

## THANK YOU

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN (1936-2018)

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Your story ideas and pictures are welcome.

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# ASHLYNNE'S LAW

## AMBER ALERT IN INDIAN COUNTRY ACT OF 2018



Friends and family gather to celebrate the signing of the Ashlynne Mike AMBER Alert in Indian Country Act

## With the passage of this important legislation, the AMBER Alert Training and Technical Assistance Program is hard at work moving the law into action.

A law born out of the tragic abduction and murder of eleven-year-old Ashlynne Mike of the Navajo Nation endeavors to bring increased law enforcement coordination, new and expanded resources, and renewed hope for solid protection of children living on tribal lands. The AMBER Alert in Indian Country Act was passed in April 2018, nearly two years after Ashlynne was kidnapped and killed May 2, 2016, near Shiprock on the Navajo Nation Reservation.

Tribal law enforcement officers did not have an AMBER Alert plan to notify the people living in the 27,000 square mile reservation that stretches from Arizona to Utah. As Ashlynne's case progressed, it brought to light gaps in public safety preparedness and coordination in the area of response to missing and abducted children; heightening the awareness of legislators and others that this serious problem facing

the Navajo Nation was also shared by tribes across the country.

The Ashlynne Mike AMBER Alert in Indian Country Act offers help for tribes in the following ways:

- Allows for integration of tribal AMBER Alert systems into state AMBER alert systems.
- Makes Indian tribes eligible for AMBER Alert grants.
- Permits the use of grant funds to integrate state or regional AMBER Alert communication plans with an Indian tribe.
- Allows the waiver of the matching funds requirement for grants awarded to Indian tribes.

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# ASHLYNNE'S LAW

## AMBER ALERT IN INDIAN COUNTRY ACT OF 2018

Continued from page 3



Ashlynn Mike

Jim Walters is the AMBER Alert Training and Technical Assistance Program (AATTAP) Administrator and testified before Congress about the need for more resources for missing and abducted Native American children. He will now oversee efforts to put the legislation into action.

"The first order of business for the Act is an assessment of the status of tribes and the obstacles they face in implementing AMBER Alert for their communities,"

said Walters. "This assessment applies to all tribes, large or small."

Walters understands firsthand the unique obstacles within tribal lands. In 2006 he became the first AATTAP Liaison for the program's 'AMBER Alert in Indian Country' initiative. He provided training and technical assistance to more than 200 tribes, with the goal of helping them respond swiftly and effectively to child protection issues including abductions, exploitation and human trafficking.

"Tribes face a number of challenges; ones most of us don't consider on a day to day basis," said Walters. "This includes a history of cultural intervention and generational trauma, jurisdictional complexities, issues with reporting, and lack of understanding

of Indian Child Welfare Law outside tribal lands."

He noted that long-term implications of victimization within the community are magnified by a close-knit societal structure, lack of resources and specialization, and limits to infrastructure and technology.

After Ashlynn's death, her mother, Pamela Foster, began advocating to make sure children in Indian Country had the same protection as any other child.

"Pamela Foster was a powerful force," said Walters. "She mobilized citizens, law makers and tribes across the country to support the effort to bring AMBER Alert to tribal communities. She was eloquent and heartfelt when talking to legislators, and they showed great support for her efforts."

Foster got support from the late Senator John McCain and other legislators to bring the AMBER Alert system to all of America's 567 federally recognized tribes.

"This bipartisan legislation addresses serious gaps in current law that have prevented tribes from quickly issuing AMBER Alerts and helping victims like Ashlynn escape tragedy," said McCain.

The AMBER Alert in Indian Country Act expands the original PROTECT Act that started the National AMBER Alert program in 2003. That bill was passed after the so-called "summer of child kidnappings" that included the abduction of Elizabeth Smart and many other children across the U.S.

"The new bill places tribes in the same standing as states and regional plans," said

Walters. "It means tribes have the same ability to establish Memorandums of Understanding, or 'MOU's', with their state AMBER Alert plan or to develop their own plan within tribal boundaries."

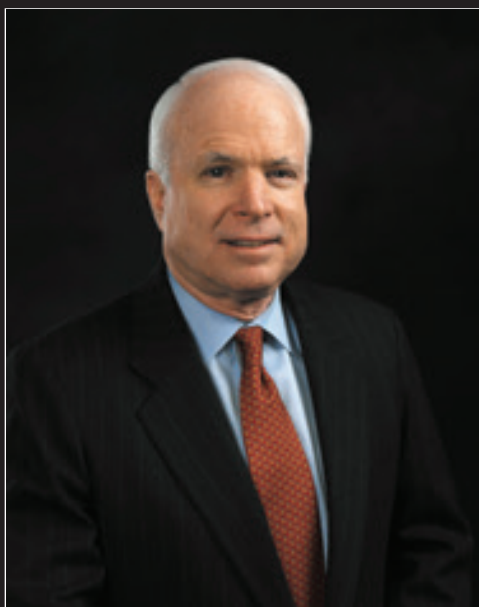
Walters has a plan to put the new law into action.

