

## **AMBER Alert Joins Twitter**

**Alexandria, Va., Jan. 13, 2014** –The National Center for Missing & Exploited Children (NCMEC) today announced the launch of an AMBER Alert™ Twitter account. Using the handle [@AMBERAlert](https://twitter.com/AMBERAlert), the new account will help the abducted children alerts reach the approximately 49 million monthly Twitter users in the United States. This announcement comes on AMBER Alert Awareness Day, which the U.S. Department of Justice declared to increase awareness of the AMBER Alert program and encourage public engagement in the safe recovery of abducted children.

“Since it was created in 1996, the AMBER Alert program has grown into a powerful national network that has helped to safely recover 679 abducted children,” said Karol V. Mason, Assistant Attorney General for the Office of Justice Programs and National AMBER Alert Coordinator. “By adding Twitter to the network, we greatly enhance our ability to reach the public and are able to make this important public safety tool even more effective.”

Twitter users, who follow the @AMBER Alert handle will automatically receive all AMBER Alerts in their Twitter feed.

“The AMBER Alert program has always represented an evolution in the way we search for abducted children, making technology and the rapid distribution of information a critical part of their safe recovery,” said John Ryan, NCMEC president and CEO. “We will continue to work with the U.S. Department of Justice to find ways to expand the alerts’ reach and bring more children home safely.”

Law enforcement issues AMBER Alerts, which include the geographic area where the alert should be issued and any available information about the child, abductor, or suspected vehicle used in the abduction.

Once issued, broadcasters and transportation agencies distribute the alerts. They are also sent to NCMEC, which resends the alerts at the request of the U.S. Department of Justice to a network of secondary distributors that includes Internet service providers, digital billboards, truckers, cell phones, and others. NCMEC will issue the alerts via Twitter through this secondary distribution.

For more information about AMBER Alerts, including the history of the program, visit [www.amberalert.gov](http://www.amberalert.gov).

### **About the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children**

The National Center for Missing & Exploited Children is the leading 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization working with law enforcement, families, and the professionals who serve them on issues relating to missing and sexually exploited children. Authorized by Congress to serve as the nation’s clearinghouse

on these issues, NCMEC operates a hotline, 1-800-THE-LOST<sup>®</sup> (1-800-843-5678), and has assisted law enforcement in the recovery of more than 191,000 children. NCMEC also operates the CyberTipline, a mechanism for reporting child pornography, child sex trafficking, and other forms of child sexual exploitation. Since it was created in 1998, NCMEC has received more than 2.2 million reports of suspected child sexual exploitation and reviewed more than 104 million suspected child pornography images. NCMEC works in partnership with the U.S. Department of Justice's Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention. To learn more about NCMEC, visit [www.missingkids.com](http://www.missingkids.com). Follow NCMEC on [Twitter](#) and like NCMEC on [Facebook](#).