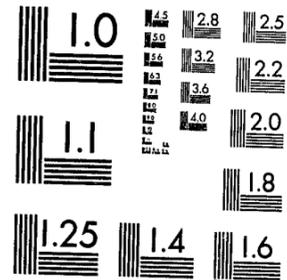


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National Institute of Justice
United States Department of Justice
Washington, D. C. 20531

11/18/82

FBI LAW ENFORCEMENT BULLETIN AUGUST 1982

Children Vanish Evenings

ords 50,000

News

missing after tornado

Finding Missing Children

U.S. Department of Justice
National Institute of Justice

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MISSING

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84999

FBI LAW ENFORCEMENT BULLETIN

AUGUST 1982, VOLUME 51, NUMBER 8

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THE COVER:

The NCIC's Missing Person File can be an invaluable tool to investigators in solving missing person cases. See Story p. 20.

Federal Bureau of Investigation
United States Department of Justice
Washington, D.C. 20535

William H. Webster, Director

The Attorney General has determined that the publication of this periodical is necessary in the transaction of the public business required by law of the Department of Justice. Use of funds for printing this periodical has been approved by the Director of the Office of Management and Budget through February 21, 1983.

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Director's Message

At the beginning of this year, Attorney General William French Smith assigned concurrent jurisdiction to investigate drug offenses to the FBI in cooperation with the Drug Enforcement Administration. This is part of an "overall effort to achieve more effective drug enforcement through coordinated efforts involving the Drug Enforcement Administration, the FBI, the United States Attorneys and other agencies in this and other Departments," according to the Attorney General.

The Attorney General praised the work of the Drug Enforcement Agency, saying that everyone at DEA "can be justly proud of their accomplishments." However, because of the magnitude of the drug problem today "for the first time since its establishment over 50 years ago, the full resources of the FBI will be added to our fight against the most serious crime problem facing our nation. . . ."

This move is part of the Justice Department's overall strategy to bring about more effective drug law enforcement through more coordinated efforts on the part of the DEA, the FBI, U.S. Attorneys, other agencies in the Justice Department, and other departments of the Federal Government. The DEA, according to the Attorney General, "will continue its fine work" and will be helped by this new cooperative effort.

The FBI's investigative effort in this area will be concentrated on major narcotics trafficking organizations, both those tied to traditional organized crime and not, and on high-level smugglers, distributors, manufacturers, financiers, and corrupt public officials who aid narcotics dealing. All the FBI's new authority will be exercised in close coordination with DEA.

NCJRS

AUG 23 1982

ACQUISITIONS

We found that this close coordination could, and did, work in the 6 months before this new plan was announced. During that time, the number of joint investigations increased from 6 to 120 throughout the country. In that period, the FBI Executive Assistant Director for Investigations, Francis M. Mullen, Jr., acted as Administrator of DEA. From an administrative standpoint, this was a very good way of bridging the gaps that existed between the two agencies. We envision the continuation of this coordination, including cross-training of DEA and FBI Agents.

The resources of the FBI will be applied as they have been consistently in the past—that is, to do the work that State and local law enforcement cannot do, as defined by the Congress in its setting of Federal jurisdiction. Often, large interstate narcotics smuggling is beyond the budget, personnel, and monetary abilities of local departments. Adding FBI resources in manpower, geographic coverage, and newly gained experience in undercover and organized crime investigations to DEA's wealth of knowledge and experience in the drug field, we believe will have a substantial impact on the national drug problem.

William H. Webster

William H. Webster
Director
August 1, 1982

54998
Cooperation

MISSING



By
DEMERY R. BISHOP
Special Agent
and
TIMOTHY J. SCHUESSLER
Program Analyst
Federal Bureau of Investigation
National Crime Information Center
Washington, D.C.

The National Crime Information Center's Missing Person File



Special Agent Bishop



Mr. Schuessler

"There is a distinct need for a national system to help in locating missing persons." This statement has recently been heard in the Nation as a plea from some sectors of the public seeking law enforcement action, although the criminal justice community has long recognized the need for a centralized computerized system for aiding and locating missing persons. At a February 1974, meeting, the National Crime Information Center (NCIC) Advisory Policy Board approved the establishment of a Missing Person File. This file was added to the nationwide NCIC system on October 1, 1975. The Missing Person File provides law enforcement agencies with the capability of entering missing person records into the FBI's NCIC computer and inquiring against this file with instantaneous response.

