. It may be the best thing for all of you.
- If you cannot talk with your parents for whatever reason, talk to another adult you trust: a close aunt or uncle, your athletic coach, a close friend's parent.
- Sometimes it's easier to talk to an objective person who's trained to listen to and help kids. A counselor from school or a professional therapist might be a good idea.
- Being productive and doing things for others can feel pretty good. If you feel like helping your parents out in some way, go ahead. Take care of your little brother or sister; offer to make dinner. Your parents will appreciate what you do for them, even if they can't express it right now.
- It can be pretty upsetting to see your parents cry—it may even make you cry, too. Go ahead. A good cry can make you all feel better.
- Stick to your regular structure and routine, whether it's school, soccer practice, music lessons, or debate club. It may reassure your parents to know your life hasn't been totally disrupted.
- You may feel like you have to be at home with your parents all the time because something might happen on the case or that they need you to be there. Try not to feel that way. Do something for yourself—it's okay. Make sure you tell your parents where you are going, and make a plan for how you can get in touch with each other.
- People who care about you will be eager to help you and your family. It's okay to rely on the parents of close friends if you need a ride or some other favor. It may help them to feel better, too.
- Try to find some **normalcy** in your daily life. Your parents may be too busy to eat dinner with you every night, but you may want to suggest making one night a week “family night,” a time for you to all sit down at the table together and catch up on each other's lives.
- Recognize that your parents are overcome with worry and may feel the need to be extra protective or cautious with you and your siblings. Try not to resent it. Even though it may not seem like it all the time, they are worried about you, too. It's okay to talk with your parents or people you trust about feeling closed-in.



Carmen

"I had to learn to live with one less person in my family."



Heather

"My brother John and I lost part of ourselves the day our sister disappeared."



Marcus

"I didn't talk to my sisters or anyone about it. The problem was, there wasn't anyone I felt comfortable talking to."



## BROTHERS & SISTERS

Sometimes brothers and sisters are wonderful and are your best friends, and sometimes they're just a pain.

When your brother or sister is missing, though, you may feel guilty about the times you did not get along with them or weren't nice to them. Somehow, everyday life doesn't feel the same anymore. Your family roles have shifted. Suddenly, you may be the oldest child, or the youngest, or even the only child at home.

What if you shared a room with your missing sibling? It can feel scary, sad, or uncomfortable now that they're no longer home. Just going in the room can make you feel their absence even more. However it makes you feel, it's okay. It's even okay if you want to think of them as being "away" for a while and to hope that eventually they'll come back.

You may have new responsibilities now like taking care of your siblings, running errands, or answering the phone. If you're a younger child, you may be asked to stay with someone else for a while—an aunt or a

grandparent. If you're a little older, you may feel a responsibility to take charge. There's a lot of tension at home. You may not know if you should talk to your brothers and sisters about what's happening or keep it to yourself.

### What can you do?

- Ask your brother or sister if they want to talk about anything. Give them the opportunity to share their feelings and to listen to yours, but respect their right to privacy if they don't want to talk.
- Try to remember that you and your entire family are sad. Sometimes, it's comforting just to know you are not alone in your sadness.
- If you're an older sibling, try to pay a little extra attention to the younger ones who may be frightened or confused. Play a game with them or read them a book. Encourage them to tell you how they feel. Sometimes, the closeness of the family is all it takes to make you feel better.

# FAMILY

- Do something helpful—even something as simple as making macaroni and cheese for the little ones. It can make you feel better to help them feel better.
- If you're an older sibling, offer to take the younger kids to a movie or the playground. Give your parents some much-needed time off, but first be sure to let them know where you're going.
- You may find yourself lashing out at your brothers and sisters. Shake it off, and let them know you're sorry. Read the suggestions in the section titled "Normal" to find other ways to let out your emotions. At the same time, try to be understanding if a sibling loses his or her temper.

*"Whoever you consider your family is family."— Ericka*

## EXTENDED FAMILY

There's your immediate family, your parents, siblings, and step-brothers and sisters. There's also your extended family, the people who care about you and gather around, like your grandparents, aunts and uncles, cousins, friends, and friends of the family. Some of your extended family may come to stay for a while. Close friends and neighbors may come by, dropping off food and asking if there's anything they can do. Your friends' parents may visit often to make sure you and your folks are doing okay. It can seem like every day after school when you walk into the house and throw down your backpack, someone new has come to visit or stay. And while sometimes this may be exciting, at other times, it can be a real hassle.

### **People may want very much to help you but just don't know how.**

Even if you have friends and family to offer support, you may still feel left out and alone. You may feel that your life and routine have been disrupted. You may feel that others are focusing mostly on your parents' well-being but are ignoring what you need right now.

### **What can you do?**

- Your immediate and extended family are concerned and worried for you and your family. But they may not have the emotional energy to deal with your feelings. They may not know what to do for you or how to ask. Try not to take their lack of attention personally.
- Don't be afraid to ask your extended family for help. Often, they don't know how best to help you. Ask them for a ride to school, to take you out for ice cream, to talk with you. Sometimes you just need to ask. Just be sure to tell your parents where you are going.
- You aren't imposing on your extended family by asking them to help out; in fact, you're doing them a favor by telling them how they can help you.
- Sometimes you need a hug. Your parents might not be around all the time now to give you one, but it's likely that a favorite grandparent will. It's okay to ask someone you trust for a hug.



## Martha

"The law enforcement people were taking over our house. They answered our phone. They drank out of our coffee cups. They were always there."

"There was this neighbor, a man who lived by himself. A lot of people in the neighborhood were speculating and gossiping about him. At first I thought it was ridiculous, but as the police kept questioning him, I started to wonder. I felt like I couldn't trust anyone."



Trevor

"I liked having the police at our house. I was very scared, and having them there made me feel safe."

**After your brother or sister is abducted, the first thing your parents will probably do is call the police. In most cases, law enforcement (police, sheriffs, detectives, the FBI) will be the first people your family talks to.**

## SOME THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW

**Law enforcement** has a job to do. They are there to find your brother or sister, to eliminate possible **suspects**, and to track down the actual **perpetrator** of the crime. Many people don't realize this, but the police and the FBI start by questioning the people closest to the missing sibling: you, your parents, your other siblings, close relatives, friends, and neighbors. The police will talk to many people, including those who know your brother or sister and who may have witnessed something important. They want to gather as much information as possible to bring your brother or sister home safely. Many times abductions are carried out by someone who knows the child involved.

The more suspects law enforcement can **eliminate**, the more they can focus on who really committed the crime and track them down. You, your parents, and others close to the family may be asked to take a **polygraph** test to see if you are telling the truth. Though this may be a frightening process, it is a necessary one.

The local police and the FBI are trained to gather as much information as possible on the case, largely through interviews. One thing you can definitely expect is that they will ask you lots and lots of questions. They may ask you the same questions over and over again. You'll probably be interviewed many times. Sometimes, the interview will be in an uncomfortable or unfamiliar place. You may have different people asking questions or the same people asking questions repeatedly. After a while, you may be so tired and confused that you start to question your own answers. You may even feel like you are being accused yourself, even though you know it's crazy.

Their questions may make you feel uncomfortable and intimidated. They will ask you questions about relatives, teachers, coaches, and family friends, and you may be afraid your answers will get them in trouble. You may think that they are being insensitive and are asking strange questions. Sometimes, it may seem like they do not know how to talk to you or don't believe you.

"They said they were just going to ask a few questions, but we were in there for hours. They asked the same questions over and over." - Amy

# LAW ENFORCEMENT

**Just remember one thing. Law enforcement's job is to ask questions to help them find your brother or sister. Your job is to answer the questions as best you can. Your only job is to tell the truth.**

**Here are some things you can do to help yourself handle the interview process:**

- Bring something with you to the interview that makes you feel comfortable. Very young children may want to bring a favorite stuffed animal or toy.
- Try not to overanalyze every question the officer asks you or to give what you think is the "right" answer. Just answer each question as truthfully as possible.
- Let the officer know if you are tired, thirsty, or need to go to the bathroom. Ask if you can take a break.

- Remind yourself that even though you don't know why they are asking certain questions, they are the experts in solving cases.
- If you cannot remember something, don't make up an answer. It's okay to just say, 'I don't remember.'
- If any part of the interview makes you uncomfortable, be sure to let your parents know about it.

Law enforcement may also do other things, some of which can feel **invasive**. They may take the family computer or other personal possessions. They may tape telephone calls, **tap** your family's phone line, or put in a second line for the investigation. They may screen your calls and your mail. They may ask questions of your friends and neighbors.

"I would sit at the police station all day and nobody would tell me anything. It was frustrating." - Marcus



# LAW ENFORCEMENT

Space for your thoughts.

"They won't tell you anything because they don't want you to get your hopes up." – Marcus

Sometimes, it may seem like there is a lot of law enforcement activity, and sometimes, there is none. You may not know everything the law enforcement officers are doing or the reasons why they are doing them. They have very good reasons for keeping activities **confidential** and not informing your family about every new development in the case. Just because you haven't heard about any progress doesn't mean that nothing is happening on the case. Try not to let it dampen your spirits.

Sometimes, there are so many law enforcement officers working on the case that you are not sure what they are all doing and why. One thing we found helpful was to have a law enforcement officer serve as our family's **designated liaison** to give us information and to coordinate law enforcement activities. Your parents may already know and trust someone in law enforcement and can ask that person, or someone they know, to take on that role. The designated liaison can give the family an update every day. That way everyone can feel like they know what's happening.

"Just because you don't hear about progress, doesn't mean they're not making any." – Marcus





# THE MEDIA

"What does the word 'media' mean? People who are always showing microphones and cameras in your face!" – Martha

## Every family needs to decide the best way to work with the media.

Often the **media** will play a role in the search for an abducted or missing child. If they do and if you are like the rest of us, being around the media is a whole new experience. Your parents may be the best judge when it comes to deciding who in your family should talk to the media and when.

You may have mixed feelings when it comes to talking to the media. On the one hand, they can play an important part in getting the word out about your brother's or sister's abduction. They can help to keep your sibling's story alive to the public. It may seem like the media only want to help. You may find them very sympathetic and friendly. All of this may be very exciting!

On the other hand, you may feel differently about the media as time goes on. They may be constantly coming into your home, invading your family's privacy, and invading your space. Film crews may park all over your front lawn. Their questions may embarrass or hurt you. The story may not turn out the way you thought it would. Sometimes, it may seem like they are not really concerned about you or your family but are more concerned about getting a story for the evening news.

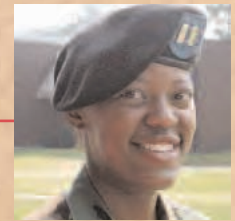
"I was mad at my Mom because the media took pictures of me at my soccer game." – Carmen

"I remember walking across the house in my pajamas and, 30 minutes later, seeing myself on the news." – Martha

Every family needs to decide the best way to work with the media. Your family may want to cooperate with the media to do everything possible to help find your sister or brother. At the same time, your family may not want to talk with the media because it may feel like the trauma is being repeated over and over again.

You may have different and **conflicting** thoughts about the media. You may want to tell them everything to help find your sibling. You may be afraid to talk with them. You may not want to expose your personal feelings to the public. You may not want complete strangers to recognize you and know your business. Tell your parents how you feel about talking with the media. If you are uncomfortable, let your parents know. If you feel like your space is being invaded, talk with your parents. If you feel like the media is hounding you for information, tell your parents or a trusted adult.

Ericka



"Where the media is concerned, there's no such thing as 'off the record.'"

"I didn't go anywhere because I knew they would follow me with questions and I was afraid I'd lose my temper."

Marcus



"You may not realize that when you do an interview, they can skew it a certain way and distort what you're saying."

Sometimes the story about an abduction gets a lot of media coverage, and sometimes it does not. Remember, the media's aim is to get the news of the day out, but what gets aired has a lot to do with what is occurring right now in your community, in the country, and even in the world. Because of this, or because law enforcement has reasons for keeping the story quiet, your sibling's abduction might not make it on the news. That doesn't mean it's unimportant or nobody cares. In some ways, it can be a relief if the media decides not to focus on your family.

*"A lot of people didn't even know that Jacob had a sister. I was 13, and I wanted nothing to do with the media."  
- Amy*

### **Here are some things you can do and think about when dealing with the media:**

- Talk with your parents about how to handle the media. Ask how your family is going to handle interviews and media calls. Don't be afraid to say "I don't want to do an interview."
- Have a trusted person with you if you agree to do an interview. They can look out for you and object if they think the

reporter is asking questions that are out of line.

- It's okay to tell a reporter you don't want to talk anymore.
- If you don't feel like talking to the media, just walk away.
- You and your family can request a reporter whom you trust to do an interview with. You can also choose not to do an interview with a reporter you don't trust.
- If the media talks to you behind your parents' backs and you feel they've asked inappropriate questions, tell your parents or another trusted adult about it.
- If you are talking with the media and you don't know an answer, it's okay to say "I don't know."
- If you agree to an interview and then change your mind and decide not to do it, it's okay to say so.



# THE MEDIA

The media can cause extra stress on your family if friends or relatives hear information on the news and not from your family. They may say, "I can't believe I had to find out about this on the news." Don't take this personally. Unfortunately, this may be part of the ongoing process for you right now.