- Work closely with the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention to meet OJJDP's goal of expanding, supporting, and further improving the capacity and development or enhancement of AMBER Alert programs in Indian Country.
- Make sure AATTAP works in alignment with the direction of Congress as expressed in the new law.

- Serve tribal communities and work with states and regional AMBER Alert plans to develop agreements that provide access for tribal communities.
- Partner with the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children to provide resources and expertise to promote adoption of AMBER Alert programs across Indian Country.

All of this work has been inspired by the love shown by Ashlynn's family.

"Her family was willing to turn their personal tragedy into a cause to protect Native American and Alaskan Native children across the country," said Walters. "As Pamela said on more than one occasion, 'We want to do this so other families will be spared our pain.'"



## THANK YOU SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN (1936 - 2018)

America has lost a hero and servant of the people with the passing of Senator John McCain of Arizona. Senator McCain exemplified all that is best about our country and made his life one of service to others. Senator McCain introduced what is now the Ashlynn Mike AMBER Alert in Indian Country Act of 2018 after the abduction and murder of eleven-year-old Ashlynn Mike of the Navajo Nation. While this is only one example of his leadership, we can hope to honor his legacy by the work we do to protect children and to be better servants of the communities we serve.

With deepest respect,

Jim Walters, Program Administrator  
AMBER Alert Training and Technical Assistance Program, National  
Criminal Justice Training Center of Fox Valley Technical College

# FACES OF THE AMBER ALERT NETWORK

## SARAH KREBS: MICHIGAN AMBER ALERT COORDINATOR

**She never gives up in making sure missing and abducted children are found**



Sarah Krebs has been the Michigan AMBER Alert Coordinator since 2014. At that time, she also served as the Missing Persons Clearinghouse Manager and the Unidentified Remains Manager, which have since been reorganized into three different positions. Krebs began as a Michigan State Police Trooper in 2000 and took on additional duties as a forensic artist in 2002. She later became an investigator before transferring to the Missing Persons Unit. Krebs still offers investigative training and assists with cold cases.

### **WHAT IS THE BEST PART OF YOUR JOB?**

The AMBER Alert is special. It's for those cases that really need it. I hold this posi-

tion very dear to my heart because I know how harmful an abduction can be and the AMBER Alert is the nation's most powerful tool to bring an abducted child home. I take this job very seriously because I am the one person responsible for the AMBER Alert in my state.

### **WHAT IS THE HARDEST PART OF YOUR JOB?**

It is very difficult when you tell law enforcement and a family that their child will not get an AMBER Alert. There is a lot of pressure because they know this is such a powerful tool, but the situation doesn't always fit our current criteria. The AMBER Alert notifies so many people and we have to protect it so we are not overusing it.

We do use our Endangered Missing Advisory for cases that don't meet the AMBER Alert criteria. The advisories have been very helpful.

### **MICHIGAN RECENTLY CHANGED ITS CRITERIA FOR THE AMBER ALERT - WHAT IMPACT HAS THAT MADE ON THE PROGRAM?**

When Michigan created our policy in 2001 we were the fourth state to have an AMBER Alert. Our criteria were extremely broad and included all endangered children. So many cases fit that we would put out 40 or more AMBER Alerts each year. However, no one complained about the high numbers because a lot of the alerts were regional. The public didn't notice the high number of

alerts, but they thought any child who was missing and endangered was eligible for an AMBER Alert.

The Wireless Emergency Alert (WEA) changed the AMBER Alert and made it a more powerful tool because you are waking up people with alerts on their cell phones. We wanted to change the criteria to meet the national standards. For instance, the alert would go out for child who is missing with a sex offender, even if the parent was the sex offender.

We couldn't send out WEAs 40 times a year. So in 2017, we changed the criteria to be for child abductions only. We went from 15 AMBER Alerts in 2016 down to three in 2017. It was really eye-opening. Only legitimate abductions have AMBER Alerts issued for them now. There is still some public confusion because we previously issued alerts for endangered children. We just had a missing autistic child and people on social media were asking 'Where's the AMBER Alert?' The community is starting to answer those questions and letting others know that the criteria doesn't fit.

