

What Should You Do If You See A Child Who Appears To Be Lost?

The National Center for Missing & Exploited Children® (NCMEC) encourages people to be alert and report situations regarding children who appear to be lost.

NCMEC teaches children to seek the assistance of adults who may be sources of help if they become lost. NCMEC encourages children to ask for help from adults such as uniformed law-enforcement or security officers and business/store personnel wearing nametags.

But what should **you** do when you see a child who appears to be lost? The steps noted below are ways you can provide assistance to a lost child.

1. **Get involved if you see a child who appears to be lost.**
2. **Comfort the child** but avoid physically touching him or her.
3. **Ask the child if he or she is lost or knows the location of his or her parent/guardian.**
4. **Refrain from requesting too much personal information** since children are taught not to give out this information to people they do not know.
5. **Contact law-enforcement authorities to report the incident.**
6. **Ask other adults in the area for assistance in reporting the incident to a person** in a position of authority in the area while waiting for law enforcement's arrival.
7. **Remain in the immediate location, and do not take the child elsewhere.** Do not place the child in your vehicle and drive to a different location to seek help.
8. **Wait with the child until help arrives.**

Note: If you see a child who you recognize as one who is missing, based on information from sources such as media reports, missing-child alerts, or fliers issued by law-enforcement authorities, immediately call law enforcement and follow their instructions.

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