Sometimes an event may trigger another media burst of attention. A similar story may come up in the news, or it may be the anniversary of your sibling's abduction. There may be people who want to **capitalize** on your family's misfortune, hounding you for your story, or wanting to make a movie or write a book about it. The media may come back to interview your family all over again. Just be prepared that this might happen. Remember to talk with your family about how you all will handle this.

## QUESTIONS YOU HATE TO BE ASKED

It takes only moments from the time of an abduction for you to realize there are questions you dread hearing. When you're in the public eye, many people think they have a right to ask you questions. Somehow people may feel they are entitled. Some people don't want to bother your parents, so they ask you a lot of questions instead.

People will ask you questions for different reasons. Friends and family may genuinely want to know how you are feeling so they can be helpful. But even a seemingly harmless question from a stranger like

"How many brothers and sisters do you have?" can throw you and leave you uncertain how to answer.

*"Even today, after all this time, I still don't know how to answer the question, 'How many sisters or brothers do you have?'" - Carmen*

*"Nobody knows how to act with you since they have never gone through it."  
- Trevor*

The media may ask you questions and broadcast your answers across the country. Law enforcement will ask you questions to help solve the case. While this is necessary, it isn't always easy. And as hard as it is to answer the questions from people you know, it may be even harder to answer questions from people you don't know.

It helps a little to be prepared for certain questions so you're not totally surprised. Here are some questions that may make you feel angry, uncomfortable, guilty, or uncertain—questions that may put you on the spot:

- How many brothers and sisters do you have?
- Do you think your brother or sister is still alive?
- What happened?
- Are you okay?
- Was your brother or sister sexually abused?
- How does this make you feel?





## SOME POSSIBLE ANSWERS

You may have your own answers to the questions we mentioned. But just in case you can't think of what to say, here are some other possible answers.

- How many brothers and sisters do you have? **I have four brothers and sisters, but one is not home right now.**
- Do you think your brother or sister is still alive? **I hope so.**
- What happened? **I don't know what happened. And I don't want to talk about it.**
- Was your brother or sister sexually abused? **I don't know if my brother or sister was sexually abused. But this is not something I am comfortable talking about.**
- How does this make you feel? **I don't want to talk about my feelings right now.**

"Everyone is different, and no one can tell you how to answer these questions." – Marcus

You may answer questions differently from your brothers and sisters. You may answer them differently at different times. It all depends on how you feel at the time. It doesn't make you wrong or a liar.

Many people have good intentions and are asking questions out of real concern. But some people are just plain nosy and **thrive** on learning information that is not really any of their business. They may spread hurtful rumors about your brother or sister. A good response to a rumor might be, "There's no **evidence** to support that."

"I don't know" is a perfectly good answer. So is, "I don't feel like answering that question right now," or "That question makes me feel uncomfortable." What if you can't think of anything to say? Then it's okay to just walk away.

Talk to your parents about any questions that make you uncomfortable. If your parents are not around, find an adult you trust, like a relative, teacher, or family friend, and let them know the questions that make you feel bad. They may be able to tell the questioner "That's enough questions for now," even if you don't feel you can.

# THE MEDIA

Or find a good buddy to talk to. Sometimes it helps to simply admit that you're really bummed out. Your friend may not have the answers, but it can help to have a caring person listen.

"I received the news by the answering machine. I felt very helpless. I was mad." – Robin

## THE "CLING-ONS"

"Maybe you should just tell your parents, 'I think this person is really weird.'" – Trevor

If your family has received media attention as a result of your sibling's abduction, your family may experience "celebrity" status in the eyes of many people, some of whom we refer to as "cling-ons." These are complete strangers who feel as if they know you because they recognize you from TV or newspapers. They may stake out your house or try to talk to you when your parents are not around. They may seem weird or wacky, and you may not want to have anything to do with them. Talk to your parents about these people. Trust your instincts. If you don't want to talk to them, tell them. If they don't get the message, you or your parents may need to be blunt.

# SCHOOL & WORK

**After your brother or sister has been abducted, “back to school” has a whole different meaning. Home is a chaotic place, but you may feel you need to be there to help out. School is a part of your normal, everyday life, but your life doesn’t feel “everyday” or normal any more.**

**SCHOOL** Chances are your classmates will know about the abduction. You may dread facing them or feel anxious about what questions they’ll ask. Their questions can hurt—even if your friends don’t mean for them to. There may be times when you feel kids looking at you or think they’re whispering behind your back. Other kids may not know what to say to you or whether you’ll want to talk about what happened. They may feel awkward; you may feel self-conscious. It can all be a big mess.

Still, it’s important to get back as soon as you can. The good news is, there are a number of built-in support systems at school, including your teachers, counselors, and coaches. Not only that, but school can provide structure and routine—reassuring things that may otherwise be missing from your life right now.

**Here are some things to help you cope with school:**

- Talk with your parents about how to ease back into the school routines. Your teachers may be willing to let you do half-days at first. A whole school

day may seem overwhelming, but you can tell yourself, “I can handle this for a couple of hours.”

- Let your friends know what you can and can’t cope with right now. Sometimes it takes just a few words to break the ice.
- You can set the boundaries. If kids ask about your brother or sister, you can say “I really don’t want to talk about that right now. But tell me about what’s going on with you.” This is a good way to take the focus off of yourself.
- Another good thing to say might be “It’s okay to talk about my brother or sister, just not behind my back. And I might want to change the subject in about 30 seconds!”

Robin



“Going back to college was extremely difficult. I did poorly in my classes that semester, and I failed English for the first time in my whole life.”

Trevor

“After the abduction, I didn’t go back to school for a long time. I didn’t want to be away from my family and I wanted to be there if my brother was found.”

Amy



“For me, it was good to go back to school because it gave me structure and routine. And it felt normal.”



- Try to hang out with positive people. The last thing you need right now is negativity.
- Get yourself involved in productive activities. Join a group or club. Find a good cause and volunteer. It's a way to feel like you're doing something to help, which you may not feel at home.

"I would work out literally for 5 or 6 hours every day. It was my getaway. It was my focus." – Marcus

"Sports was a really big deal for me. It gave me discipline, teamwork, and confidence, and it was a great stress reliever, too. My coach was always there to encourage me." – Martha

"When you're playing sports, nothing else matters." – Marcus



One of the best things you can do for yourself is get involved in a team sport, a school club, or other activity. They can be a welcome relief from thinking about the situation at home. Sports are a way to turn your mind off and focus all your attention on physical activity instead. A team sport gives you a clearly defined role, and it can feel good to be part of a team, working toward a common goal. It's one area of your life where you can take control again. A group activity or school club can also give you a broader support network and something positive and constructive to do for yourself.



# SCHOOL & WORK

**It's natural to fear that you won't be able to concentrate in class and to worry about falling behind. Remember that your teachers want to help you succeed. They are probably aware of your circumstances at home and willing to work with you any way they can.**

- Part of your teachers' job will be to help you pace yourself. Meet with each of them and come up with a plan for how to handle things your first week back. Try to take it one day at a time. If your plan doesn't seem to be working out, it's okay to change your approach.
  - Your friends may be willing to bring work home for you so you don't get too far behind.
  - Your teachers or your counselor may be able to arrange for you to have a tutor to help you go over missed work or subjects that are a struggle.
  - It's understandable if the situation at home makes it hard to concentrate. But at the same time, try not to use it as an excuse.
- It may feel like you are just going through the motions of school, and that's okay. With time, all the "motions" may start to feel natural again.
  - You may not ace every test, but give yourself credit for what you do accomplish. Whether it's answering a question correctly in class or spiking the volleyball in gym class, pat yourself on the back for your small victories.



Amy

"My teachers pretty much said, 'Do what you can do.' I didn't have to make up all the work I missed."



Carmen

"I remember the first day back pretty clearly. I liked my teacher, and she held a small meeting with my friends and the school counselor. It was a good chance to talk about things."

Trevor

"One of the things I remember is that the longer you stay out, the harder it is to go back."



You may be readjusting to school pretty smoothly. But then, when you least expect it, you may be walking down the hall or eating lunch in the cafeteria, and you become overwhelmed by emotions. For no apparent reason, you want to cry, snap at a friend, or run away. All of a sudden, it may be too much for you. You may feel like you're falling apart.

This is natural and to be expected. There are a couple of things you can do. If you think you're going to "lose it" in class, talk to your teacher ahead of time and arrange a signal that says "I need a time out." You may just need to go outside and breathe some fresh air for a minute or to go see the school counselor. With a simple signal, like pulling your earlobe or dropping a note on the teacher's desk, you won't need to draw a lot of attention to yourself, and you can take a much needed break.

*"In high school, especially it's easy to hook up with the wrong people. Be careful who wants to hang out with you and why." – Martha*

Finally, this will be a **vulnerable** time for you. There may be other kids who try to take advantage of your vulnerability and who don't necessarily have your best interests at heart. This is a time to trust your instincts. If you feel uneasy or find yourself thinking "This is not a positive or productive thing to do," don't do it. Stick with the friends who make you feel good about yourself and life in general.

## WORK

If you're an older sibling, you eventually have to return to work, rather than to school. But many of the same principles that apply to school-age kids apply to you, too, so take a look at some of the suggestions under the "School" section.

You may find it's hard to leave home because you feel like you need to be there to help. If the media has covered the abduction, it's likely your co-workers will have heard about it and may ask uncomfortable questions.

### What can you do?

- *Decide what you do and don't feel comfortable saying, and set conversational boundaries accordingly.*
- *Go back to work gradually, maybe 3 days a week, then 4, then 5. Or see if your boss will let you telecommute some of the time.*
- *Your tendency may be to hide in your office and not talk to people. If you can, try to force yourself to go out to lunch or dinner with co-workers and talk about anything else but your sibling's abduction.*

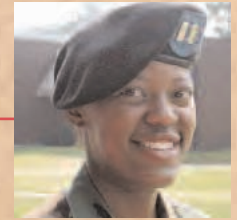
# SCHOOL & WORK

- Try to surround yourself with people who are positive and who help you to feel that way.
- Immerse yourself in exercise, or music, or books. Reading is a good way to take your mind off things.
- Don't be too hard on yourself. You may find it difficult to concentrate on work at first. Recognize that it's natural to be distracted and that you will become more focused in time.
- Take frequent breaks from work to clear your mind. Go outside for a walk. Stand up and stretch. If you're having trouble accomplishing the work, see if it's okay to leave early that day.
- Your employer may have an Employee Assistance Program that can arrange for you to have free counseling. You may want to check into it.



- Take good care of yourself physically —eat well, exercise, get some rest. Even when you don't feel like it, these things are important.
- Use healthy outlets for dealing with stress. Remember that some things you might turn to for comfort now may hurt you in the long run.

## Ericka



"I had to go back overseas to my Army job in South Korea. It was right back to work—no down time. My support system was back home. I worked myself to exhaustion."

## Heather



"When I went back to work substitute teaching, all the kids wanted my 'autograph' because, in their eyes, I was a celebrity. They did not really understand. I used that opportunity to ask them each to write down one rule of safety, and then I signed that."



# HOLIDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES

*"The holidays are back. Hold your breath!" – Heather*

Your family may have always celebrated certain holidays and events: Christmas, Hanukkah, Thanksgiving, Halloween, New Year's Eve, and each person's birthday. But if your brother or sister has been abducted, holidays can fill you with different feelings. You may be worried about what to do when your missing sibling's birthday rolls around. You may feel selfish to celebrate a holiday or your birthday when your brother or sister is still missing. You may ask yourself, "Is it wrong to still want to celebrate Thanksgiving?"

The answer is no. Deciding to celebrate a holiday can be a positive step, a way to acknowledge that life goes on, a way to feel more like a "normal" family, even for a day. On the other hand, you or your parents just may not be "up" for a celebration right now. That's fine, too.

Holidays are always emotional times for families. Recognize that they will be even more emotional now. If you simply ignore a holiday or event, remember that the rest of the world will be celebrating, and you'll be very aware of that.

If a holiday is approaching, try to anticipate how you want to handle it. If you can't decide what you want to do, think about what you *don't* want to do, and go from there. Discuss your ideas and thoughts with your family. The Holidays Checklist on the following page can help your family make decisions about an upcoming holiday or celebration. Ask each family member to fill out a separate checklist, and then sit down together and compare notes.

## **Here are some other ways to cope with holidays:**

- Talk with your family ahead of time about what

*makes the most sense for the coming holiday. Remember, whatever you feel is okay. If you just can't cope with any kind of celebration, be upfront about it. You may want to talk to your parents about being somewhere else that day, like at a friend's or relative's house.*

- You or your parents may not feel like celebrating a holiday, but you may not want to spoil things for the younger kids. See if you can find a compromise between an all-out celebration and no holiday at all.
- Holidays can bring out all kinds of hidden emotions. Be prepared for that. Tell yourself it's okay to take a break from the party or dinner if you become overwhelmed by feelings.
- You and your family may feel that it is too difficult to do the same things you usually do on a certain holiday. Think about starting some new traditions. If you always have turkey on Thanksgiving, this year make a big pot of spaghetti. Talk with your family about this.



# COPING WITH THE HOLIDAYS CHECKLIST

Place a check mark by what you want to do this year. Share this with your family or have them do one of their own and compare notes.