We never had a secondary alert and that's why the AMBER Alert initially included everything - because it was our only option. We added the Endangered Missing Advisory; and that alerting tool still depends on public involvement and help. The advisory can be used for people with Alzheimer's and dementia, children with autism or children who are endangered for another reason not related to an abduction. The new program is really working flawlessly. We still have some pushback, but we can now offer another alerting option even when we do not issue an AMBER Alert. However, it doesn't reach everyone's cell phones.

Social media can also be used to help get the word out, and that approach is really working well. Social media is a great partner for the AMBER Alert and Endangered Missing Advisory. We recover more children from tips and leads generated by Facebook than anything. Social media is the 'milk carton' of the 21st century and utilizes the internet to reach large numbers of people rapidly. I do wish I had someone who could work full-time with a focus solely on maximizing and managing the use of social media with endangered missing and abducted person cases.

### **WHAT OTHER INITIATIVES HAVE YOU TAKEN TO HELP FIND MISSING AND ABDUCTED CHILDREN?**

We created a movement with an event called Missing in Michigan Day that started in 2011. Based upon its growth, we started a non-profit to support it and handle all of the donations. It's started a revolution across the country. We now have similar events across the country, such as 'Missing in Arizona' or 'Missing in California.' The public comes together to remember the people who are missing. We also continue to work year-round collecting DNA and making reports. It's a proactive law enforcement event where people can meet each other to talk about their missing loved ones. We have gathered more than 100 missing unidentified cases since the event began in 2011.

We also just passed a law that makes Michigan the first state in the country to require all law enforcement to immediately enter missing person information into the National Missing and Unidentified Persons System (NAMUS).

### **WHAT MOTIVATES YOU TO FIND MISSING AND ABDUCTED CHILDREN?**

I think my work as a forensic artist and working with unidentified remains was the start. These

# FACES OF THE AMBER ALERT NETWORK

## JOLENE HARDESTY: MICHIGAN MISSING PERSONS CLEARINGHOUSE MANAGER

**She fights to help missing and abducted children—and the fight is never over**



Jolene Hardesty has been the Missing Persons Clearinghouse manager for Michigan since 2017. She has been involved in law enforcement for 18 years and started as a police dispatcher because she thought “it would be cool to be on the good guy’s team.” Seven years later she became a dispatcher for the Michigan State Police and was promoted to an analyst, working with the state’s Law Enforcement Information Network (LEIN). Hardesty volunteered to help with the 2011 Missing in Michigan Day and developed a passion for missing children from that experience.

### **WHAT IS THE BEST PART OF YOUR JOB?**

Getting babies back safe and getting them to someone who won’t hurt them and will

care about them. I will use any resource possible to bring children home and make them safe. When I think of everything I’ve done in my career, I have had some great moments as a dispatcher. But nothing fills my cup like working with missing persons, working with law enforcement, and social workers to let children know someone cares. Each child is a human being who means something. I just love my job.

### **WHAT IS THE HARDEST PART OF YOUR JOB?**

The cases where despite our best efforts it doesn’t seem to have that big of an impact. We recently had a 15-month-old boy who tested positive for cocaine at birth. Child protective services wanted to put the infant into protective care but the judge didn’t want to take the baby away from his biological mom and dad. The mom didn’t want to be in the child’s life. The dad was struggling with alcoholism. He just couldn’t provide safe care for the child. The child was allowed to live with his mother and father but he didn’t have a stable, consistent home environment. I just felt like the boy was being lost and we couldn’t do anything about it because the judge said we need to allow the parents to parent their child. You have to go forward and continue in your work, knowing you did your best, but that it likely will not change things.

### **WHAT DO YOU THINK IS THE VALUE OF THE AMBER ALERT?**

I couldn’t put a value on AMBER Alert. To me it’s like asking ‘How much is my child worth?’



You can't put a price tag on these babies. They're precious and worth more than anything.

The AMBER Alert is an invaluable tool. I have seen it in action and it is really awesome. It creates a lot of work for officers, but at the same time gives them leads to follow up on that they would not have otherwise. Social media also provides lots of leads and we love our media partners because they are often the difference in making or breaking a case. We try to give as many stories as possible to the media to help find missing people.

#### **DO YOU HAVE AN AMBER ALERT THAT STANDS OUT FOR YOU?**

Probably my first one. Our AMBER Alert Coordinator was on maternity leave; our unidentified remains analyst had gone home. I tried to figure out who gets what information and how to get it to them. Sarah still helped me even though she was on maternity leave. I was able to follow the process and effectively handle the alert, even though it was my second month on the job.

