

# Has someone you know gone missing?

## Organisations that provide help and support

Factsheet 4

**It is believed that around 200,000 people go missing every year in the UK. Although most missing people are located within two days, their disappearance can be traumatic for both their family and their friends.**

As many as 2,000 people each year may remain missing for as long as a year, which can be very distressing for their families and friends left behind. It is normal to experience a range of emotional responses when missing a loved one. This may include feelings of anxiety, fear, anger, guilt, confusion, depression, helplessness, isolation, panic attacks, numbness and lack of motivation.

It is important to take care of yourself and your family. Do not be afraid to ask others for help and support where possible. You can assist the police investigation, cope better and be there to support the missing person when they return or are located, if you take care of yourself.

A number of charities and organisations exist who may be able to provide you with support, advice and assistance:

### Missing People

The charity Missing People provides support, advice and practical help for the families of missing people across the UK. It has a 24 hour telephone helpline for around-the-clock emotional support for the duration of a loved one's disappearance. The charity also runs

several helplines for both missing adults and children to contact if they need assistance. Missing People also has a website listing details of people who have been reported missing in the UK, both adults and children. Missing People is the largest charity working in this area.

Telephone: **116 000**

Email: [info@missingpeople.org.uk](mailto:info@missingpeople.org.uk)

Website: [www.missingpeople.org.uk](http://www.missingpeople.org.uk)

### Reunite

Reunite is the leading UK charity specialising in international parental child abduction. It provides advice and support to anyone affected by child abduction or those who fear their child may be abducted. More information on this charity and their services can be found on their website.

Telephone: **0116 2555 345**

Advice line: **0116 2556 234**

Email: [reunite@dircon.co.uk](mailto:reunite@dircon.co.uk)

Website: [www.reunite.org](http://www.reunite.org)

### Missing Abroad

Missing Abroad provides advice and support for the families of children or adults missing overseas. Missing Abroad may also be able to provide practical assistance and help to individuals missing and stranded abroad. Missing Abroad is run by the Lucie Blackman Trust.

Telephone: **0207 047 5060**  
Freephone: **0800 098 8485** (for  
sightings and intelligence)

Email: [operations@missingabroad.org](mailto:operations@missingabroad.org)

Website: [www.missingabroad.org](http://www.missingabroad.org)

## **Samaritans**

Samaritans provides confidential non-judgemental emotional support, 24 hours a day. Services are offered by telephone, email, letter and face-to-face in most of its branches.

Telephone: **08457 90 90 90**

Email: [jo@samaritans.org](mailto:jo@samaritans.org)

Website: [www.samaritans.org](http://www.samaritans.org)

## **Children and Families Across Borders (CFAB)**

Children and Families Across Borders (CFAB) assists people who have been separated from family members as a result of divorce, migration, seeking asylum, trafficking and abduction. It also supports people for whom there are protection concerns, including children and vulnerable adults who may have been abducted or trafficked. CFAB assists in cases where children are separated from one or both parents. CFAB aims to reunite children with their families and assist children and adults to re-establish and maintain contact with parents and family members.

Telephone: **0207 735 8941**

Email: [info@dfab.uk.net](mailto:info@dfab.uk.net)

Website: [www.cfab.uk.net](http://www.cfab.uk.net)

## **Parents and Abducted Children Together (PACT)**

PACT is an international non-profit organisation that aims to increase awareness of parental child abduction. It

is influential in the areas of policy making and research, through its lobbying to raise awareness and advocate solutions.

Information and resources relating to parental Abduction is available on their website.

Telephone: **0800 731 1845**

Email: [support@pact-online.org](mailto:support@pact-online.org)

Website: [www.pact-online.org](http://www.pact-online.org)

## **Salvation Army**

The Salvation Army provide a service for tracing adult relatives with whom contact has been lost (this does not include adoptees or under-16s).

Telephone: **0207 367 4747**

(Mon - Fri 8:15am to  
3:15pm)

Website:

[www.salvationarmy.org.uk/familytracing](http://www.salvationarmy.org.uk/familytracing)

## **Karma Nirvana**

Karma Nirvana is a charity that supports victims and survivors of forced marriage and honour-based abuse. Karma Nirvana operates nationally across the UK and can be contacted via its Honour Network helpline. More details are available on their website.