## Holiday Cards

- Mail as usual
- Shorten your list
- Include a "Holiday Letter"
- Elect to skip this year

## Decorations

- Decorate as usual
- Modify your decorations
- Ask for help
- Let others do it
- Make changes, such as an artificial tree instead of a real one
- Have a special decoration for your loved one
- Choose not to put up decorations

## Shopping

- Shop as usual
- Give cash
- Shop through catalogs or the Internet
- Ask for help

- Shop early
- Make your gifts
- Give baked goods
- Shop with a friend
- Ask for help wrapping gifts
- Do not exchange gifts now, but later
- Make a list of gifts to buy before you go out

## Holiday Music

- Enjoy as usual
- Avoid turning the radio on
- Shop early before stores play holiday music
- Listen to it, have a good cry, and allow yourself to feel sad

## Traditions

- Keep the old traditions
- Attend holiday parties
- Don't attend holiday parties
- Go to an entirely new place
- Bake the usual holiday foods
- Buy the usual holiday foods
- Bake, but modify what you usually do

- Attend a religious service
- Do not attend a religious service
- Attend a totally different place of worship
- Spend quiet time alone
- Visit the cemetery
- Open gifts on the usual day
- Open gifts at another time

## Holiday Dinner

- Prepare as usual
- Go out for dinner
- Invite friends over
- Eat alone
- Change time of dinner
- Change routine of dinner, such as this year, do a buffet
- Change location of dinner, eat in a different room
- Ask for help

## Post-Holiday & New Year's Day

- Spend as usual
- Go out of town
- Avoid New Year's parties
- Attend a New Year's party
- Hold a New Year's party

- Spend time with only a few friends
- Write in a journal your hopes for the new year
- Go to a movie
- Go to bed early

## Other Ideas

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Used with permission from  
The American Hospice Foundation  
2120 L Street, NW, Suite 200  
Washington, DC 20037  
www.americanhospice.org  
202-223-0204 Phone • 202-223-0208 Fax  
© 2005 American Hospice Foundation.  
All Rights Reserved.

# HOLIDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES



Amy

"You go through all those same feelings again—the ones you went through when your sibling first went missing."

those same feelings again—the ones you went through when your sibling first went missing."



Robin

"Anniversaries of the abduction are still tough. We all experience elevated levels of stress when late July rolls around."

tion are still tough. We all experience elevated levels of stress when late July rolls around."



Trevor

"I feel we have an obligation to recognize that day."

to recognize that day."

## ANNIVERSARIES

Hopefully your brother or sister will quickly come home safe and sound. For some families, however, it may take a longer period of time—even years. Like holidays, anniversaries can sneak up on you. On the anniversary of a sibling's abduction, you may find yourself reliving the same feelings you had when your brother or sister was taken. It's natural to experience very strong emotions as the anniversary date approaches. You may dream about your sibling or have trouble sleeping. You may find that you and your parents are struggling to keep your emotions under control.

Because anniversaries can be difficult or emotional occasions, talk with your family about what you want to do on that particular day. You and your family may want to be with just your immediate family or to have more family friends and relatives around. You may want to have some sort of ceremony to honor your missing sibling.

### Here are some ways to handle anniversaries:

- Expect that the day is likely to be an emotional one for you and your family. Give yourself permission to feel all of your feelings, and let yourself cry if you need to.

- Anniversaries can be tough, so do what you need to do to take care of yourself. You may need to be on your own or with friends and not talk about your missing sibling.
- You may want to honor your brother or sister by keeping the memory of him or her alive. It can feel affirming to celebrate the memories. Share funny stories about your sibling with family and friends. Bring out old family pictures.
- Invite people to write messages on **biodegradable** helium balloons; then, take the balloons outside and let people share what they have written. You might sing a song or share a poem and then let the balloons go.
- Light a special candle or say a prayer.
- Write your missing brother or sister a letter. Say all the things you wish you could have said before.

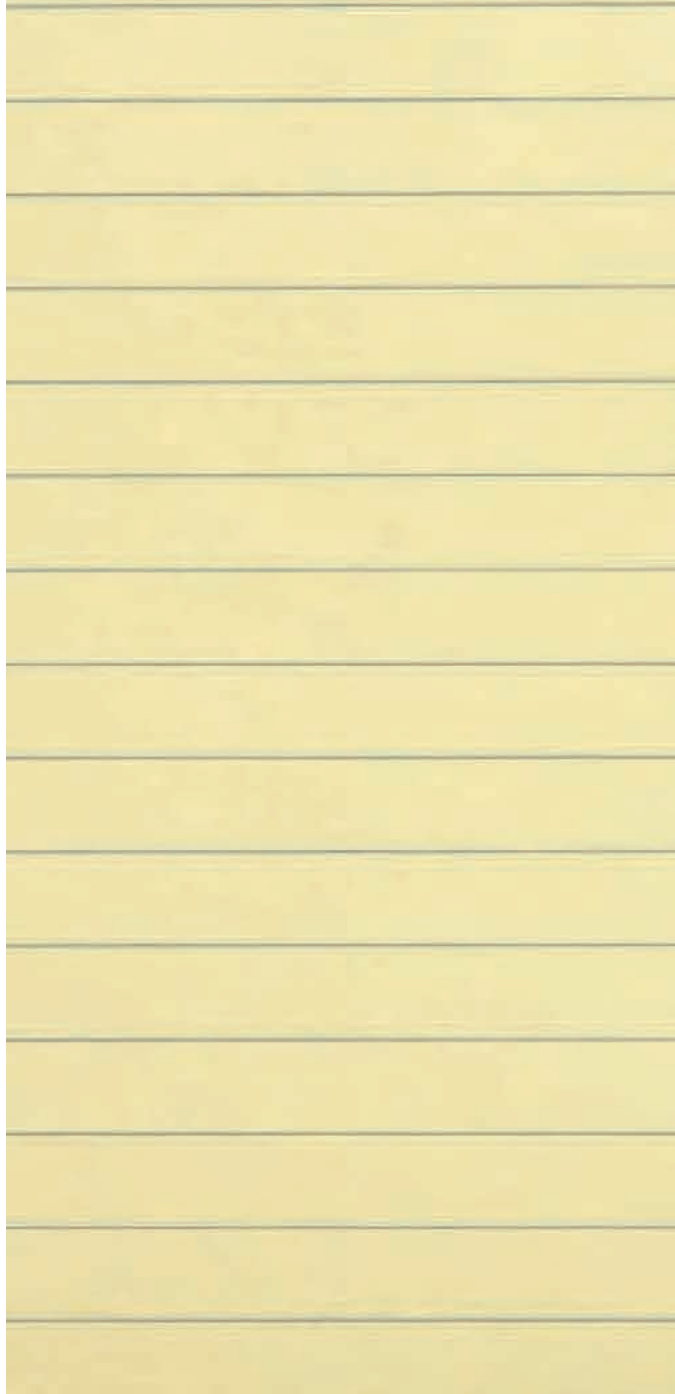


# HOLIDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES

- If you need time alone, pick out a safe place to go in your home. Make sure you let your parents know where you are. Let yourself remember your brother or sister. It may help you to feel close to them.
- Don't be afraid to ask your parents or your siblings for what you need right now—a shoulder to cry on, a hug, someone to hold your hand.
- Spend some time with your family pet. Sometimes animals can be a great source of comfort.



*Space for your thoughts.*



# WHEN YOUR BROTHER OR SISTER COMES HOME



Marcus

"Finding the victim is not the

end, recovery is just starting. Relationships can change; be aware things may be different than before. This is normal."



Ericka

"When a sibling is returned, it is

not over. Expect them to act different. Be sensitive to their wants and needs."



Robin

"Don't expect your brother or

sister to talk about everything that happened. Be patient. They will talk about things when they are ready."

Our greatest hope is that your brother or sister comes home safely. That was what we all hoped for. But when you read our messages of hope at the end of the guide, you will see that this was not the outcome for all of us. Sometimes a sibling is gone for a long time, sometimes siblings don't come home, and sometimes they don't come home alive. The hardest part in writing this guide was facing the reality that the outcome may not be what you expected or dreamed of. We aren't saying this to frighten you. We are saying this to be realistic and to let you know that we went through every possibly scenario that you can imagine. We know how hard it is. We know how painful it can be. Take one day at a time. Take one step at a time. Take care of yourself. Use this guide to help you get through each hour and each day. You will get through this no matter how hard it may seem right now.

As we said before, we sincerely hope that you are happily reunited with your brother or sister. This will be a time of joy and celebration for you and for your family. And while everyone will share in the joy, there are some things you may want to think about.

Chances are, you'll have a lot of questions about what happened to your sibling. Your brother or sister may not be ready or able to talk about it. If they don't want to discuss what happened, talk about things in general, everyday stuff like you used to talk about before the abduction. Don't try to pry information out of them. On the other hand, your brother or sister may want to talk all the time. Let them talk at their own pace and in their own time.

It's important to remember that kids who have been abducted have gone through a terrible ordeal. They may seem different than before. Some kids who go through this kind of an experience may seem distant and want to be left alone. Or they may pick someone to confide in—it might be another family member or a close friend. If they seem distant and want to spend a lot of time alone, don't take it personally. If they confide in someone besides you, try not to feel left out or insulted. Give them the time and space they need to sort out their feelings.

Try to pay attention to what your brother or sister needs from you. It's okay to ask if there's any special way you can help. But it's not a good idea to try to force information out of your sibling. Just as you needed others to respect your feelings throughout the time of the abduction, your brother or sister needs you to respect their feelings now.

You may tend to smother your sister or brother with affection or to feel overly protective. That may not be what your sibling needs right now, or even in the future.

**Just be patient—and let your sibling know you're there to help in any way you can. And remember, the healing process may take some time.**

# WHEN YOUR BROTHER OR SISTER COMES HOME

Here is some space for you to write about your thoughts.

**The media may gather around your family all over again. Remember some points from the section on the media:**

- Talk with your parents and your sibling about what is best for the family.
- You don't have to do interviews if you don't want to.
- Take care of yourself and each other. This can be a very vulnerable time for all of you.

Most importantly, you may find that your sibling's return stirs up a lot of feelings in you again. Ask for help if you need it. Ask your parents, a trusted adult, even a trusted law enforcement officer, if you think that you or your sibling needs help through the process.



# A NEW NORMAL

## Heather

---

"I was lucky though. I was blessed with a beautiful daughter who reminded me daily that there was something bigger, that I had to go on. I had to eat, sleep, get up, get dressed, and participate in life."

## Robin

---

"I just wanted life to go back to normal again."

## Amy

---

"After some time had passed, we all needed to begin to return to our 'normal' lives. By the time I was 16, I was driving my brother and sister to basketball and dance. Our lives were as far from normal as I could imagine."

"In this situation, it's normal not to feel 'normal.'" —Martha

**From the moment your brother or sister is abducted, your life—and your family's life—will change. Nothing will ever be exactly the same again. All the things that feel like a part of "normal" everyday life may feel different now.**

"I would try to put it behind me. I just wanted to be a kid again."  
— Trevor

Just sitting at the dinner table may feel different because you're so aware of the empty chair. Going to school may feel different because suddenly your friends aren't sure what to say to you—and you're not sure how to talk to them, either. Your home may be filled with strangers from law enforcement or the media, and you can't even flop down on the sofa because your parents may be doing an interview for the evening news.

Your world has been turned upside down, and you may feel like you're in limbo—unable to relax and just "be" because you're constantly waiting for the next piece of news about your brother or sister or just plain waiting for them to come home. When a sibling has vanished, how can life ever feel **normal** again?

It can't. Not completely. But over time, whether it's from day to day, or from month to month, your life will take on new rhythms and routines. You may grow more accustomed to the changes that at first seemed so strange, or frightening, or upsetting. What feels

normal now may be different from what seemed normal before. And it can begin to feel more familiar. Things can begin to feel more okay.

"I didn't go back to school right away, but I never missed a dance class. Dance was fun." — Carmen

There are things you can do to help yourself find a comfort zone amidst all the chaos. Doing positive things can help you to restore some balance in your life and regain a sense of normalcy from day to day.

### Here are some things to try:

- Take on some kind of physical activity, whether it's running, swimming, joining a sports team, lifting weights, or dancing.
- Lose yourself in mental activity. You can concentrate on school work, but you can also read, do crossword puzzles or sudoku, or take up meditation.

# A NEW NORMAL

- Express yourself through art. Draw, paint, work with clay, knit, do beadwork, design clothes or jewelry, listen to music, play a musical instrument, experiment with cooking or baking.
- Write. You can keep a journal, write short stories, a novel, or poetry.
- Talk. What matters is that you find someone to talk to who you trust, whether it's an adult or a friend your age. Find someone who is not judgmental, someone you're comfortable with: a friend, relative, counselor, godparent, or member of the clergy.
- Volunteer. Volunteer for a cause that has personal meaning for you, whether it's a missing children's organization, an animal rights group, or a tutoring program.
- Take care of an animal. Pets can love you unconditionally, make wonderful companions, and give you someone to hug. If your parents say this isn't the

time to bring home an animal, see if you can walk the neighbor's dog or volunteer at an animal shelter.

Even if life doesn't feel the same again, it's important to live your life the way you should at your age. Try not to retreat from life or to put everything "on hold" until your sibling returns. Hold tight to friends and the things that make you feel good. Remember that whatever feelings you have are okay, so let yourself laugh, cry, or be angry.

Routines can give your life some much needed structure, so use school, sports, clubs, and other activities to give your days routine and a sense of familiarity and meaning. Try to stay positive, even if life feels very unfair.