The best part of this AMBER Alert was when the police pinged the suspect's cellphone and it came up in Ohio. I called Ohio and asked for an alert in their state. When they issued their AMBER Alert, the suspect, who was originally headed southbound on I-75 away from Michigan, must have received the Wireless Emergency Alert (WEA) because his phone started moving northbound back towards Michigan. Police saw his vehicle and apprehended him. It was a great feeling to get the Michigan and Ohio AMBER Alerts issued, and to catch the suspect and safely recover the child. It was a great day, and an awesome reward.

#### **MICHIGAN RECENTLY CHANGED THEIR CRITERIA FOR THE AMBER ALERT - WHAT IMPACT HAS THAT MADE?**

Educating the public about the differences between an AMBER Alert and the Endangered Missing Advisory (EMA) has been so important. We wanted to be more in line with the national AMBER Alert criteria. A few of our community partners, especially the autistic community, found it difficult to learn we were removing autism as a sole factor for issuing an AMBER Alert. It was negatively viewed initially, but in reality it has strengthened the effectiveness of both alerts, because we can issue the most appropriate alert based upon each case's circumstances around the reasons for endangerment of the missing child. The EMA has become better understood as an effective alerting tool for endangered missing children who have gone missing for reasons other than an abduction; such as those who wander or go missing and have autism.

Reaching out to the public about the importance of more tightly defined criteria for AMBER Alert, and having an alternate alerting plan and tool in the EMA, has been key in our success. We used to issue an AMBER Alert for just about anything. We've tightened up that criteria, and are now more careful with the use of the alert, having issued just one AMBER Alert so far in 2018.

To understand the power of social media, just consider what we have done with sharing information through various platforms on missing persons cases. People share information about missing persons; and they know things and share that with others on the sites. If you share a post, you are helping because someone else will see it and say, 'I saw that car at a gas station or that person at a grocery store.' The word spreads like wildfire.

# FACES OF THE AMBER ALERT NETWORK

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## SARAH KREBS: CONTINUED

cases are terrible. I've seen the agony families have gone through when a loved one is missing. I am a parent of a six-year-old girl, a one-year-old girl and a baby boy on the way. No one is more vulnerable than a missing child.

**WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO OTHERS WHO WORK WITH THE AMBER ALERT PROGRAM?** I think coordination between the states is essential. At the National AMBER Alert Symposium, we had representatives from all 50 states. It was so important to be able to connect faces with names; and to meet and network with other AMBER Alert Coordinators, Missing Person Clearinghouse Managers and CART program members from each state, especially when you have cross-state abductions. It's important to know people and to trust them.

For instance, we had an AMBER Alert and an officer in Colorado ran a plate and saw the alert in Michigan. The AMBER Alert program is powerful and I'm proud to be a part of it.

**WHAT WAS YOUR MOST MEMORABLE AMBER ALERT?** Probably the multi-state alerts stand out the most for me because of the coordination between all of the states. The first AMBER Alert I did was for children who were abducted in Indiana and found in Detroit. An FBI agent told me the Indiana children were in Detroit. I called the Indiana AMBER Alert coordinator and we were able to issue an AMBER Alert swiftly and effectively; this was helped by us knowing one another and having that personal relationship. The alert ended with a car chase and both children were recovered safely. So, my first AMBER Alert involved multiple states, two children and a gunman taking the children during the middle of the night and asking for a ransom. It literally sounds like something that could have been made into a movie. But we work hard for the best possible outcome – safe recovery of the children. 🌟

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## JOLENE HARDESTY: CONTINUED

**WHAT OTHER INITIATIVES HAVE YOU TAKEN TO HELP FIND MISSING AND ABDUCTED CHILDREN?**

My first year I was involved with organizing the poster contest. I put the contest out on social media and contacted our media partners with a press release. I spoke to different TV and radio stations and we had the most participants ever that year. We had

first, second and third prize winners in the contest. The first prize winner, whose parents are also Michigan State Police Troopers, also won the national contest. When I told her mom, she was so happy, she started crying. It was so great. It was fun to go with the winner to Washington, D.C., to see her honored.

## JOLENE HARDESTY: CONTINUED

We also try to do juvenile sweeps, where we go through a list of juveniles who are missing in a particular area—a city, county or tri-county area. We try to recover as many missing children as possible and talk with them carefully as part of the recovery process. We look for human trafficking elements or abuse at home to find out why the child is running away. Children don't run-away for 'no reason' so we try to find out the 'why' behind their decision to run.

### **WHAT MOTIVATES YOU TO FIND MISSING AND ABDUCTED CHILDREN?**

Just knowing how important it is for every child to have a safe home, and to feel safe in his or her own bed every night. I'm a parent so I want my kids to feel safe and loved. I do my best, so that even if these children never know people care about them, we can do everything in our power to make sure they feel safe. We hope the children will see or sense the passion we have to make sure they have a safe home, and even a bed, toys and clothes all their own. They shouldn't be scared to be where they live.

