

Pointers For Parents

Instant Photography: From Smiles To Safety

(NAPSA)—Taking pictures of the kids is one of the great joys of being a parent. However, most parents don't realize that pictures can bring back more than just memories—an effective photograph can prove to be vital in the unthinkable event of a disappearance.

According to the FBI's National Crime Information Center, nearly 2,000 children are reported missing each day in the U.S. Fortunately, the majority of these children are recovered quickly and safely due to pictures. In fact, according to the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC), one child in six is found because of a photograph—making a current picture the single most important tool in finding a missing child. Surprisingly, while most parents have lots of pictures of their children, most do not have a photograph that is considered suitable for use in locating a lost or missing child.

Seeking to address this urgent national problem, Polaroid Corporation, along with the NCMEC, created Project KidCare—a child photo identification and safety education program. Project KidCare is dedicated to increasing national awareness of missing and exploited children, while educating families about child safety and encouraging parents to combine a child's personal information with a current, high-quality, color instant photograph.

Polaroid and NCMEC think parents should take the necessary precautions to protect their children. "Every time we are faced with a high profile case that's making headlines, families are understandably frightened," says Ernie Allen, president and CEO, NCMEC. "But, parents need to know these cases are very rare and parents can take measures to safeguard their kids. First and foremost, parents need to talk to their children and keep the lines of communication open. Just as important, parents should have a suitable photograph and vital statistics documented, as outlined in the Project KidCare passport."



A current picture can be an extremely helpful tool in recovering a missing child.

Project KidCare suggests a few simple measures that every parent should take with their children:

- Talk to your kids. Create an atmosphere in the home where children feel safe confiding information about an uncomfortable experience.
- Plan for an emergency. Keep updated information about each child and current photographs on hand. They should include at least one unobstructed head-and-shoulders shot. Parents should update the photos every six months for children age six and under, and every year for children age six and older.
- Be sure to go over the rules with children about whose homes they can visit, and discuss the boundaries of where they can and can't go in the neighborhood.
- Teach children to get out of dangerous or uncomfortable situations right away.
- Children should be cautioned never to approach any vehicle, occupied or not, unless accompanied by a parent or trusted adult.
- Make sure children know their names, address and telephone numbers, and how to use the telephone.

Through Project KidCare, Polaroid is working with local businesses, civic groups and large corporations across the country to provide parents with a passport-like booklet containing a current photo of their child, vital personal and medical emergency information and NCMEC's The Rules of Safety. For more information on Project KidCare and the use of instant photos, parents are encouraged to visit the Web site at www.polaroid.com/kidcare or call 1-800-662-8337, extension K400.