It's all too easy to get caught up in negative routines and activities. There are a number of things you should avoid, things that will only prolong many of the difficulties you're facing right now or make them worse.

## **At all costs, avoid:**

- Drugs. Stay away from tobacco, alcohol, legal and illegal drugs. They're addictive and physically harmful. And they make your "lows" even lower.





## Robin

---

"Despite the horrors and negativity associated with her kid-napping our family has become closer than ever before. Even though it didn't seem like it at the time, life did go on, and so far, we have made the most out of it."

## Amy

---

"As time went on, we gradually attempted to redefine ourselves both as individuals and as a family. Each of us has done this at different times and in different ways. It is a continuous process that has continued to be a daily struggle."

## Heather

---

"Still trying to live like everything's okay. I'm okay. Everything is going to be okay."

- Inappropriate relationships, ones that are controlling and unsupportive, ones that make you dependent and unable to help yourself heal.
- Withdrawing from friends, family, and support systems. It's okay to need some time alone, but don't isolate yourself for long periods of time.
- Obsessively following other cases of child abduction.
- Closing up inside and not feeling your feelings.
- Expecting someone else to make everything alright. Things will eventually feel better, but it may take time.
- Blaming yourself. Stay away from statements that begin with "I should've or I could've." You are in no way responsible for your sibling's abduction.
- Taking care of everyone but yourself.

"There will always be a 'before' what happened and an 'after.'" – Carmen

## LIFE GOES ON

Once the abduction of a brother or sister has happened, there's no going back to things exactly the way they were before. So much of your day-to-day life may be difficult, painful, and frightening. You wonder what will be the outcome. Will your brother or sister come home safe and sound? Will your brother or sister ever be found? Will you know how the story ends?

As the brothers and sisters who authored this book, we will tell you that the story hasn't ended yet. The fact is, we continue to be affected by whatever happened to our siblings years ago. We continue to cope with thoughts and feelings that were awakened during that time.

Hard as it may be to believe, we will also tell you that the experience has actually had some positive affects on our lives. We may have been forced to grow up faster, but we have also grown up stronger. We have become more sensitive and empathetic to other peoples' problems. We have learned that life does go on, that it still holds much that is good and satisfying, and that we can and should dare to hope that things will get better, still.



# MESSAGES OF HOPE

**When we were writing this guide, we thought it might help you to know that no matter what happens, your life will go on. Things do get better. One way or another, you'll be able to move forward. Here are our stories.**

## **A Message from Amy, Trevor, and Carmen**

When our brother, Jacob (age 11) was abducted 17 years ago, Amy was 13, Trevor was 10, and Carmen was 8. None of us had any resources to help us through such a horrible time.

In some ways, we were lucky. We had a wonderful network of relatives and family friends who surrounded us with love and support. But we didn't have any way of knowing if what we were feeling and experiencing was "normal." It would have been good to have that reassurance.

Jacob's abduction affected our entire family and community. As his siblings, however, we feel that we experienced things on a deeper level than those around us. As Jacob's siblings, we were in a unique situation—one that very few others could relate to.

The experience of creating this guide enabled us to meet some of those few others. We shared our experiences with them and were surprised that even though we all had different situations and circumstances, we were more alike than different. It was a relief—even after all this time—to relate to other people who had been through similar experiences.

That is our hope for you. We hope that this guide will help comfort you as you are experiencing probably the worst thing that has ever happened to you. We hope that by reading about our experiences, you are reassured that what you are thinking and feeling is okay. We hope that, as difficult as it may seem now, you realize that you will make it through.

We were never sure that we would be normal again. But here's what happened to each of us:

Carmen is now 25 years old. She graduated from the University of Wisconsin at Madison with a degree in human development and family studies. She married an Englishman and they now live in Minnesota, where Carmen works as an Independent Living Service Worker. She and her husband, Kristian, just welcomed the newest member to their family: a black lab/german shepherd puppy named Bean.

Trevor is now 27 years old and has finished his degree in human development and family studies at Colorado State University. He continues to live in Colorado with his girlfriend, Trish. He works for RE/MAX Professionals, Inc. as a real estate agent.

Amy is now 31 years old. She graduated from the University of Minnesota with a degree in psychology.



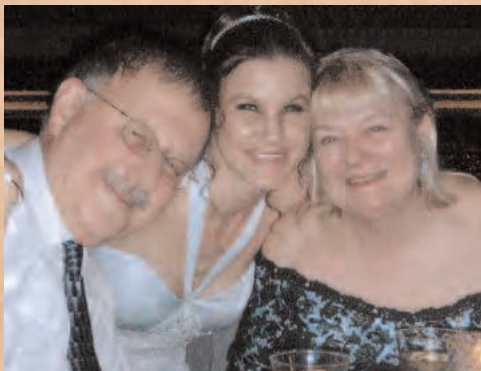
**The kids in 1989. Back, left to right: Jacob and Amy. Front, left to right: Trevor and Carmen.**



**The family in 2006. Front, far left, Carmen; center, Trevor; far right, Amy.**



Martha, her parents, and Jimmy in 1995.



Martha and her parents at her wedding in 2007.

She went to graduate school and obtained her license to teach special education and is working on finishing her master's degree. She is in her fourth year of teaching high school students with moderate to severe developmental and cognitive disabilities. Amy lives in Minnesota with her husband, Chris. They have two young daughters and two Italian greyhounds.

We want you to know that it is possible to lead a normal life after all you have been through. Our brother has been gone for more than 17 years. Although that may seem like an eternity, and we certainly hope your experience does not last as long as ours has, we want you to know that we turned out okay. We want you to believe that you will be okay, too.

Our thoughts are with you.

---

### A Message from Martha

I do not know exactly how you feel, but just like you, my brother was kidnapped. Hard as it may be to believe right now, I want you to know you are going to be okay. My hope is that this guide will help you navigate your way through this extremely difficult time. My hope is that through our words in this guide, we are reaching out to you and can help you through your pain. You are not alone.

I was 16 when my 9-year-old brother Jimmy was kidnapped. Our family went through a dizzying rollercoaster ride of emotions with the media, law

enforcement, family, friends, and the community all helping us to search for him. After 3 months, we learned that Jimmy was kidnapped and killed.

At that time, there were no resources available to help me through the search for my brother and the aftermath of what happened. Helping write this guide and connecting with other siblings who have gone through the same things helped me tremendously. I felt normal and as if an enormous weight had been lifted off of me. I learned that even though our stories are different, we share many of the same feelings and thoughts.

Know that how you feel and what you are thinking are not wrong in any way. You will work through your thoughts and feelings and come out okay on the other side. I did.

I am now 27 years old. I have bachelor's degrees in English and telecommunications from the University of Florida. After graduating college, I moved to Atlanta, Georgia, and I am getting married in June 2007.

I will always remember my brother Jimmy, and one way that I honor him is to not take my life or the people that I have in my life for granted. I am very thankful for each day that I have.

My thoughts are with you during this difficult time.



# MESSAGES OF HOPE

## A Message from Heather and John

If we had this guide when our sister was abducted, I'm not sure that we would have been able to read it right away. But, as the journey continued and we faced events that we could have never imagined, I think it would have been comforting to read the words from other siblings who have had to cope with such a loss. We don't think that there are any answers, just words that may relieve your anxieties, fears, and fury. We would have used this guide to get some idea of how to handle certain situations and perhaps avoid others. When our sister Molly was abducted and murdered, we felt disbelief that such things could happen and had happened. If we had a guide like this, we may not have felt so alone and freakish.

We hope that this guide helps reassure you that the feelings you are undergoing have been felt by all of us at one time or another. We would like you to keep this guide and open it when the time feels right. There may be some parts that you read now and some parts that you save for later.

Today, we continue to wonder what happened to our sister on June 27, 2000. It has been almost 7 years, but we still meet with police every 3 months or so. Our hearts rise and fall with new information regarding Molly's murderer.

Life expects you to keep going, though, and we have. John is a successful builder and just completed refinishing his first house. He is surrounded by supportive

friends who have stayed by his side, cheering him, distracting him, and helping him remember that life goes on. An athlete in high school and college, John continues his athletic regimen on a daily basis and makes it an important part of his life.

Heather completed her master's degree in special education and is in her sixth year teaching fifth and sixth grade students. She has a beautiful and amazing 7 year-old daughter, and a family that, although fractured, is surviving together. She works with her parents for the Molly Bish Foundation, educating the community about the risks of abduction. Every week, the entire family gets together for dinner on what they call "fragile Fridays" where they spend time together despite their busy schedules.

We are lucky to be able to offer our words, thoughts, and feelings about the most devastating experience in our lives in the hope that they will envelope you and sustain you.



Heather with her parents, John and Molly in 2000.



Mom, Dad, John, Heather and Mikaela in 2001.



# MESSAGES OF HOPE



The kids in 1988. Back, left to right: Robin and Ericka. Front, left to right: Tamara and Marcus.



Ericka, Robin, Mom, Marcus, and Tamara in 2003.

## A Message from Ericka, Marcus, and Robin

You haven't met us, but, hopefully you have read some of our words, and they seem familiar to you. We want you to know that you are not alone. When we lived through our sister's abduction, it seemed that we were the only persons feeling the way we did. But by helping to put this guide together, we learned that we were not alone. Other people have gone through very similar situations, and it helps to know that.

We know that your situation might be different from ours, but we all have the same feelings. What you feel is valid and important; please don't let anyone tell you otherwise. You are your own individual and deserve to live your life because life does not stop when something terrible happens, no matter how badly it feels. We are still successful in the career paths we were on before the abduction.

Yes, the experience changed us. We value our family and friends more because we no longer take them for granted. But we are still living and trying to be the best "us" that we can. Remember these things: take care of yourself, find someone you can talk to. And remember you are not alone.

Let us tell you a little bit about ourselves.

Robin was 20 years old when Tamara was abducted. She attended West Point and graduated in May 2004. Although she did not serve as an officer in the Army due to an honorable medical discharge after graduation, she was accepted to a graduate program at

Vanderbilt University in July 2004 and is in her third year working toward a doctorate in biological sciences. She and her husband Alan have two cats—AJ and Brad. She hopes to become a professor in the Chemistry-Life Science Department at West Point.

Marcus was 18 years old when Tamara was abducted. Despite the difficulties associated with the abduction of his sister, he secured an appointment to West Point Military Academy, where he quickly distinguished himself as one of the top cadets in his class. He won the first ever national championship in crew for the Military Academy in 2005. He will graduate on May 26, 2007, with a degree in economics and will serve as an Army aviation officer. He will be in flight school for the next 1 1/2 years before reaching his first unit. He plans to continue his education while concurrently serving in the Army and leading soldiers.

Ericka was 24 years old when Tamara was abducted. At that time she was a first lieutenant in the Army stationed in Seoul, South Korea. About 3 weeks after Tamara was rescued, Ericka went back to Korea to finish up her tour there. Since then, Ericka was promoted to captain, commanded a company, was deployed with that company to Iraq, and brought them back and moved to Fort Gordon, Georgia, where she currently instructs junior officers on leadership and radio/telecommunications. Ericka has two cats—Gusgus and Cinder. She hopes in the future to obtain her master's degree.

# WORDS YOU MAY NOT KNOW

You may hear some strange or unfamiliar words in connection with your sibling's abduction. Don't be afraid to ask a trusted adult or older sibling what these words mean. Look them up in the dictionary. Talk to someone if you're still not clear. Here are some of the words you may not know the exact meaning of:

**abduction** – to carry a person off by force; to kidnap; to lure away.

**abnormal** – unusual or unexpected, something that is not normal.

**accustomed** – something that is familiar, something that you are used to.

**biodegradable** – environmentally friendly, recyclable.

**capitalize** – to benefit from or to get the most out of.

**confidential** – something that is secret or private.

**conflicting** – something that is contradictory or at odds; disagreeing with.

**depression** – the state of being sad; people suffering from depression may feel sad, have no energy, and feel as if they have no value.

**designated liaison** – someone your family chooses to be the spokesperson when talking to the media.

**eliminate** – to get rid of, to remove.

**empathetic** – to be sympathetic, concerned, compassionate, or understanding,

**evidence** – proof of something, confirmation of facts, to verify.

**exploited** – used unfairly; taken advantage of.

**inappropriate** – not suitable or fitting; an incorrect action.

**invasive** – tending to intrude, as in invading privacy.

**journal** – a diary you keep to write down your thoughts, feelings, and what happened that day.

**kidnap** – to steal or carry off by force.

**law enforcement** – the people who make sure the law gets followed; for example, the police, detectives, sheriffs, and the FBI.

**media** – a form of communication, information or entertainment; for example, newspaper, radio, television.

**normal (or normalcy)** – regular or usual.

**obsessively** – to be overly preoccupied, something you can't stop thinking about or doing.

**perpetrator** – the person who commits the abduction, the person who is guilty.

**polygraph** – a lie detection instrument; it is used by law enforcement to see if someone is telling the truth.

**sibling** – a brother or sister.

**suspect** – a person the police think may have committed the crime.

**tap (as in phone)** – a device used to listen to or record a phone conversation.

**thrive** – to flourish, succeed, blossom.

**vulnerable** – exposed or open to being easily hurt; you can be physically vulnerable or emotionally vulnerable.

Names, addresses, and phone numbers you want to keep.