Honour Network Helpline: **0800 5999  
247**

Website: [www.karmanirvana.org.uk](http://www.karmanirvana.org.uk)

## **British Red Cross**

The British Red Cross can assist with tracing relatives separated by war and disasters and provides a service to exchange messages.

Telephone: **0207 235 5454**

Email: [itms2@redcross.org.uk](mailto:itms2@redcross.org.uk)

Website: [www.redcross.org.uk/trace](http://www.redcross.org.uk/trace)

### **Missing-You.net**

Missing-You.net is a free and instant on-line messaging service which allows users to contact missing persons, old friends and distant relatives.

Website: [www.missing-you.net](http://www.missing-you.net)

### **Missing Wales**

Missing Wales is a charity dedicated to helping and tracing missing people from Wales and supporting their families. It provides a 24 hour free phone helpline. Its aim is to support, advise and listen to any person who has gone missing and wishes to either contact them to pass on a simple safe and well message home or to reunite them with their family.

Telephone: **0800 012 1217**

Email: [janet@missingwales.co.uk](mailto:janet@missingwales.co.uk)

Website: [www.missingwales.co.uk](http://www.missingwales.co.uk)

### **Childline**

Childline is a counselling service for children and young people. Its' helpline may be a source of support fro a child who is missing or has run away from home.

Telephone: **0800 11 11**

Website: [www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)

### **Safe and Sound Derby**

A specialist organisation which seeks to reach out to children and young people who are being, or at risk of being, sexually exploited through criminal practices that threaten their physical and mental wellbeing (many of these children may be reported missing).

Telephone: **01332 362120**

Email: [info@safeandsoundderby.co.uk](mailto:info@safeandsoundderby.co.uk)

Website:

[www.safeandsoundderby.co.uk](http://www.safeandsoundderby.co.uk)

### **SAFE@LAST**

SAFE@LAST provides services (including a 24hr helpline) to young people who have run away, are thinking of running away or who have been made to leave the place they usually live. This charity works closely with police to return missing young people home if it is safe to do so. In some areas of the country, it provides emergency accommodation for young people who have run away or been made to leave. It also provides information on the dangers and risks of running away from home.

Telephone: **0800 335 SAFE** or **01909 566977**

Website: [www.safeatlast.org.uk](http://www.safeatlast.org.uk)

### **Rerun Dorset Runaways Service**

Rerun Dorset Runaways Service provides advice, information and support to young people under 19 and their families, who are experiencing issues around running away or unplanned leaving home; with a view to reducing the incidence of persistent running away.

Telephone: **01258 475487**

Email: [info@rerundorset.org](mailto:info@rerundorset.org)

Website: [www.rerundorset.org](http://www.rerundorset.org)

## Jigsaw4u

Jigsaw4U provides care, advice, guidance, advocacy, support and counselling for children and young people who are experiencing loss and trauma. The work of this charity includes the counselling of young runaways.

Telephone: **0208 687 1384**

Website: [www.jigsaw4u.org.uk](http://www.jigsaw4u.org.uk)

## ECPAT

End Child Prostitution, Child Pornography and the Trafficking of Children for Sexual Purposes (ECPAT). This charity focuses on the prevention of the exploitation and trafficking of children.

Telephone: **0207 233 9887**

Email: [info@ecpat.org.uk](mailto:info@ecpat.org.uk)

Website: [www.ecpat.org.uk](http://www.ecpat.org.uk)

## Railway Children

Railway Children exists to help vulnerable children, its objective is to provide relief to children and young people who are in conditions of need, hardship or distress and in particular, those living on the streets. Railway Children works with over 26 partner organisations with 117 projects worldwide across Africa, Asia and the UK. Railway Children helps thousands of street children every year from around the world.

Telephone: **01270 757596**

Email:

[enquiries@railwaychildren.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@railwaychildren.org.uk)

Website: [www.railwaychildren.org.uk](http://www.railwaychildren.org.uk)

## The Children's Society

The Children's Society provides help and understanding for children who are unable to find the support they need elsewhere. It is a large national charity with a network of projects. It also has an online runaways' resource pack that highlights the dangers of running away on its 'My Life' website.

