



AMBER Alert Training and Technical Assistance Program

Fact Sheet



The **AMBER Alert Program** is a strategy to create a national (and international) seamless network of AMBER Alert Coordinators poised to respond to episodes /incidents of missing, endangered or abducted children; and assist in the safe recovery of these children. The AMBER Alert Program is a U.S. Department of Justice Initiative in partnership with over 120 AMBER Alert Coordinators, Clearinghouse Managers, law enforcement agencies, broadcasters, departments of transportation, tribal communities, non-profit organizations and others committed to the recovery of missing, endangered and abducted children. As of February 28, 2008, 392 abducted children have been recovered as a result of the AMBER Alert Program.

- The **AMBER Alert** strategy calls for the inclusion of key partners to make the network functionally effective, including:
 - Broadcasters/media,
 - law enforcement (local, state, tribal and federal),
 - emergency management officials,
 - departments of transportation,
 - other agencies or organizations within the public safety sector, private sector, public safety communications, non-profit organizations; and
 - Child advocacy organizations.
- The key partners are called to create and enhance the capacities of state and local law enforcement responses to incidents of missing, abducted or endangered children which is a critical infrastructure to improve the recovery rate of America's missing children.
- Create a Coordinated AMBER Network
- Encourage Compliance/Adherence with National Standards and Best Practices
- Improve Response to Missing Children through Participation and Awareness
- Improve AMBER Program through Ongoing Evaluation
- Improve AMBER Programming by Legislative Research and Support
- Enhance Use of Technology
- Improve AMBER Data Collection Methods

National AMBER Alert Network

- Established secure web-based, communications portal for more than 120 AMBER Alert state, local, regional and tribal Coordinators
- Electronic newsletter, **AMBER Advocate** reaches over 30,000 child protection professionals four times each year
- Established regional AMBER Alert Liaisons to work with four geographical regions, including all states, Canadian Provinces, Territories, and the District of Columbia providing technical assistance, training, policy development and investigative assistance
- **Technical Assistance** has been provided to thousands of persons, organizations and conferences since the inception of the DOJ AMBER Alert Initiative.

AMBER Alert Training Programs

January 1, 2006 – December 31, 2006

- 43 training sessions
- 2333 participants
- Received 56,460 hours training
- 1945 of 2333 submitted evaluations
- 99% provided "good" or "excellent" overall ratings

January 1, 2007 – December 31, 2007

- 23 training sessions
- 1,720 participants
- Received 42,564 hours of training
- 99% provided “good” or “excellent” overall ratings

Training Summary:

- 66 training sessions
- 4,053 participants
- 99,024 hours of training
- Every State, District of Columbia, Territories and representatives from Canada and Mexico have attended training sessions
- Major News organizations, including Gannett, Pappas Telecasting and Univision participate in AMBER Alert training provided by the University of South Carolina.
- 7 National or Regional Conferences on missing, endangered and abducted children with total attendance more than 1,650
- Three national roundtable meetings with parents and siblings of abducted children to determine response issues, investigations and prosecution.

Evaluation of the Impact of AMBER Alert Training Programs

- 98 – 100% of respondents say they received new insights and information regarding missing and abducted children
- Prior to the training program, only 35% of respondents claimed to have received training in cases of missing and abducted children
- 80% of respondents indicated that they plan to make changes or improvements to special services and follow-up support to family members of missing victims
- A range of 96 – 100% of the respondents indicated that they wish to incorporate information and ideas brought back from the courses to their unit or agency’s plans for managing and investigating cases of missing and abducted children.
- 89% of respondents indicated that the courses altered their outlook toward problems of missing and abducted children.
- 93% of Law Enforcement CEO’s plan to make changes in how they train members of their agency

Child Abduction Response Team Network

- Initiative began in Florida in 2005
- National Initiative followed in 2006
- Training programs from January 2006 through 2007 yielded the following:
 - 117 teams representing 37 states, Puerto Rico and the Bahamas
- CART Programs are designed to work within US communities, however specialized sessions of CART planning has created the basis for the first “international CART” program, involving federal, state and local authorities in the United States and Canada
- Currently, discussions between Texas, New Mexico, Arizona and California and their Mexican counterparts are pushing for joint AMBER Alert Plans and CART Programs

CART Certification Program

- To establish a verification of response capability a Child Abduction Response Team Certification process and challenge was established in 2007
- North Florida CART is the first team/community to undergo the vigorous test to achieve Certification, meeting all 33 standards and successfully completing the mock child abduction exercise
- More than a dozen CART programs throughout the United States are seeking Certification of their respective CART Programs