**Who do you go to when you need someone to listen? In the past, you may have turned to your parents or brothers and sisters for support. They may not be able to help you right now, though, because—like you—they are trying to cope with the loss of your sibling. It's not that they are ignoring you or that they don't care. It's simply that they are coping in the best way they know how, and they may not have the energy right now to be good listeners.**

If that's the case, there are other people you can turn to for help and support. The people who may help the most are those who listen without giving advice, those who genuinely want to hear what you're going through, and those who do not make judgments about you or your family. They may not know exactly what you're going through—how could they?—but they care enough to listen to your thoughts and feelings. You trust them.

**Your parents are the first people to turn to, but if they can't listen, it's also a good idea to talk to:**

- Close friends.
- Someone facing similar circumstances.
- A trusted adult: a lifelong babysitter or family friend.
- A member of the clergy.
- A close relative.
- A school counselor, teacher, or coach who you know and trust.

The following resources provide information and support for families of missing children. Most of these resources target parents as their initial audience. You may want to share the following list with your parents or other concerned adults.

- The U.S. Department of Justice manages the AMBER Alert program, an early warning system to help find abducted children. To access the AMBER Alert Web site, visit [www.amberalert.gov](http://www.amberalert.gov).
- The National Center for Missing & Exploited Children (NCMEC) was established in 1984 to help prevent child abduction and sexual exploitation; find missing children; and assist victims of child abduction and sexual exploitation, their families, and professionals. To access their resources, call NCMEC at 800-THE-LOST (800-843-5678) or visit their Web site at [www.missingkids.com](http://www.missingkids.com).
- Every state, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and Canada has a Missing Children Clearinghouse that provides support and assistance to families of missing children. You can find a listing of every state clearinghouse on the NCMEC Web site at



# WHERE TO FIND MORE HELP

**www.missingkids.org.** On the left side of the page, click on the tab for resources for parents and guardians.

- The Association of Missing and Exploited Children's Organizations is a membership organization of nonprofit local agencies in the U.S. and Canada that provides services to missing children's families. This includes help with poster and flyer development and dissemination, advocacy, aid to local law enforcement, and resource referrals. Visit their Web site at **www.amecoinc.org** or call 877-263-2620.
- Team H.O.P.E. (Help Offering Parents Empowerment) is a parent mentoring and support program for families of missing children. Made up of parent volunteers, Team H.O.P.E. provides mentoring services, counseling, and emotional support for both parents and other family members. Volunteers can be reached at 866-305-HOPE (4673).
- Take Root provides support and assistance to children abducted by a family member. Take Root can be reached at 800-ROOT-ORG or by visiting their Web site at **www.takeroot.org**.
- The National Criminal Justice Reference Service (NCJRS) is a federally funded resource offering information to the public and juvenile justice practitioners. NCJRS is sponsored by a partnership of Federal agencies from the Department of Justice and the Executive Office of the President. It hosts one of the largest criminal and juvenile justice libraries and databases in the world. To access information from NCJRS, or to order or download copies of this guide, visit their Web site at **www.ncjrs.org**.

*Names, addresses, and phone numbers you want to keep.*

## **A message to parents or older siblings**

As the brothers and sisters who helped to put together this guide, we felt strongly that it needed to give all children, regardless of their age, the support they need at this difficult time. We developed this section of the guide as a way for kids to actively express themselves. These activities can be used by children who are too young to read or understand our words, children who choose not to read the guide right now, or children who want to engage in some other type of activity.

When a brother or sister is abducted, younger children face many of the same mixed-up feelings and worries that older children do, even if they can't put them into words. Having some activities relating to the experience can help younger kids deal with their feelings. This activities section is divided into three parts – one for very young children, one for children who are learning to read and write, and one for older kids and teenagers.

To ensure that the activities are appropriate for children dealing with grief and loss, the American Hospice Foundation graciously allowed us to use many of their materials and activities. Directions are provided for the activities for younger children. The activity sheets can be torn out of the guide and stapled together so younger kids have ownership and a “book” of their own. The three levels allow children and parents to choose activities that are age appropriate. Answers to puzzles are found on the last page of this section.

Please remember that we have selected activities that would have been helpful to us and our younger siblings at the time our brother or sister was abducted. Ultimately, parents need to decide what would be most helpful and appropriate for their children. Clearly, these suggestions and activities can not take the place of professional help that children may need at a time like this.

These activities include material that is adapted from numerous publications and is used with permission from the American Hospice Foundation.

All rights are reserved. Additional information is available from the American Hospice Foundation's Website at [www.americanhospice.org](http://www.americanhospice.org).

Color this door knob sign, cut it out, and hang it on  
Your Personal Space.

Level 1







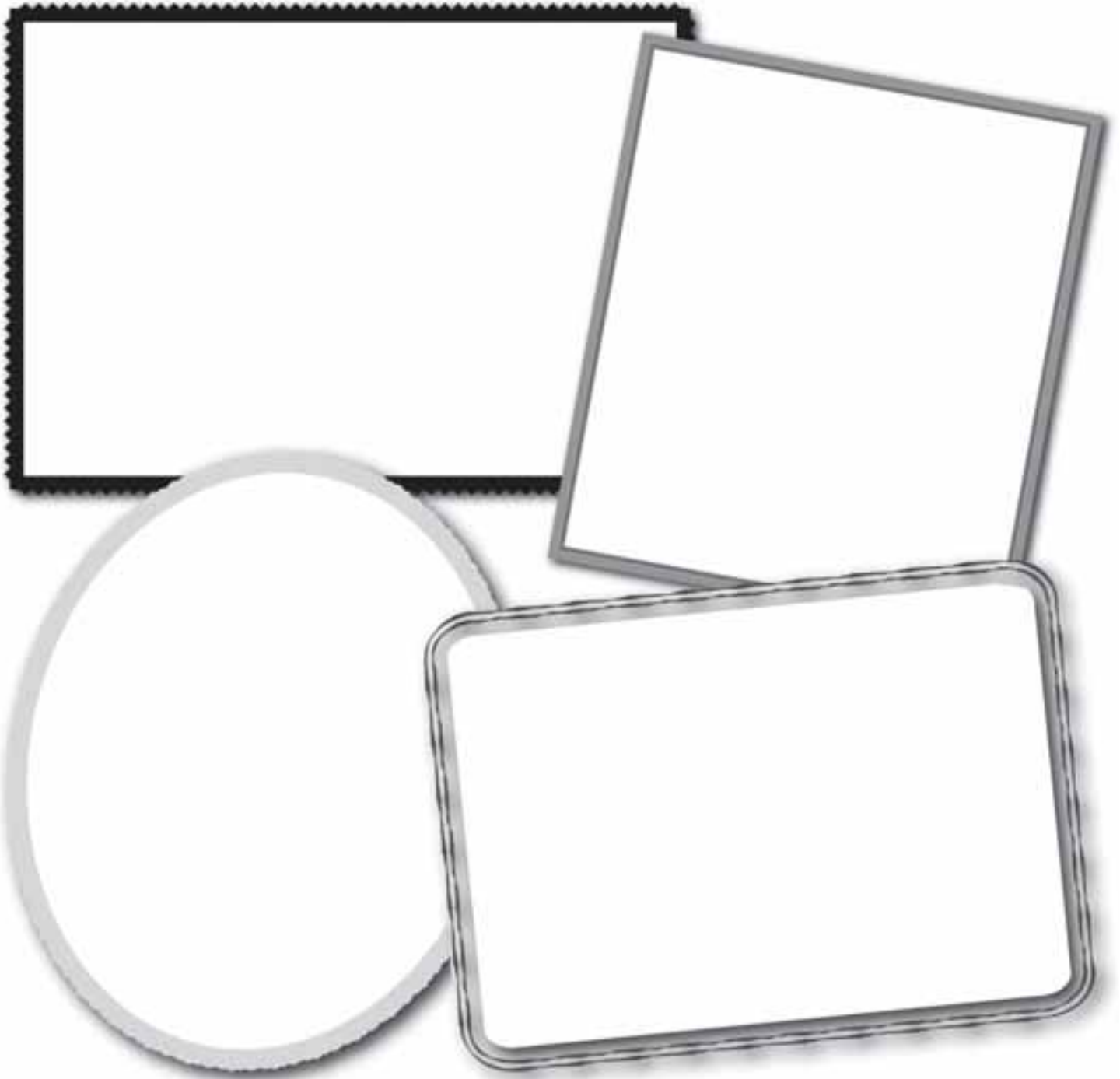
**Create a collage that reminds you of your brother or sister.  
Try using pictures and words from magazines.**

**Level 1**



Adapted from "Remembering You: A Book of Memories for the Teenager Who Has Had a Loved One Die", pg 9, Copyright 2003.

Find and glue some pictures of you with your brother or sister.





**Write a letter to your brother or sister.**  
You can ask someone to write it for you.

**Level 1**



# What worries you or scares you the most?



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

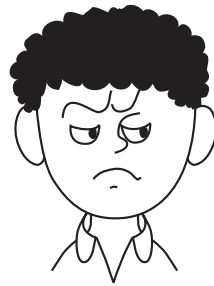


# How I feel about things.

Circle pictures or draw your own.



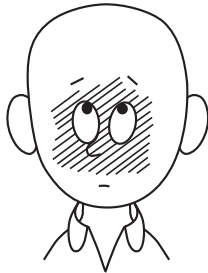
shocked



mad



bored



embarrassed



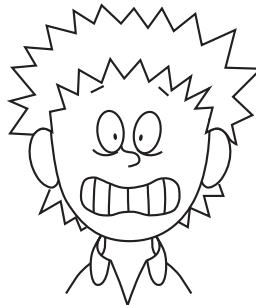
excited



happy



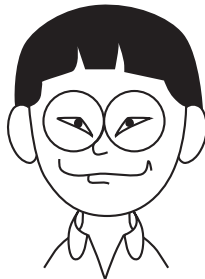
hurt



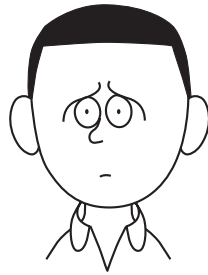
scared



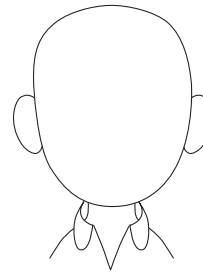
sad



responsible

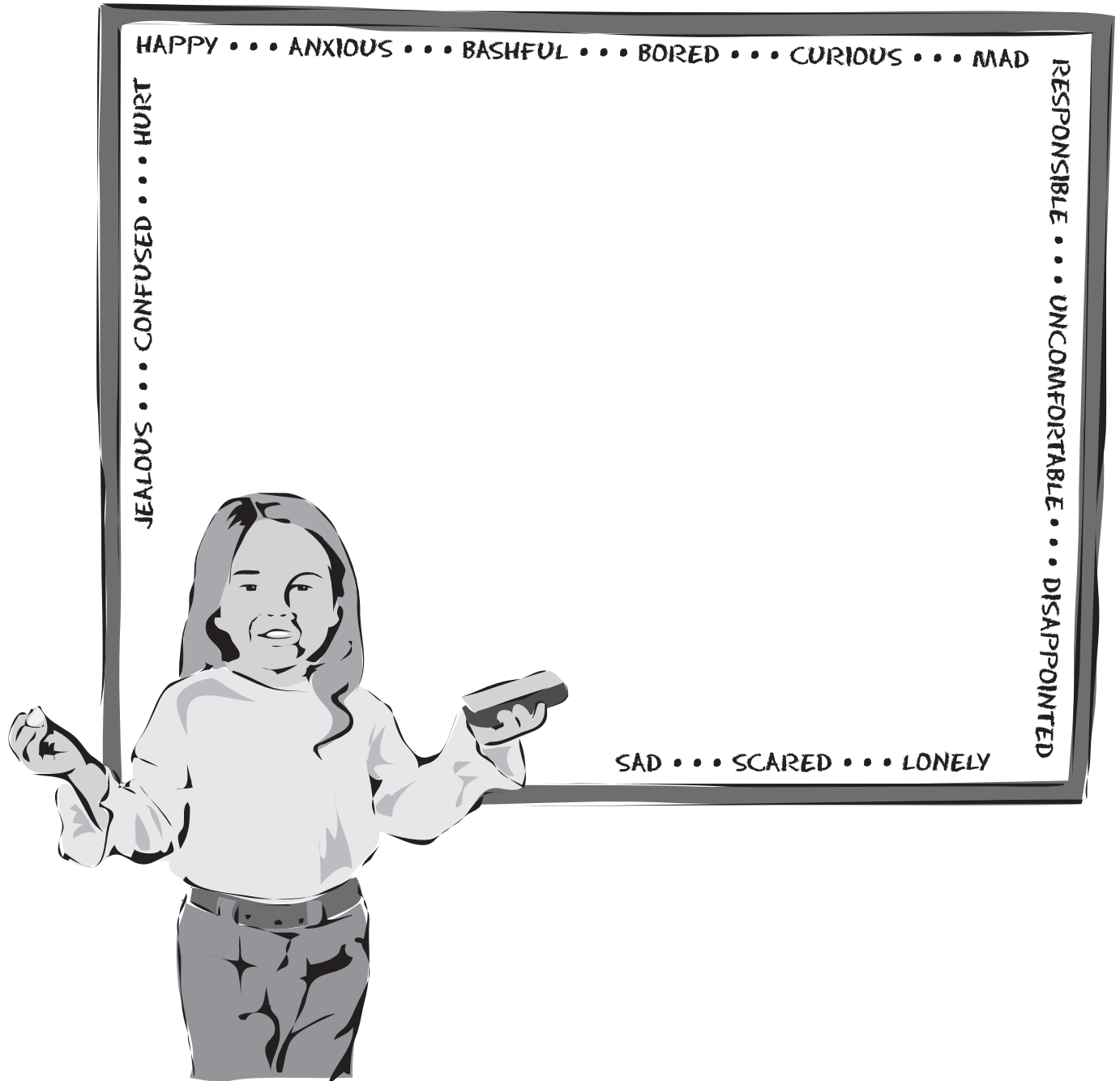


worried

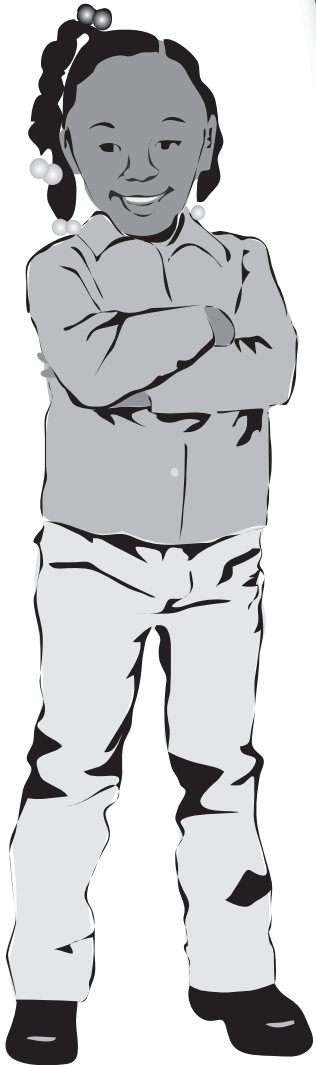




Draw a picture of how you feel.