The File

In order to use the Missing Person File to its maximum potential, all law enforcement personnel should be aware of its existence and the criteria for entering a missing person record into NCIC. The file is composed of four categories of records. These categories and the criteria for entry in each are as follows:

- 1) Disability—A person of any age who is missing and under proven physical and/or mental disability or is senile, thereby subjecting himself or others to personal and immediate danger.
- 2) Endangered—A person of any age who is missing and is in the company of another person under circumstances indicating that his physical safety is in danger.

- 3) Involuntary—A person of any age who is missing under circumstances indicating that the disappearance was not voluntary, i.e., abduction or kidnaping.
- 4) Juvenile—A person who is missing and declared unemancipated as defined by the laws of his State of residence and who does not meet the entry criteria of the other three categories.

A record may be entered in the Missing Person File if the entering agency has documentation supporting the stated conditions under which the person is declared missing. Examples of acceptable documentation are a written statement from a parent or legal guardian confirming that the person is missing and verifying his date of birth, a written statement from a physician or other authoritative source corroborating the missing person's physical and/or mental disability, or a written statement from a parent, legal guardian, family member, or other authoritative source advising that the missing person is in the company of another person under circumstances indicating that his physical safety is in danger or that the missing person's disappearance was not voluntary. A missing person report filed with a police agency is sufficient documentation for entering a juvenile in category No. 4. Although some departmental rules establish time delays in entering individuals' records into the Missing Person File, there is no mandatory system requirement for delayed entry, i.e., 24-hour time lapse from disappearance to entry.

A record entered in the disability, endangered, or involuntary category is retained in the file indefinitely until a locate is placed on the record or action is taken by the entering agency to delete the record. A record entered in

"The Missing Person File provides law enforcement agencies with the capability of entering missing person records into the FBI's NCIC computer and inquiring against this file with instantaneous response."

the juvenile category is retained until the person is no longer a juvenile as defined by the statutes of his State.

The Missing Person File is designed to permit entry of descriptive information and unique numeric identifiers. The record specifically differentiates the individual as a missing person and not a person for whom an arrest warrant is outstanding.

Off-Line Search Capability

In addition to online searches of the NCIC computer by criminal justice agencies with NCIC terminals, special off-line computer searches not possible with a terminal may be conducted for all NCIC files by contacting the FBI's NCIC staff. As online searches of timely and accurate information can increase the probability of wanted person apprehension and stolen property recovery, these searches can also facilitate locating a missing person or identifying a dead body. NCIC off-line search possibilities are infinite. Searches can be limited to a certain time frame, i.e., a particular year, day, or hour, and to the records and/or transactions of a particular State or city. An NCIC off-line search can be made with a minimum of one search parameter; however, searches including all available information will be more effective. Searches can be made on common personal descriptors, such as sex, height, weight, estimated age, scars, marks and hair coloring, to assist in identifying a missing or deceased person.