### **WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO OTHER PARTNERS WHO WORK WITH THE AMBER ALERT PROGRAM?**

Networking has been one of the best things I have done for my career. I like to meet new people and see how their roles and work fit into the larger criminal justice system of which we're both a part. It's easier to call someone when you have a relationship. I can say 'It's Jolene in Michigan and I need your help.'

I had to call Alabama about a missing three-month-old girl whose mother had substance abuse issues. Trying to avoid drug testing, the mother fled the state in an attempt to avoid having her child taken away from her. I was able to track the mother to Huntington, Alabama. I contacted Alabama's clearinghouse manager for help in rescuing the baby and getting her out of harm's way. The field investigator went to Wal-Mart where the mom was shopping with her baby. The investigator got her license plate number as well as a lead that the car had been seen at a trailer park. A deputy located the mother sitting in her car in the driveway. The case workers recovered the baby and the mother returned to Michigan. She later died of a heroin overdose. I feel like we helped save that child, and it means so much to me that I had a helping hand in finding that baby and getting her to safety.

During another investigation we found out a baby was missing from state care and it was believed she was the product of sexual abuse between the 27-year-old mom and a 15-year-old male victim. I used the EMA to broadcast to the area where the baby lived in Michigan. Within hours after the advisory went out on social media, the sheriff's office received and followed up on numerous tips. The baby was hidden, carted around in a laundry basket in the backseat of a family member's vehicle as they fled authorities. We recovered the child and the suspect was later apprehended. 🍷

# AMBER ALERT ON THE FRONT LINES:



## COLORADO AMBER ALERT HELPS FIND BOY WANDERING NAKED AND HUNGRY IN UTAH

Emergency 9-1-1 telecommunicators in Saguache County, Colorado, received a call from a father who was concerned because his twelve-year-old son had been missing for three hours. It was Saturday, June 23, 2018, and the Saguache County Sheriff's Office gathered information and sent a message about the boy to other local law enforcement officers in case he might be in the area.

The sheriff's office asked for an AMBER Alert to be issued on Saturday night, but CBI had some concerns about the criteria.

"We declined the AMBER request based on the facts we had at the time," said Jillian Ganley, Colorado AMBER Alert Coordinator. "We suggested an Endangered Missing Person Alert. We also offered investigative assistance and let the agency know we would be willing to issue the AMBER Alert if any new information was uncovered during the investigation."

The sheriff's office began to conduct additional interviews and collaborated with the Colorado Bureau of Investigation (CBI) and the FBI to gather additional information. They discovered the missing boy was likely with a 60-year-old man who was known to have a dubious reputation.

"The suspect belonged to a group of individuals known to approach children in parks," said Captain Ken Wilson, Saguache County Sheriff's Office. "We're a small community with more than 3,000 square miles and 10,000 people, so we all need each other and look out for each other."

On Sunday, June 24, deputies determined the boy was in danger and they had enough information to meet the criteria for an AMBER Alert. CBI issued the alert at 8:26 p.m. through the Emergency Alert System (EAS) which sends the information to Colorado law enforcement, media outlets, highway signs and state lottery terminals.



CBI then sent the information through the Wireless Emergency Alert (WEA), a system which sends text alerts to all cell phones in the area. However, after issuing the WEA, they discovered some cell phone users received multiple notifications of the AMBER Alert, while delivery to other cell phone users was delayed. CBI contacted the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children for assistance with sending the alert through WEA to ensure complete distribution.

"In the end we learned several cell service providers were not able to accept the formatting of a dash included in the message," said Ganley. "We now know to avoid special characters if at all possible, and to type the message directly into the software instead of copying it and pasting it in."

The sheriff's public information officer also posted the information on Facebook. "People started sharing it like crazy," said Wilson.

Even though they were looking for a boy believed to be in danger, everyone involved in the search did their best not to get too emotional during the investigation. "We try as best as we can to be detached and analytical," he said. "We need to make sure we have everything we need to find the child. It helped us all to know something is being done and people are looking."

"After every AMBER alert we issue there is an uneasy feeling until the children are found," added Ganley. "However, we must remain focused to ensure everything possible is being done to bring these children home safely."

At 9:50 p.m. that same day, a tip came in on Facebook that the boy was seen that

morning in Hanksville, Utah. At 11:30 p.m., the Garfield County Sheriff's Office in Utah received a call from campers who said they were approached by two people without clothes asking for food and water. Deputies immediately responded to the call but did not find anyone.