There are a few things I want to tell you.  
Here is a letter to my brother or sister.

A large, tilted sheet of white paper with horizontal lines, intended for writing a letter. The paper is positioned to the right of the girl and is slightly offset from the top and right edges of the page.

# Here are some questions I would like to ask.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_
7. \_\_\_\_\_
8. \_\_\_\_\_

I worry most about:

---

---



What helps me the most is:

---

---



# Things to do instead of hurting.

Rip up old newspapers or magazines and throw them around.

Throw a Nerf ball against the wall.

**Make a "MAD" face in the mirror.**

*Write an angry letter and tear it up into little pieces.*

*Make balls of the torn paper and throw them into a trash can and see how many "baskets" you can make.*

*Find someone to talk to.*

**Kick pillows piled up against the wall.**

**Draw a picture of what or who is making you mad and stomp on it.**



Pop plastic packing material "bubbles."

*Stomp around or walk briskly until you feel better.*

**Blow into a paper bag and pop it.**

Punch a beanbag chair, mattress, or a pillowcase filled with old clothes or paper.

**Yell a karate yell and beat on a Nerf ball.**



**Count to 10 loudly .....and slowly.**

*1 ... 2 ... 3 ... 4 ... 5 ... 6 ... 7 ... 8 ... 9 ... 10*

**Take a shower. (It can be a paper shower.)**

*Make a list of everything that makes you mad, and rank them according to how mad they make you, starting with those that make you the maddest.*

**Shout your anger into a tape recorder, play it back, and hear your angry voice.**

**Pull weeds vigorously.**

*Do an angry dance.*

**Work a wad of clay until it is softened and you feel better.**



*Take a bucket of water and a big brush, and "paint" the trees.*



**This is what scares me the most:**

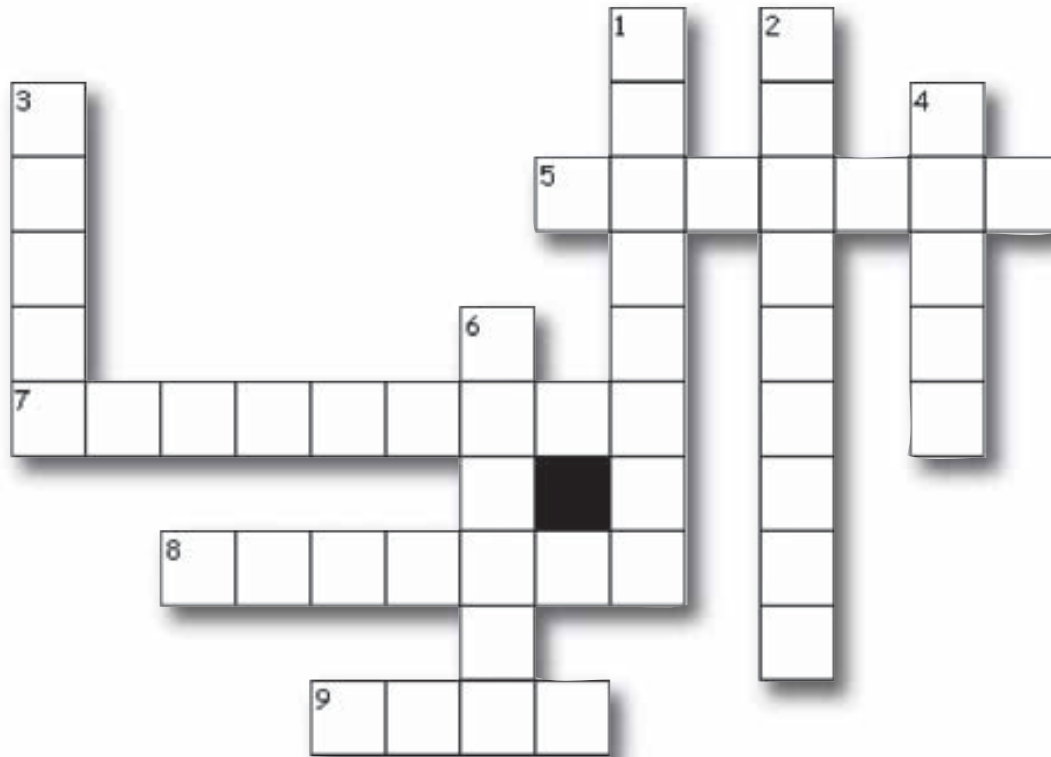
*(You have a choice to write or draw.)*

**Sometimes I get mad, and this is what makes me maddest:**

*(You have a choice to write or draw.)*

# Crossword Puzzle 1

Level II



## Word Bank

*Note: One word  
will not be used*

**media**  
**polygraph**  
**sibling**  
**criminal**  
**abduction**  
**court**  
**journal**  
**hope**  
**angry**  
**kidnap**

### Across

5. a brother or sister
7. to carry a person off by force; to kidnap; to lure away
8. a diary you keep to write down your thoughts, feelings, and what happened that day
9. to have faith

### Down

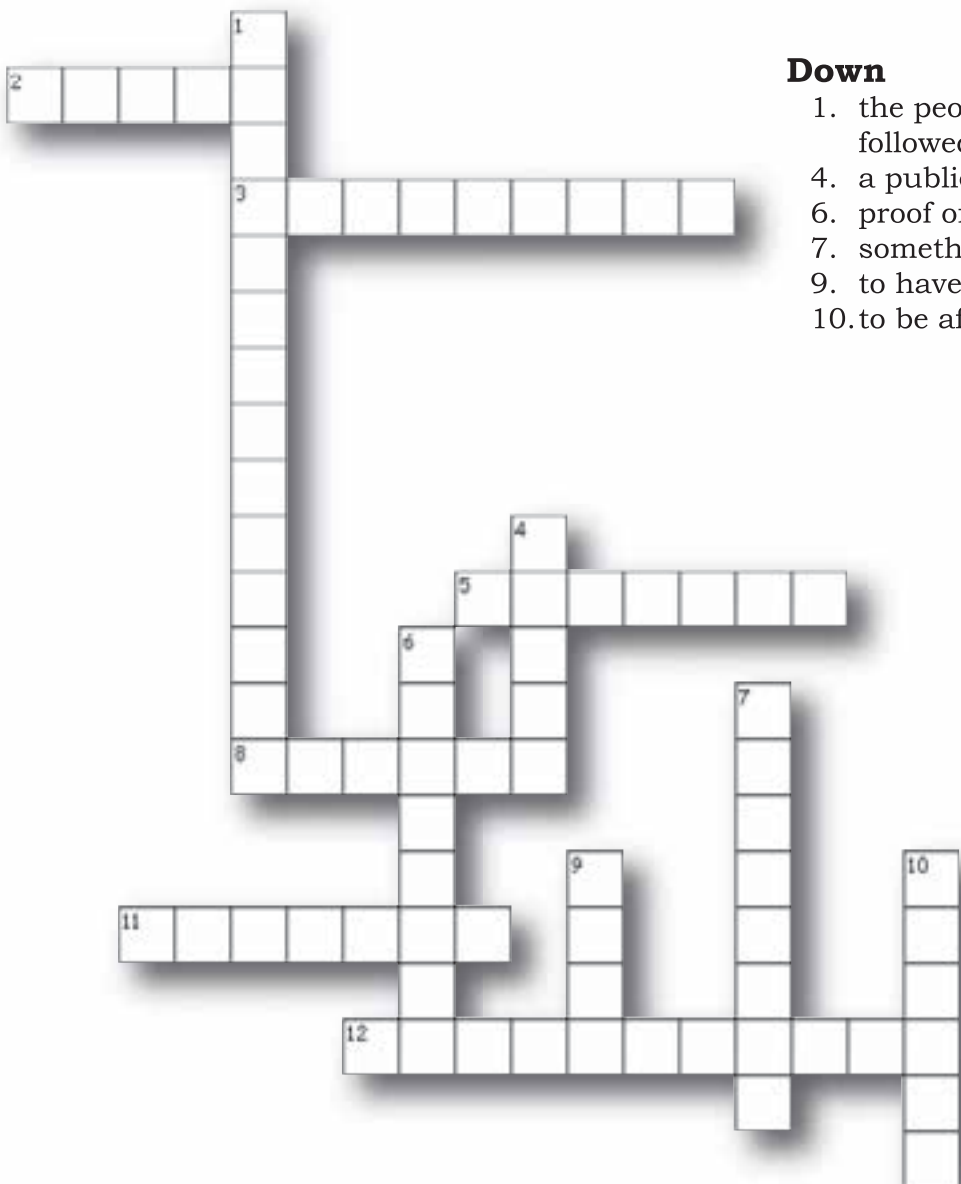
1. an offender; lawbreaker; villain
2. used by law enforcement to see if someone is telling the truth
3. a form of communication, information, or entertainment; for example, newspaper, radio, TV
4. to feel mad
6. to steal or carry off by force



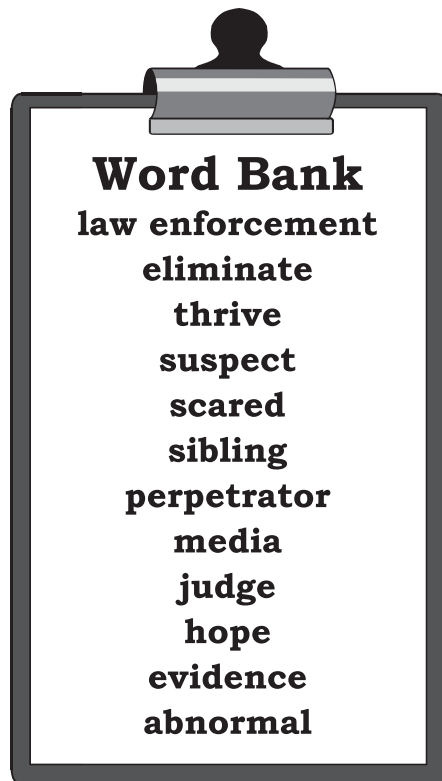
## Crossword Puzzle 2

**Across**

2. a form of communication; for example, newspaper, radio, TV
3. to get rid of; to remove
5. a person the police **think** may have committed the crime
8. to flourish, succeed, blossom
11. a brother or sister
12. the person who commits the abduction; the person who is guilty

**Down**

1. the people who make sure the law gets followed; for example, the police
4. a public official in a court of law
6. proof of something
7. something that is not normal
9. to have faith
10. to be afraid, frightened

**Word Bank**

law enforcement  
 eliminate  
 thrive  
 suspect  
 scared  
 sibling  
 perpetrator  
 media  
 judge  
 hope  
 evidence  
 abnormal

# My Favorites Are:

Color \_\_\_\_\_

Article of clothing \_\_\_\_\_

Food \_\_\_\_\_

Person or relative \_\_\_\_\_

Game \_\_\_\_\_

Animal \_\_\_\_\_

TV show \_\_\_\_\_

Vacation \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher \_\_\_\_\_

Book \_\_\_\_\_

Holiday \_\_\_\_\_

Time of day \_\_\_\_\_

Music group \_\_\_\_\_

What I like most about my life \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

