



**Missing Children
Society of Canada**

The Child Search Network: Part of Canada's National Strategy for Missing Children

The Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police (CACCP) has identified the Missing Children Society of Canada's (MCSC) new *Child Search Network* as a national resource and system to meet the 'gap of response' for high-risk missing children cases that do not meet the strict criteria for the AMBER Alert.

In doing so, the CACCP is adding its endorsement to that of the Alberta Association of Chiefs of Police, the Saskatchewan Association of Chiefs of Police, the Ontario Association of Chiefs of Police, the British Columbia Police Chiefs Association, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, the BC Missing Persons Unit Task Force, and the National Search and Rescue Secretariat.

In partnership with Microsoft and Esri Canada, the MCSC has created a best-in-class technology developed and pilot tested in consultation with select police services. It is a network that bridges the identified gap of response for police, enabling high-risk missing children information to be shared between police services across the country, and between the general public and the police. The MCSC *Child Search Network* is a new, turn-key solution available today, at no cost to police organizations.

For these reasons, the CACCP is now inviting all police services in Canada to adopt and implement the new *Child Search Network* as a standard resource for all high-risk missing children investigations.

How does the Child Search Network fit into the national strategy for missing persons?

Many missing children cases cross municipal, provincial, territorial, and even international borders and not all high-risk missing children cases meet the AMBER Alert criteria. The MCSC *Child Search Network* provides police services and Canadians across Canada with a quick, easy, and cost-effective way to share information and collaborate with one another to find missing children more quickly and reunite them with their families.

Canada's national infrastructure to manage missing children cases now involves three (3) key components: the AMBER Alert System, the Missing Children Society of Canada's *Child Search Network*, and the RCMP's National Missing Persons DNA Program.

a) AMBER Alert System

AMBER Alerts are issued by the police only when a missing child age 18 and under is believed to have been abducted and is in imminent danger.

AMBER Alerts are sent through the National Public Alerting System to mobile phones, on broadcast media, through social media, and on highway signs. AMBER Alerts include the name, and a description of the abducted child, who he or she might be with, and descriptions of any vehicle suspected of being used in the alleged abduction. They are broadcast to all citizens in a large geographic area (e.g. Northern Alberta, Southern Ontario) and are received based on a real-time location.

b) The Missing Children Society of Canada's *Child Search Network*

The MCSC Child Search Network is a system connecting police agencies across the country and linking community members to police services.

The network includes a database with real-time details from police about missing children cases, with photos, location maps and capacity to deliver the information to community members and first responders specific to their location. It also lets the public share vital information with police via the technology. The *Child Search Network* consists of different communication channels used to convey Child Search Alerts including the MCSC rescu app, traditional media, Facebook, Twitter, or SMS text.

- **Child Search Alerts**

Child Search Alerts are issued by the Missing Children Society of Canada, in conjunction with police, for an urgent missing child case that does not meet the AMBER Alert threshold but requires immediate community assistance.

Once a police service has initiated a missing person's investigation and the investigating team has defined the parameters of the search, they may issue a Child Search Alert. This is achieved by accessing the **MCSC Child Search Network - Police Hub** at <https://police-csnmcsc.hub.arcgis.com/>, a secure online portal where the police upload missing persons cases to be made accessible to law enforcement agencies, first responders, and the general public.

Child Search Alerts are targeted to specific geographic areas (e.g., city or street). Police services in that region will be advised. Also, Canadians who have registered for the alerts via the free **MCSC rescu app**, will be advised based on the location the user specified when they registered.

As the missing person investigation evolves, different alerts may be issued at different times, in different regions.

- **MCSC rescu app (<https://rescu.mcsc.ca/>)**

The general public is invited to share any information they may have regarding a missing person's investigation via the MCSC rescu app. (Only police can upload/submit cases.)

Canadians can serve as the valuable eyes and ears of the police and as a voice for the missing child/youth. Canadians can access the free MCSC rescu app from their app store and use it to view information about missing children cases found on the *Child Search Network* and advise the police of the tips that may help them to locate and reunite the child/youth with their family.

c) National Centre for Missing Persons and Unidentified Remains

The National Centre for Missing Persons and Unidentified Remains (NCMPUR) of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) is Canada's national centre that assists law enforcement, medical examiners, and chief coroners with missing persons and unidentified remains investigations across the country.

The NCMPUR also operates the Canada's Missing website (www.canadasmising.ca) which features profiles of missing persons and unidentified remains that have been published at the request of the primary investigator from either a police, coroner, or medical examiner agency. The lead investigator determines when and whether to publish a case.

While this website does not include a listing of profiles for all missing persons and unidentified remains in Canada, it is important to note that the MCSC *Child Search Network* is an identified program of the RCMP's NCMPUR. A signed memorandum of understanding exists between the two organizations with a goal to increase Canadian public awareness on issues related to missing children; assist in the prompt and safe return of missing children to their lawful guardians; and contribute to national and international efforts to obtain support for a global cooperative response to the issues of missing children. Discussions are underway to determine how best to maximize and align the systems to further increase the efficiency of missing person investigations.

While police are able to use advances in technology to their advantage while investigating, it's acknowledged that the most effective search for missing children and youth must include partnerships and new tools that enable members of the community to contribute. We believe that the MCSC *Child Search Network* is a national, collaborative approach involving partnerships between the police, a non-governmental organization, the private sector and the general public and that it is a cost-effective, winning combination that will allow us to find missing children more quickly and reunite them with their families.

Contact MCSC for access and training on the MCSC Police Hub via:

- The portal: <https://police-csnmcsc.hub.arcgis.com/>
- Email: info@mcsc.ca
- Phone: 1-800-661-6160