On Monday, June 25, dispatchers received a call at 9:40 a.m. stating "a young boy and an older man were both naked at the Bear Paw Resort," according to the law enforcement report. "This description matched the AMBER Alert that dispatch had received the night before."

Upon immediate response, deputies found the suspect and victim and confirmed they were the subjects in the AMBER Alert. The man was taken into custody and the boy was taken to the hospital for evaluation.

"I always feel very relieved and thankful after every successful AMBER Alert," said Ganley. "I am so glad we were able to reunite this young boy with his family. This is the ending we hope for after every alert we issue."

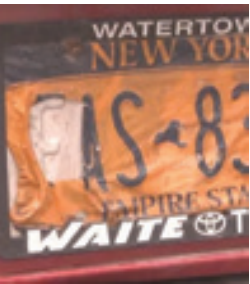
"I'm happy for the family," added Wilson. "I'm happy for the child."

According to the law enforcement report, the victim said they had spent the night without clothing and slept under a tree. The suspect was charged with child kidnapping, lewdness involving a child and reckless endangerment. He may also face federal charges.

The Colorado AMBER Alert coordinator said it was helpful to have so many law enforcement officers, including CBI agents, sharing information from the scene. "Every AMBER

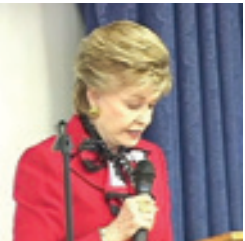
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# AMBER ALERT BRIEFS



## AMBER ALERT MOTIVATES NEW YORK TO REPLACE PEELED LICENSE PLATES

New York law enforcement officers are stopping motorists and asking them to replace peeled license plates for their own safety and for others. “Without us being able to read the license plate then it would make it difficult for us to spot stolen vehicles, or vehicles if there’s an alert or an Amber Alert [on them],” said Jefferson County Sheriff’s Deputy John Gleason. The peeling plates can be replaced for free. 🍷



## CONGRESS CONSIDERS BILL TO HAVE AMBER ALERTS IN ALL U.S. TERRITORIES

The U.S. congressional representative from Guam has introduced a bill that would provide funding to integrate territories into the National AMBER Alert network. Congresswoman Madeleine Bordall’s AMBER Alert Nationwide Act has bipartisan support and has been endorsed by the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children. 🍷



## U.S. UPDATES EMERGENCY ALERT SYSTEM TO PREVENT FALSE ALARMS

The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) will enhance the Emergency Alert System (EAS) to prevent “unexpected false alarms” like the one that warned Hawaii residents of a ballistic missile attack. State and local officials can now conduct “live code” tests for wireless phones with the same codes and procedures used during an actual emergency. The FCC said the updates will help prevent “alert fatigue.” 🍷



## VIRGINIA STATE POLICE USES THE ASHANTI ALERT TO FIND MISSING ADULTS

The Virginia State Police has started issuing an Ashanti Alert or Critical Missing Adult alert to find missing adults who may be in danger. The alert was launched on July 1, 2018, and was named after kidnapping and murder victim Ashanti Billie. The first alert was issued for a man who was believed to be in danger and in need of medical attention. The second alert was sent out for a mother of four who was believed to have been abducted. 🍷

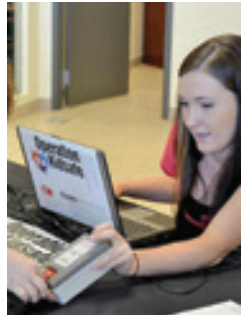
## AMBER ALERT AND CHILD IDENTIFICATION EVENTS TRENDING ACROSS THE U.S. IN 2018

The El Paso, Texas, Sheriff's Office registered children with AMBER Alert cards on July 10, 2018. This information can be used if a child is reported missing or abducted, and includes a color photo, fingerprints and identifying information about the child.

Free child identification kits were also distributed on July 17 at a fair in Ionia, Michigan. The process creates a flash drive with a photo, video, digital fingerprints and other vital information.

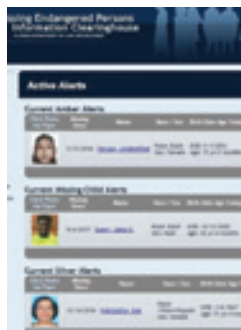
A child ID event was also held that same week in Bridgman, Michigan. To date, more than 90,000 Michigan children have participated in the state's Child Identification Program.