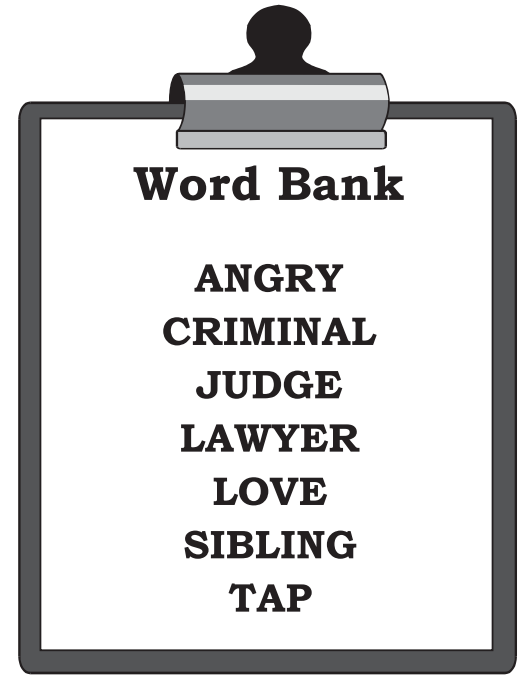
\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



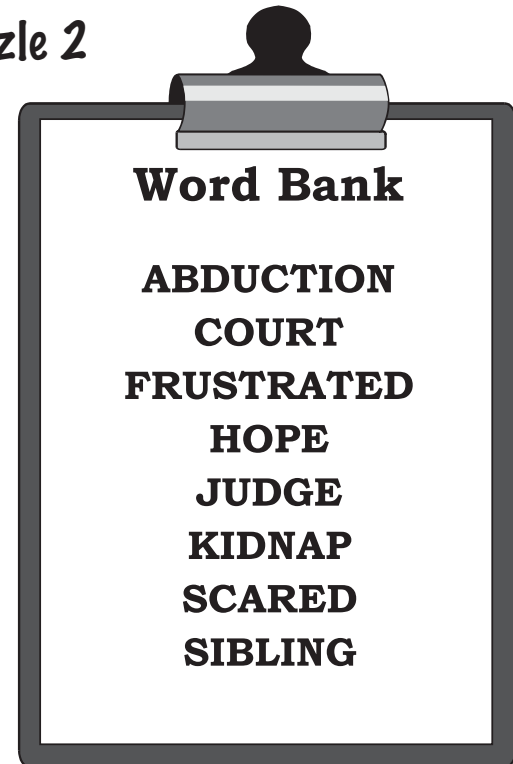
### Wordsearch Puzzle 1

O L S I S O V T  
C R I M I N A L  
Y R G N A P J R  
D X H M S A S E  
W E N P J T Q Y  
S I B L I N G W  
L O V E R U E A  
K C E G D U J L



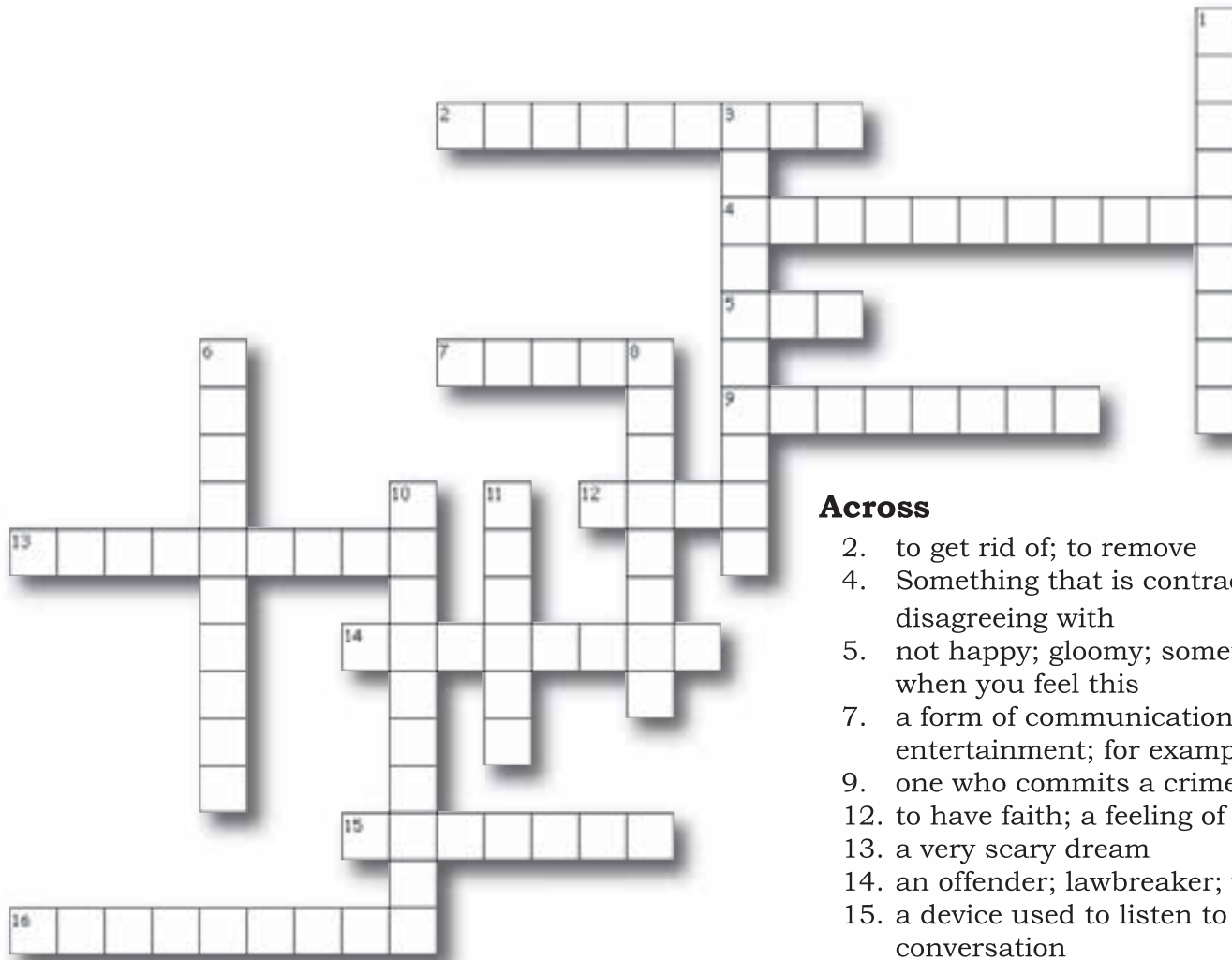
### Wordsearch Puzzle 2

U L P S A S E Z B D  
J G Y Y B S O F E L  
N N E G D U J T L Y  
Q M W D U S A D K B  
E H B X C R I Y I N  
P O T A T E U U D P  
I P R S I B L I N G  
J E U I O I C C A D  
D R O A N W N A P I  
F M C P G K B P M L





# Crossword Puzzle 3



Word Bank	
wiretap	hope
polygraph	eliminate
sad	criminal
offender	depression
media	conflicting
nightmare	abduction
normal	abnormal
frustrated	accustomed

## Across

2. to get rid of; to remove
4. Something that is contradictory or at odds; disagreeing with
5. not happy; gloomy; sometimes you might cry when you feel this
7. a form of communication, information, or entertainment; for example, newspaper, radio, TV
9. one who commits a crime; a criminal
12. to have faith; a feeling of optimism
13. a very scary dream
14. an offender; lawbreaker; villain; perpetrator
15. a device used to listen to or record a phone conversation
16. to carry a person off by force; to kidnap; to lure away

## Down

1. a lie detector instrument; it is used by law enforcement to see if someone is telling the truth
3. something that is familiar; something that you are used to
6. a feeling of not being able to accomplish what you set out to do; to be stumped and possibly aggravated
8. unusual or unexpected; something that is not normal
10. the state of being sad; people suffering from depression may feel sad, have no energy, and feel as if they have no value
11. regular or usual

# Wordsearch Puzzle 3

G B F P Y Y R C N Q S L I L S  
P Q T R U W R I D C L N Q A U  
K S G U K I E E A N A D D I S  
Y N I M M D T R C P W Z J T P  
A P D I L I E O P A I E B N E  
M G N V O D Z R B R R L E E C  
Z A D L W X O D P E E I A D T  
L J P C U P U D O D T M E I J  
Z X U H R C A Z L N A I Y F O  
E S O I T X C K Y E P N S N O  
Q P A I V H P R G F O A A O D  
E T O J Q F T C R F Z T D C O  
E N L A M R O N A O P E W A V  
Z H A D H Y S M P K R U R N I  
Z W F V Y W R E H X F E B C D



**Word Bank**

**ABDUCTION**  
**ANGRY**  
**CONFIDENTIAL**  
**CRIMINAL**  
**ELIMINATE**  
**EXPLOITED**  
**HOPE**  
**INAPPROPRIATE**  
**NORMAL**  
**OFFENDER**  
**POLYGRAPH**  
**SAD**  
**SCARED**  
**SUSPECT**  
**WIRETAP**

# Wordsearch Puzzle 4

E C N A T T O R N E Y T C L R  
X R O L E C N E D I V E A E O  
P I I E A N O R M A L W N M T  
L M T G N I L B I S E P G P A  
O I C D N S T A I N C A R A R  
I N U U E R I N F M K N Y T T  
T A D J N P V O E E U D E H E  
E L B A D A R G E D O I B E P  
D N A B S C X E G I I K I T R  
C W F I E P O H S A P F U I E  
O A V M Z L I A I S O N N C P  
U E E C A P I T A L I Z E O R  
R N E L I M I N A T E O D Q C  
T D E T A R T S U R F Q N A E  
M I J H P A R G Y L O P Q H S

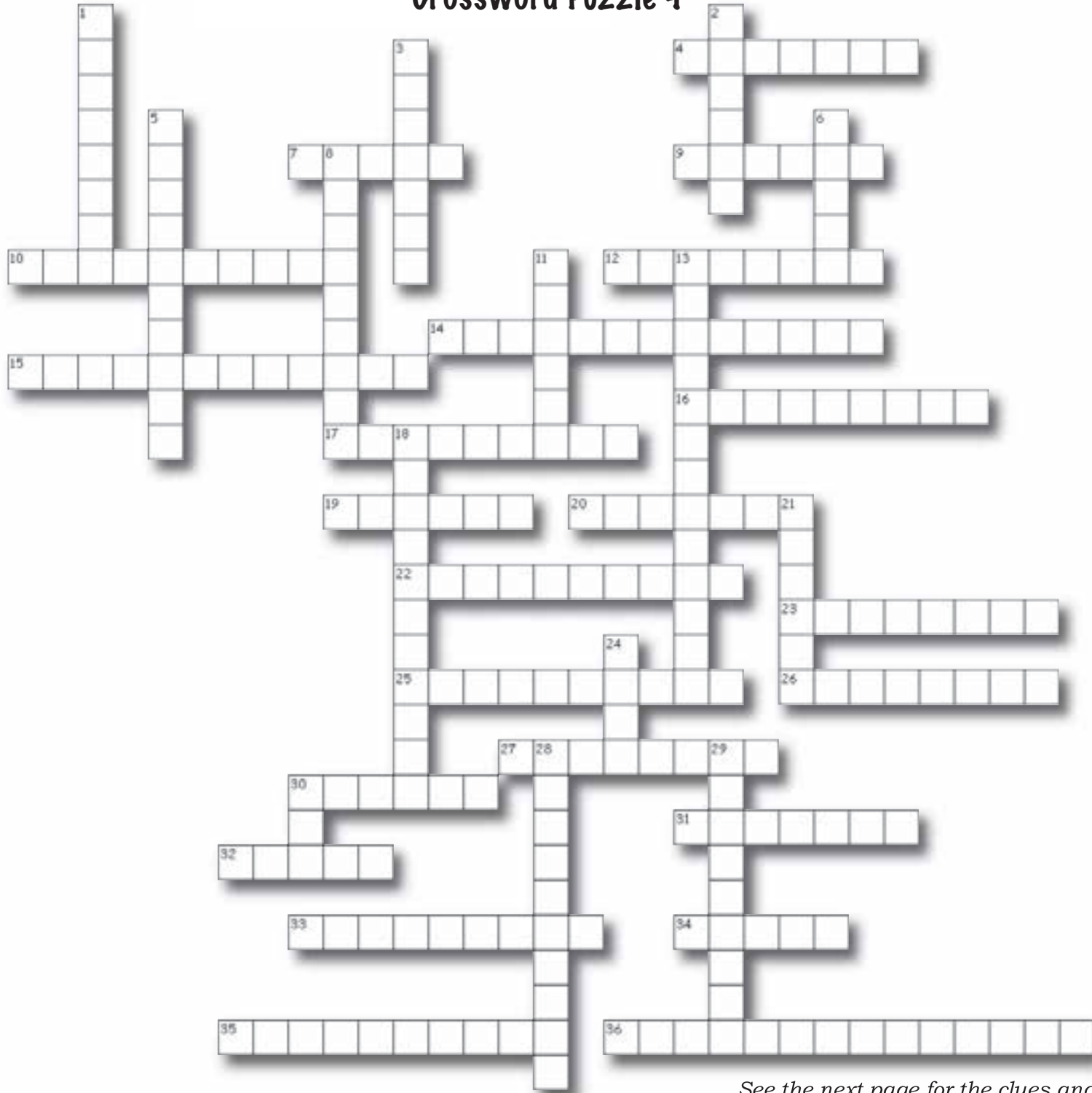


## Word Bank

<b>ABDUCTION</b>	<b>FRUSTRATED</b>
<b>ANGRY</b>	<b>HOPE</b>
<b>ATTORNEY</b>	<b>INVASIVE</b>
<b>BIODEGRADABLE</b>	<b>JUDGE</b>
<b>CAPITALIZE</b>	<b>KIDNAP</b>
<b>CONFIDENTIAL</b>	<b>LAW ENFORCEMENT</b>
<b>COURT</b>	<b>LIAISON</b>
<b>CRIMINAL</b>	<b>MEDIA</b>
<b>DEPRESSION</b>	<b>NORMAL</b>
<b>ELIMINATE</b>	<b>PERPETRATOR</b>
<b>EMPATHETIC</b>	<b>POLYGRAPH</b>
<b>EVIDENCE</b>	<b>SAD</b>
<b>EXPLOITED</b>	<b>SIBLING</b>