Telephone: **0845 300 1128** or  
**0207 841 4400**

Email:

[supportercare@childrenssociety.org.uk](mailto:supportercare@childrenssociety.org.uk)

Website: [www.childrenssociety.org.uk](http://www.childrenssociety.org.uk)

## Barnardo's

Barnardo's works directly with children, young people and their families to support children and campaigns for better childcare policy. Barnardo's has hundreds of projects throughout the UK, including a Missing Service to support children who go missing. Barnardo's also report on missing-related issues. For example, it produced a 2010 report *Whose Child Now*, focusing on sexual exploitation and the links to children going missing and child trafficking in the UK.

Telephone: **0208 550 8822**

Email: **May be emailed from a form on their website**

Website: [www.barnardos.org.uk](http://www.barnardos.org.uk)

## National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC)

The NSPCC aims to end cruelty to children in the UK. The NSPCC works directly with children in projects throughout the country. It campaigns to change the law to further protect children and provides the **Childline** helpline and the NSPCC helpline. The NSPCC also provides advice and help for adults, in order to protect children.

Telephone: **0207 825 2775**

Email: [info@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:info@nspcc.org.uk)

Website: [www.nspcc.org.uk](http://www.nspcc.org.uk)

## Local community support groups

Local community teams and support groups in your area may also be able to help. For example, there may be a group in your area which can offer general advice and assistance for those experiencing anxiety or depression. Information about local community services in your area can be found on your local county council website. Contact details for your local county council can be obtained from the DirectGov website:

[www.directgov.uk/en/DI1/Directoriate/Localcouncils/AtoZoflocalcouncils/DG\\_A-Z\\_LG](http://www.directgov.uk/en/DI1/Directoriate/Localcouncils/AtoZoflocalcouncils/DG_A-Z_LG)

Information and advice on local voluntary organisations and support groups can also be obtained from your local Citizen's Advice Bureau. You can find out where your nearest CAB is on their website:

[www.citizensadvice.org.uk](http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk)

## Additional information and coping strategies

### Someone is Missing – an Emotional Resource for Families of Missing People

*Someone is Missing* is a very useful online resource, developed by mental health and law-enforcement organisations in New South Wales, Australia. It includes information on the impact of having a missing family member or friend. There is also information on a range of practical coping strategies for people dealing with the trauma of missing someone. *Someone is Missing* can be found at:

<http://pandora.nla.gov.au/pan/40259/20100213-0001/www.missingpersons.org.au/index.html>

## Counselling or Therapy

Some people find that counselling or therapy can help them when a loved one is missing. If you think that it might be helpful to visit a counsellor or therapist in your area, you may wish to visit your GP to discuss this. Your GP will assess you and decide whether to refer you to a professional counsellor or therapist. In some cases, you may be given six sessions of counselling for free, but you may have to pay for all sessions, depending on where you live.

If you do not wish to go to your GP, you can contact the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP), which will help you find a qualified counsellor, although you will have to fund this yourself. BACP has a client information helpdesk which assists people to find a suitable counsellor with whom they feel comfortable, in their particular area. The helpdesk staff can also discuss any queries or concerns that might arise while choosing a counsellor, or during the counselling process.

BACP Helpdesk: **01455 883316**

Website: [www.bacp.co.uk](http://www.bacp.co.uk)

Search for a therapist:

[www.itsgoodtotalk.org.uk/therapists](http://www.itsgoodtotalk.org.uk/therapists)

If you visit a counsellor or therapist, you may find it helpful to take the following document, which is produced by the Australian Federal Police, with you:

Supporting those who are left behind : A counselling framework to support families of missing people

Booklet:

<http://www.missingpersons.gov.au/GetAssets.axd?FilePath=/Assets/Files/84ed048c-e9b9-45e4-b108-cc456002f7f7.pdf>

Brochure:

<http://www.missingpersons.gov.au/Assets/Files/de7c5359-7415-4643-a408-cabbaa769896.pdf>

## Family Liaison Officers

In some cases, the police may allocate a Family Liaison Officer (FLO) to assist with the investigation. A FLO is more likely to be allocated in suspicious cases, where the police believe that the missing person may have come to harm. The FLO is primarily an investigator whose task is to gather information from the family and to enable a two-way conversation between the family and the police.

If you are allocated a FLO, there is a possibility that they may be withdrawn from the case after a period of time, even if the missing person has not been found.

Family Liaison Officers may be able to help you get in touch with a charity, such as Missing People, which can provide support and assistance during this difficult time.