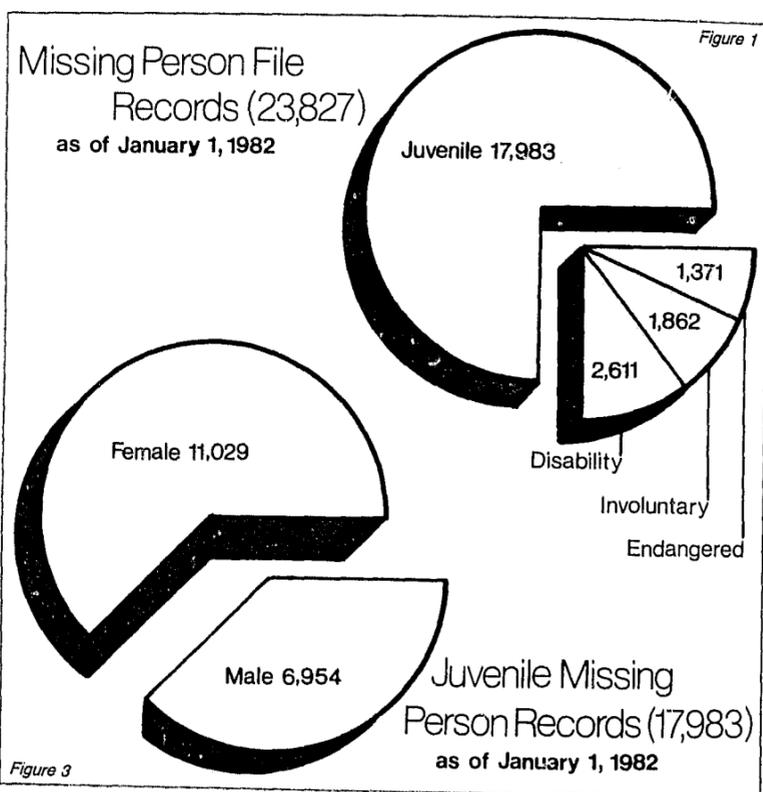
Unidentified Dead File Pilot Project

As an additional investigative tool, the NCIC Advisory Policy Board approved the establishment of a nationwide unidentified dead file pilot project. The Colorado Bureau of Investigation (CBI) Unknown Dead File is currently available to all criminal justice agencies for a test period of 2 years. The pilot will determine whether there is a need to establish an unidentified dead file on a national basis, whether a file of this type could be automated, and what type of information should be included to best serve the user.

An authorized agency seeking to identify a recovered body is required to

transmit a form describing the remains to the CBI via the National Law Enforcement Telecommunications System, Inc. (NLETS) or by simply sending the form through the mail. The CBI Identification Unit files the report after computerizing the identification information shown on the form.

An investigator working on a missing person case may check the Unidentified Dead File by providing available identification data. Prompt response is provided during normal business hours, giving the inquirer any



possible lead information, such as who has a body fitting the description of the missing person.

Once an identification is made, the originating agency requests the CBI to destroy the index record in the Unidentified Dead File. This file does not contain complete investigative reports, photographs, x-rays, or locations of the remains. The information contained in the file serves as an index to establish contact between agencies seeking to locate missing persons and identify deceased persons whose bodies have been located. The file's value is de-

pendent on its completeness, nationwide entry of records, and active use by investigators.

Public Concern

Various major metropolitan cities have a large volume of missing person cases reported annually. There are 30,000 reported missing person cases,¹ 50,000 parentally abducted children,² and 1 million runaways,³ annually. During some of the recent major cases—the Gacy murders in Chicago, the Atlanta kidnappings, the missing Patz child in New York, and the Walsh abduction in Florida—there was con-

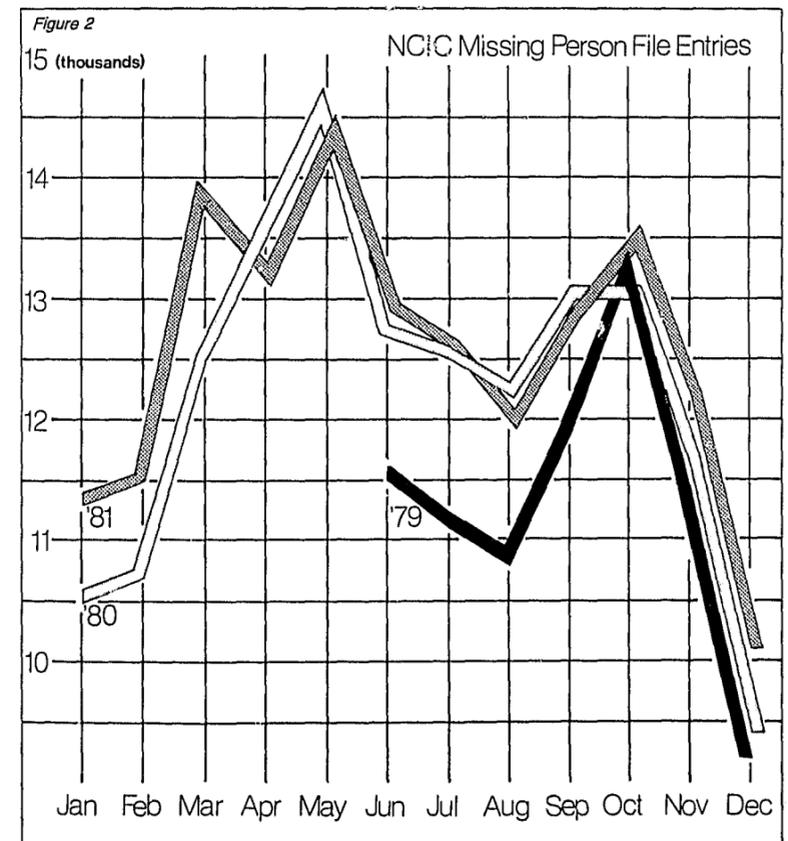
siderable media coverage indicating that police agencies were not coordinating their efforts in locating missing persons and that a nationwide missing person system was virtually nonexistent. This type of public awareness should encourage all law enforcement agencies to ensure the use of the Missing Person File.