In Birmingham, Alabama, a Ford dealership decided to celebrate its 100th anniversary by holding a fingerprinting and child safety program through Operation Kidsafe. Adamson Ford held the event in February 2018 and ID cards were created for more than 150 children. 🍷



## FLORIDA INCREASES WAYS TO NOTIFY PUBLIC DURING ALERTS FOR ABDUCTED AND MISSING CHILDREN

The Florida Department of Law Enforcement has expanded the AMBER and Missing Child Alert public notification systems to include more ways to notify the public. Residents already receive emails and text messages about the alert, and people can now sign up to receive alerts through voice calls, TDD/TTY (text messaging for the hearing impaired) and other mobile device apps. 🍷



## MISSISSIPPI WOMAN HIRES ATTORNEY AFTER MISTAKENLY IDENTIFIED AS AMBER ALERT SUSPECT

A woman who was erroneously identified as a suspect in an AMBER Alert in Jacksonville, Mississippi, has hired an attorney to investigate the mix-up. The alert was issued for a six-year-old girl and identified Jasmine Simmons as the suspect. Law enforcement later revised the alert and identified the suspect as Jazzlyn Tommynik Simmons as the suspect. The attorney asked the media to retract or correct any stories that identified his client as being involved in the alleged kidnapping. 🍷



# AMBER ALERT BRIEFS



## TWO WOMEN CHARGED FOR FALSELY CLAIMING THEIR CARS WERE STOLEN WITH CHILDREN INSIDE

A 25-year-old mother was arrested after telling Saraland, Alabama, police that her car was stolen by an ex-boyfriend with her three-year-old son inside. Police issued an AMBER Alert and activated the Child Abduction Response Team (CART) to assist in the investigation. Police say the woman changed her story several times and they ultimately determined the child was with family members.

Police in Grand Prairie, Texas, charged a woman with making a false police report after an AMBER Alert was issued for her ten-month-old baby. Police say the woman wanted to speed up the recovery of her stolen car by claiming her child was in the back seat. Police determined the woman's car was stolen but that she did not have a baby. 🍷



## CONCERNS RAISED ABOUT DIGITAL LICENSE PLATES

A Washington state lawmaker is worried digital license plates would allow the government to track motorists and invade their privacy. The digital plates show license information but also could provide messages that a car was stalled, stolen or involved in an AMBER or Silver Alert. California and Arizona have pilot programs for similar digital plates. 🍷



## MAINE WARNS PUBLIC ABOUT FAKE AMBER ALERT ON SOCIAL MEDIA

The Somerset County, Sheriff's Office in Maine issued a warning in June 2018 about a fake AMBER Alert being shared on Facebook. The alert claims a taxi was stolen with a passenger and could be anywhere in the area. Maine has activated AMBER Alerts just twice since the state started the program 13 years ago. 🍷

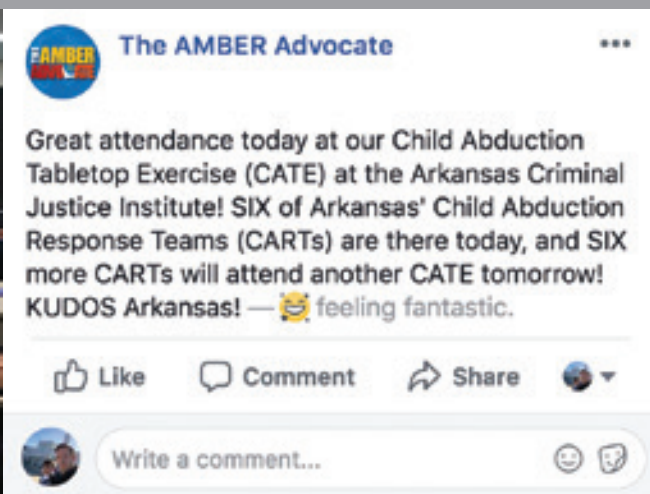


## FBI HOLDS CHILD KIDNAPPING DRILL FOR CHICAGO POLICE

The FBI offered a live action drill in Frankfurt, Illinois, on August 9, 2018, to train Chicago area officers how to handle child abductions. The scenario involved a 10-year-old girl who was missing after she left to see her tutor. Local law enforcement officers, the FBI and reporters with camera crews took part in the exercise. Officers gathered information from interviews and surveillance video to determine the girl entered the car of man who claimed he needed help finding a lost dog. The drills are held to make sure law enforcement is ready during an actual abduction. "After 46 years, I've learned that you never stop learning; that learning new procedures, protocols and methods is what makes your agency able to handle an incident like this," said Tim McCarthy, Orland Park Police. 🍷