# Crossword Puzzle 4



See the next page for the clues and word bank

**Across**

4. someone your family chooses to be the spokesperson when talking to the media or law enforcement
7. a place where a judge or jury decides if people are following the laws
9. an attorney; counselor; a person who studied the law and can provide legal representation
10. exposed or open to being easily hurt, physically or emotionally
12. an offender; lawbreaker; villain; perpetrator
14. environmentally friendly; recyclable
15. something that is secret or private
16. a lie detector instrument used by law enforcement to see if someone is telling the truth
17. used unfairly; took advantage of
19. regular or usual
20. a person the police think may have committed the crime
22. to be sympathetic, concerned, compassionate, or understanding
23. tending to intrude, as in invading privacy
25. something that is familiar; something that you are used to
26. proof of something; confirmation of facts; to verify
27. one who commits a crime; a criminal
30. to be afraid, frightened
31. a brother or sister
32. a public official who decides cases brought before a court of law
33. a very scary dream

34. to feel mad, annoyed, irate
35. to benefit from or to get the most out of
36. the people who make sure the law gets followed; for example, the police, detectives, sheriffs, and the FBI

**Down**

1. unusual or unexpected; something that is not normal
2. to steal or carry off by force
3. a diary you keep to write down your thoughts, feelings, and what happened that day
5. the state of being sad; people suffering may feel sad, have no energy, and feel as if they have no value
6. a form of communication, information, or entertainment; for example, newspaper, radio, television
8. to be overly preoccupied; something you can't stop thinking about or doing
11. to carry a person off by force; to kidnap; to lure away
13. not suitable or fitting; an incorrect action
18. the person who commits the abduction; the person who is guilty
21. to flourish, succeed, blossom
24. to have faith, a feeling of optimism
28. a feeling of not being able to accomplish what you set out to do; to be stumped and possibly aggravated
29. to get rid of; to remove
30. not happy; gloomy; sometimes you might cry when you feel this

**Word Bank**

**abduct**  
**abnormal**  
**accustomed**  
**angry**  
**biodegradable**  
**capitalize**  
**confidential**  
**court**  
**criminal**  
**depression**  
**eliminate**  
**empathetic**  
**evidence**  
**exploited**  
**frustrated**  
**hope**  
**inappropriate**  
**invasive**  
**journal**  
**judge**  
**kidnap**  
**law enforcement**  
**lawyer**  
**liaison**  
**media**  
**nightmare**  
**normal**  
**obsessive**  
**offender**  
**perpetrator**  
**polygraph**  
**sad**  
**scared**  
**sibling**  
**suspect**  
**thrive**  
**vulnerable**

# Wordsearch Puzzle 5

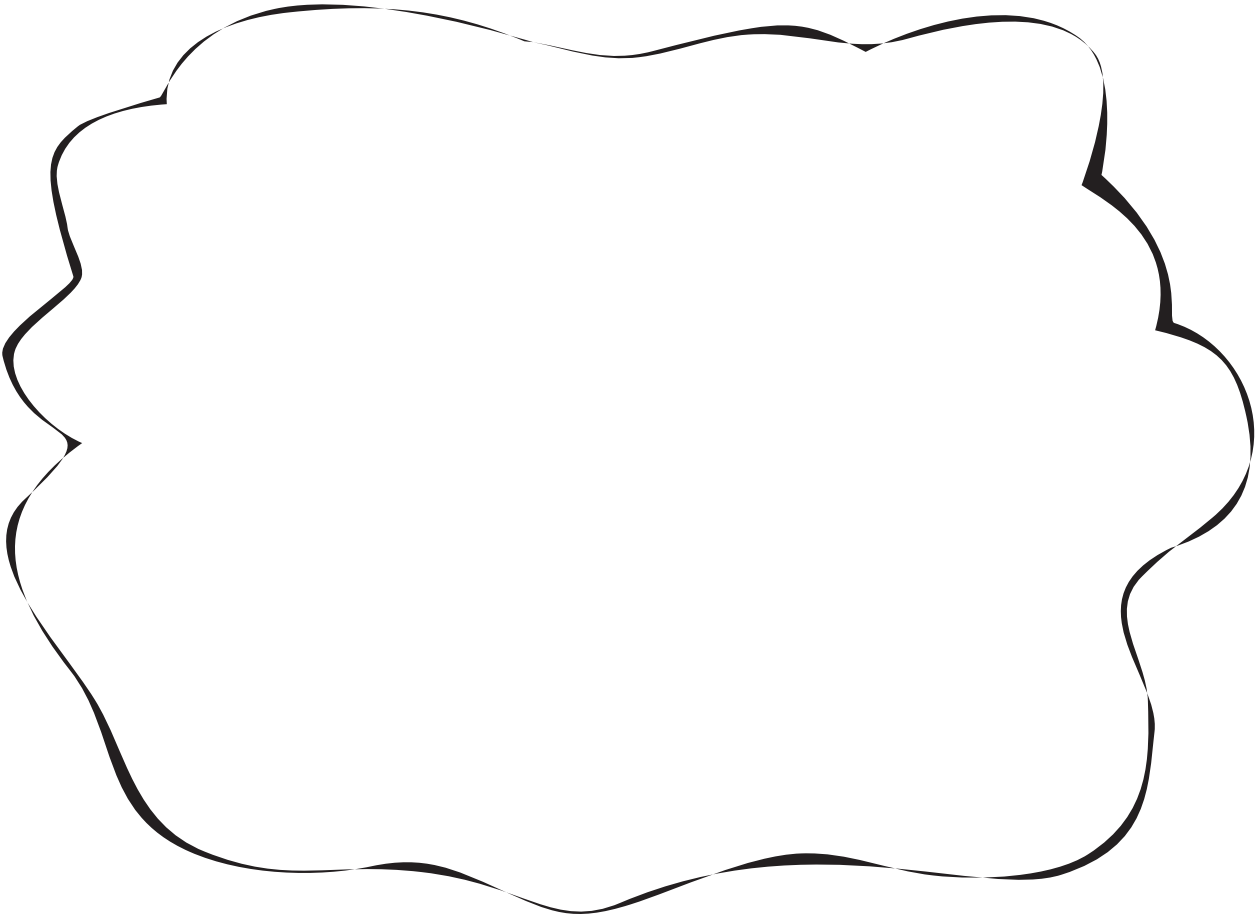
X X U W L B E D H G R M V C F Z N R N E  
 R L D N O I T C U D B A R H U P V E K N  
 L T A R X T A C A R S L J G T H L O R J  
 R R B N Y V I I I P R B K L D U C W N Y  
 W G O O R I R G S T I S D V M G Y G S H  
 S M X H E U P E U O E T T L O N T G E K  
 A W G S D V O O R D N H A I J H G E O U  
 U P D K N E R J E O A I T L A X J P N F  
 E C E S E L P X F H T K T A I S P W X T  
 I Q Y V F S P R A N Q A O F P Z Z D T T  
 J E A L F L A W E N F O R C E M E N T A  
 U G V K O I N D L S G U N T D T E P G C  
 B T Q I F Y I V B M S R E B E B H J O V  
 O C T Q R F F V A T E I Y E G P T U D H  
 U E D U N H P A R G Y L O P R S R X W X  
 D P J O R P T A E L I M I N A T E E E A  
 L S C H M X T G N O R M A L H K U Q P T  
 K U L R S E G X L D O K M O C A Z Z Q C  
 D S Z T D U C Z U I I S W H L G S P A P  
 Q D A E V I S A V N I K Q Q D D E T A M



## Word Bank

- |                      |                        |
|----------------------|------------------------|
| <b>ABDUCTION</b>     | <b>INVASIVE</b>        |
| <b>ANGRY</b>         | <b>JOURNAL</b>         |
| <b>ATTORNEY</b>      | <b>JURY</b>            |
| <b>CAPITALIZE</b>    | <b>KIDNAP</b>          |
| <b>CHARGED</b>       | <b>LAW ENFORCEMENT</b> |
| <b>CONFIDENTIAL</b>  | <b>LIAISON</b>         |
| <b>COURT</b>         | <b>NORMAL</b>          |
| <b>DEPRESSION</b>    | <b>OFFENDER</b>        |
| <b>ELIMINATE</b>     | <b>PERPETRATOR</b>     |
| <b>EMPATHETIC</b>    | <b>POLYGRAPH</b>       |
| <b>EXPLOITED</b>     | <b>SAD</b>             |
| <b>FRUSTRATED</b>    | <b>SUSPECT</b>         |
| <b>HOPE</b>          | <b>THRIVE</b>          |
| <b>INAPPROPRIATE</b> | <b>VULNERABLE</b>      |

What advice do you have for other kids on how to cope with this?





**Crossword Puzzle 1**



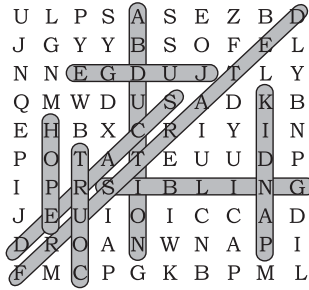
**Crossword Puzzle 2**



**Wordsearch Puzzle 1**



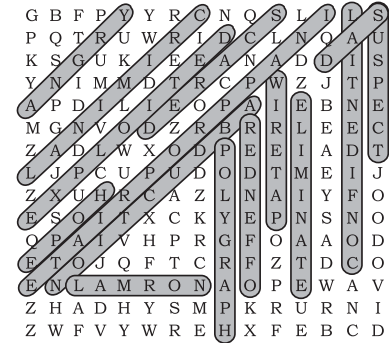
**Wordsearch Puzzle 2**



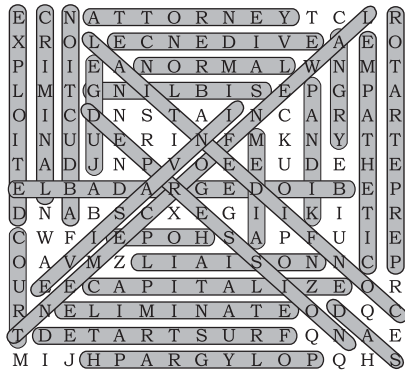
**Crossword Puzzle 3**



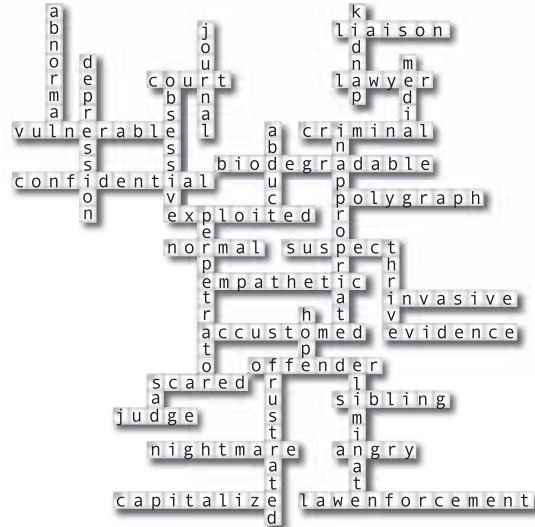
**Wordsearch Puzzle 3**



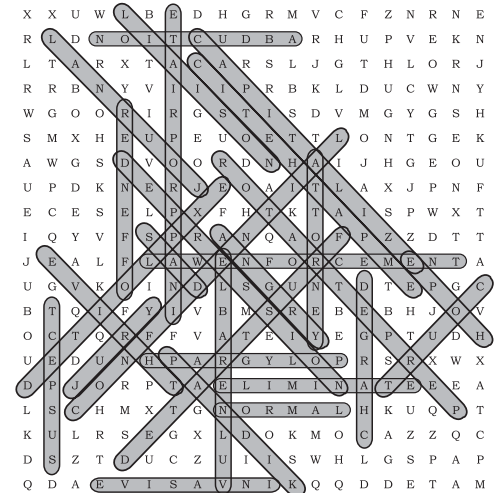
**Wordsearch Puzzle 4**



**Crossword Puzzle 4**



**Wordsearch Puzzle 5**



## MAJOR SUPPORTERS:

Mr. Tom Petters

Oshkosh B'Gosh, Inc.

Time Warner Cable

Enterprise Rent-A-Car Foundation

Xerox Corporation

---

## PARTNERS:

Fox Valley Technical College

American Hospice Foundation

FirstPic, Inc.

Lockheed Martin

FasterKitty, LLC

---

## CONTRIBUTORS:

Kimpton Hotels

Fox World Travel

DataWatch

Skyline Technologies, Inc.

Corporate Express

**U.S. Department of Justice**  
Office of Justice Programs  
*Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention*



PRESORTED STANDARD  
POSTAGE & FEES PAID  
DOJ/OJJDP  
PERMIT NO. G-91

Washington, DC 20531

Official Business

Penalty for Private Use \$300