In using the Missing Person File, it is important that:

- 1) The missing person report be filed and additional documentation, if required, be furnished;
- 2) The information be entered into the system on a timely basis; and
- 3) The record be removed when the individual is located.

A statistical analysis of the Missing Person File was recently conducted to determine the degree of its use by law enforcement agencies. Between October 1975, and January 1982, 791,403 records were entered in the NCIC Missing Person File, an average of 10,552 entries per month. Recent analyses have shown that an average of 76 percent of the records in file are in the juvenile category. It is estimated that 601,466 records have been entered for missing juveniles since the file became operational in 1975. This would be an average of 8,020 juvenile-category entries per month.

As of January 1, 1982, there were 23,827 records in the NCIC Missing Person File. Of these records, 17,983 were in the juvenile category, 1,371 were in the endangered category, 1,852 were in the involuntary category, and 2,611 were in the disability category.



"Use of the NCIC Missing Person and Unidentified Dead Files can result in significant humanitarian service and criminal justice accomplishments."

ry. (See fig. 1.) Review of monthly entries for 1980 and 1981 shows that the yearly high for both years was in the month of May, with 14,646 entries in 1980 and 14,357 entries in 1981. The month in which the least number of entries were made was December for both years, with 9,366 entries in 1980 and 10,088 entries in 1981. Figure 2 shows monthly entries from June 1979, through December 1981.

Juvenile Category Statistics

Of the 17,983 missing juvenile entries, 61.3 percent were entered for females and 38.7 percent were entered for males. Missing males outnumbered missing females for most ages through age 12. Missing females substantially outnumbered missing males between 13 and 19 years of age. Missing persons 10 years old and younger represent only 3.2 percent of the records; persons 11, 12, and 13 years old represent 10.1 percent of the records; persons 14, 15, 16, and 17 years old

represent 85.4 percent of the records; and persons 19 years old and older represent 1.2 percent of the records. Percentages do not total 100 percent because of rounding.

Of the missing juveniles, whites comprised 82 percent of the records followed by blacks with 16.4 percent of the records. The majority of the entries—51.1 percent—are for white females. White males comprise 30.9 percent of the records, black females comprise 9.3 percent of the records, and black males comprise 7.1 percent of the records. (See fig. 3.) These figures are constant during the course of the year, with juvenile entries constituting the majority of records on file. If the estimates indicating that there are over 1 million runaways annually are correct, a total of approximately 114,000 juvenile records entered into the Missing Person File per year would indicate that the full potential of the file is not being utilized.

Successful Utilization

A recent successful use of the file highlights its potential. An individual, Tom J.,* lost his memory. He only knew his name as a result of a document which he had in his possession. After 2 years of attempting to discover his past, with negative results, Tom J. began a new life. He married and found employment. One day, Tom J. was stopped by a police officer for a traffic violation. The officer made an inquiry on him, via NCIC. The inquiry resulted in a "hit"—Missing Person—Endangered, entered by a Florida agency. Tom J. was brought to the police station and contact was established with his parents. After verifications, Tom was reunited with his parents.

Use of the NCIC Missing Person and Unidentified Dead Files can result in significant humanitarian service and criminal justice accomplishments. It is yet another tool for the law enforcement officer to use in order to better serve the public.

FBI

*Fictitious—Summary of facts taken with permission from American Broadcasting Corporation program, 4-6-81, "That's Incredible."

Footnotes

- ¹ Ingrid Groller, "Where are They?" *Parent's Magazine*, April 1981, p. 70.
- ² "Up Front," *People Magazine*, October 5, 1981, p. 30.
- ³ *New York Times*, June 22, 1980, Section 11, p. 9.

END

Figure 3

Juvenile Missing Person Records

Race	Percent of Total		Percent of Total		Total	Percent of Total
	Females	Records	Males	Records		
American Indian or Alaskan Native	86	.5	67	.4	153	.9
Asian or Pacific Islander	16	.1	16	.1	32	2
Black	1,671	9.3	1,284	7.1	2,955	16.4
White	9,191	51.1	5,548	30.9	14,739	82.0
Unknown	65	.4	39	.2	104	.6
Total	11,029		6,954		17,983	