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# AMBER ALERT INTERNATIONAL

## THE BAHAMAS LAUNCHES CHILD ABDUCTION ALERT SYSTEM

The Bahamas started a pilot child abduction alert program in July 2018, similar to the U.S. AMBER Alert. The country is calling the notifications “Marco’s Alert,” after 11-year-old Marco Archer who disappeared and was later found dead in 2011. The public has to opt-in to receive the alert but police can decide if the situation is so critical that a message will be sent to everyone regardless of opting in. The alerts can be sent by phone, email, pager, fax, computer pop up screens and social media. 🇧🇸



## SILVER ALERT IS TESTED IN CANADIAN CITIES

Police in several Canadian cities tested a Silver Alert, a notification that would go out to a specific area when a senior citizen goes missing. Residents can opt-in to receive the alerts which are aimed at helping find lost seniors with Alzheimer’s disease or dementia. Police teamed up with health and social services workers and volunteers during a day-long training exercise to test the new Silver Alert system. 🇨🇦



## CANADA INSTITUTES NEW PASSPORT RULES TO PROTECT CHILDREN

Canada has instituted changes to passport rules to protect children under the age of 16. The Canadian immigration minister can now issue a passport without application; and can refuse to issue or can revoke a passport to protect the child’s safety. A child can now also apply for a travel document to escape abuse under the new rules. 🇨🇦

## AUSTRALIA CONSIDERS AN ALERT SYSTEM TO LOCATE DEMENTIA PATIENTS

An Australian scholar is urging the government to create a public notification system similar to Silver Alerts used in the U.S. to help find lost people with dementia. Dr. Margie MacAndrew conducted a study about missing persons with dementia. "Wandering can result in potentially life-threatening outcomes such as malnutrition, increased risk of falls, injury, exhaustion, hypothermia, becoming lost, and death," she said. "Rapid reporting within one hour of knowing a person is missing is also known to help search and rescue have a better chance of finding a person alive and well. 🍷



## LUXEMBOURG'S FIRST AMBER ALERT IS SUCCESSFUL IN FINDING BOY

Luxembourg issued its first AMBER Alert on June 26, 2018, for a seven-year-old boy who was forcefully abducted by his father. Law enforcement believed the father to be dangerous based on a mental disorder. The alert was sent to the media, social media, billboards and traffic boards. Police were able to find the father and child in France. The boy was returned to his mother and the father was extradited back to Luxembourg to face criminal charges. 🍷

## AMBER ALERT EUROPE REPRESENTATIVES VISIT FRANCE TO REINFORCE EFFORTS TO FIND MISSING CHILDREN

AMBER Alert Europe officials visited the French Judicial Police headquarters on June 25, 2018, to gain a better understanding of the development of France's missing child system. The meeting was also used to enhance cooperation between AMBER Alert Europe and the French specialized missing persons police unit. France was the first country to have a missing child notification system that disseminates information to TV, radio, highway signs, railway stations, social media and websites. The 'Alerte Enlèvement' has been used 22 times in France and has resulted in the successful recovery of all missing children for which the alerts were issued. 🍷

## ON THE FRONT LINES: COLORADO


Alert requires a unique mix of training, experience, instinct, quick thinking and a lot of teamwork; and this alert was no different," said Ganley.

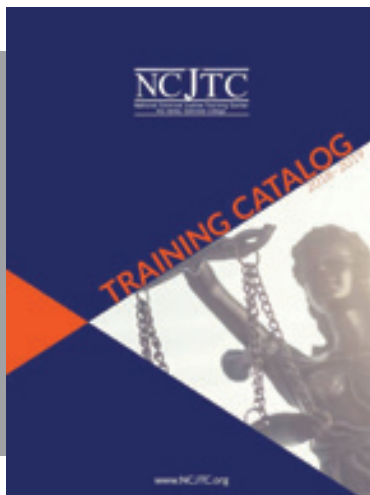
Looking back, Wilson said training helped in the search, but he credits his public information officer for getting the information out to so many people. He said the most important lesson he learned from this case is the need for getting enough information quickly to meet the AMBER Alert criteria.

"Make sure your focus is correct," he said. "Make sure you meet the criteria before you jump the gun and do everything else. You can't just say you need an AMBER Alert, you have to meet the criteria. Otherwise every missing child report would be an AMBER

Alert and they wouldn't be as valuable as they are."

Ganley agrees that determining the facts for an AMBER Alert is critical. "My best advice would be to have as much communication as possible with those on scene," she said. "All AMBER Alert incidents are very fluid situations, and this one was no different. By having an open line of communication, we were able to send the alert very quickly after new information was learned."

Colorado has issued 91 AMBER Alerts since the program began in April 2002. The state's first AMBER Alert was issued in August 2002. 



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The AMBER Advocate shared a post.

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