## Police agencies and related organisations

A number of organisations also exist to assist the police with their investigations. You may be interested in their roles and remits, which are outlined briefly below:

### NCA UK Missing Persons Bureau

The UK Missing Persons Bureau works with the police and related organisations to help find missing people. The Bureau acts as the centre for the sharing of information on missing and unidentified people. The Bureau assists with both recent and long term/historic missing person cases and the services provided are free to police forces. The Bureau also co-ordinates with Interpol and overseas agencies in order to assist with international missing person enquiries. The Bureau is part of the CEOP Command in the National Crime Agency (NCA).

Telephone: **0845 000 5481**

Email:

[missingpersons bureau@nca.x.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:missingpersons bureau@nca.x.gsi.gov.uk)

Website:

[www.missingpersons.police.uk](http://www.missingpersons.police.uk)

### NCA Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (CEOP) Command

The Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre delivers a multi-agency service dedicated to tackling the exploitation of children. Its work includes targeting sex offenders who groom children online, travelling sex offenders and identifying victims and perpetrators from images of child abuse. Some children may be reported missing after going to meet individuals they have met online and CEOP has responsibility for work relating to missing children.

Telephone: **0870 000 3344**

Email via contact form at:

[www.ceop.police.uk/contact-us/contact-form](http://www.ceop.police.uk/contact-us/contact-form)

Website: [www.ceop.gov.uk](http://www.ceop.gov.uk)

### Interpol

Some missing person cases require international co-ordination or assistance, for example if a person goes missing while abroad or at sea. If there is reason to believe that a missing person is overseas, the police will co-ordinate with Interpol to issue a Yellow Notice, which will advise other countries that the person is missing and this may help locate them. The UK police does not have the automatic right to go and investigate on foreign soil when someone goes missing overseas.

In some cases, Interpol can assist the UK police by requesting that enquiries are made by the appropriate police force in the country in which the person has gone missing.

Some information is available on the Interpol website:

Website:

[www.interpol.int/Public/Children/missing/default.asp](http://www.interpol.int/Public/Children/missing/default.asp)

## Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO)

The FCO can provide advice and assistance to families and friends of people believed to be missing abroad. More information on the role of the FCO may be found in the factsheet *What to do when someone goes missing abroad*, available at [www.missingpersons.police.uk](http://www.missingpersons.police.uk)

Telephone: **0207 008 1500**

Website:

<http://www.fco.gov.uk/en/travel-and-living-abroad/when-things-go-wrong/missing>

## FCO International Child Abduction Section

The FCO International Child Abduction Section assists British and Dual British nationals affected by parental child abduction or residence and contact disputes.

Telephone: **0207 008 0878**

Out of Hours: **0207 7008 1500**

Website:

<http://www.fco.gov.uk/en/travel-and-living-abroad/when-things-go-wrong/child-abduction>

## FCO Forced Marriage Unit

If you are worried that someone may be missing because they have been forced into marriage, the FCO Forced Marriage Unit can provide confidential advice and assistance to:

- Those who have been forced into marriage

- Those at risk of being forced into marriage
- People worried about friends or relatives who may have been forced into marriage

Telephone: **0207 008 0151**

Email: [fmf@fco.gov.uk](mailto:fmf@fco.gov.uk)

Website:

<http://www.fco.gov.uk/en/travel-and-living-abroad/when-things-go-wrong/forced-marriage>

## International Child Abduction and Contact Unit (ICACU)

The International Child Abduction and Contact Unit (ICACU) is the Central Authority in England and Wales for the Hague Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction. The ICACU is based within the Office of the Official Solicitor and Public Trustee. The ICACU is open Monday to Friday 9.00am to 5.00pm and can provide information and advice relating to international child abduction.

Telephone: **0207 911 7127**

Email: [enquiries@offsol.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@offsol.gsi.gov.uk)

Website:

<http://www.justice.gov.uk/guidance/protecting-the-vulnerable/official-solicitor/international-child-abduction-and-contact-unit/index.htm>

For additional copies, to enquire about the content of this document or request the information in an alternative format, please contact the UK Missing Persons Bureau on 0845 000 5481 or email: [missingpersons bureau@nca.x.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:missingpersons bureau@nca.x.gsi.gov.uk)

The information in this guide is not definitive and should be utilised in conjunction with police guidance and independent legal advice.