

# IF YOU ARE MISSING

How to send a message home and access help

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**How to send a message home**

If you have gone missing (or don't have contact with your family but think you may have been reported missing) and you want to let the police and your family know that you are safe, you can go to any police station with proof of your identity and tell them that you have been reported missing. The police will confirm who you are and will speak with you to confirm that you are safe and well. The police will then let your family or whoever reported you missing know that you are safe. If you are an adult and do not want anyone to know where you are, the police are obliged to respect your wishes and will not inform your family of your whereabouts. However, if you are a vulnerable person (for example under the age of 16 or suffering from a mental illness) the police officer will have a duty to protect you and may decide, on the basis of a risk assessment, to take a different course of action.

If you are missing and need help from the police, visit your local police station or telephone your local police force. Telephone numbers can be found in the phone book or online: [www.police.uk/pu/contact-the-police/](http://www.police.uk/pu/contact-the-police/)  
If you are in danger and need urgent assistance, dial 999.

If you would rather not contact the police, the charity Missing People can send a message to your family or friends. They can also advise and assist if you would like to be reunited with your family, but are unsure as to how to go about this.

**Help and support from Missing People**

The charity Missing People is the largest UK charity helping missing people and their family and friends. Missing People also provides advice and assistance to children and adults who are missing. They can provide you with support and send a message back to your family. They won't tell anyone that you have contacted them unless you want them to. If you do want to get back in touch with your family, they can help.

Telephone: 116 000

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

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

**Missing People's helplines are there for you**

Missing People operate a Runaway Helpline for those under 18 and a Message Home Service for those aged 18 and over. These are confidential services which provide help, advice and support to people who are missing. These services are available via phone, text or email.

**Runaway Helpline for young people**

The Runaway Helpline is a UK-wide free and confidential service for anyone who has run away from care or home or has been forced to leave home. The helpline is open 24 hours a day and can be accessed by telephone, text or email. If you want them to, the Runaway Helpline could help you to contact your family, a carer, a support agency such as Social Services or a young person's project. They may also be able to help you find a place of safety. You can even text the helpline if you have no credit left on your mobile phone. Contact the Runaway Helpline on:

Freephone: 116 000

Email: [116000@runawayhelpline.org.uk](mailto:116000@runawayhelpline.org.uk)

Online chat: Available between 14:00 – 21:00

Text: 116000

**Message Home service**

Message Home is a service accessible for anyone who is missing and are seeking confidential help and advice. Message Home can help you to contact your family (they must be over the age of 18) or pass on a message to them, to let them know that you are safe. They will only pass on your message and will not tell your family any other information, such as your location.

Freephone: **116 000**

Email: [116000@missingpeople.org.uk](mailto:116000@missingpeople.org.uk)

Text: **116 000**

**If you are in distress**

If you are upset, worried or depressed and want to speak to someone, but don't want to contact the police or a missing person's organisation, you can contact a confidential helpline.

**Samaritans**

You can talk to Samaritans any time of the day or night if you are worried, upset, confused or would just like to talk to someone. Samaritans provides confidential emotional support and you can reach them by telephone, email, letter or alternatively, you can drop into a local branch and talk to someone face to face.

Telephone: 116 123

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

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

**Childline**

The Childline helpline is there for you if you want to talk about anything that is troubling you.

Childline provides help, information and advice for children and young people, whether they are missing or not, at any time of the day or night.

You can call their helpline or you can send an email or chat with someone online, using their website.

Telephone: 0800 11 11 or 116 111

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

Email: By signing up on their website

Online Chat: [www.childline.org.uk/get-support/1-2-1-counsellor-chat/](http://www.childline.org.uk/get-support/1-2-1-counsellor-chat/)

**European missing children hotline**

By phoning **116 000**, you will be put in touch with an organisation which supports missing persons and their families. 116 000 is the European missing children hotline number and is active in 27 countries including, the UK, Belgium, Denmark, France, Greece, Hungary, Italy, The Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia and Spain.

Calls to 116 000 in the UK are answered by the charity Missing People (see previous section) and callers can access the Message Home facility and the Runaways Helpline, as well as being able to speak to an advisor.



If you require more information, other factsheets can be downloaded from the UK Missing Persons Unit website: <http://missingpersons.police.uk>.

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

#### ABOUT THE UKMPU

The Missing Persons Unit is the UK national and international point of contact for all missing person and unidentified body cases. We're the only UK agency focused exclusively on missing people. We serve all UK police forces as well as overseas police agencies.

We are a hub for the exchange of information and provision of expertise on the subject of missing persons. We provide a comprehensive service for all missing person investigations, supporting law enforcement and other agencies.



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



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