



# Fact Sheet

## The Canada Border Services Agency's *Our Missing Children* program

### Borderproofing Children

In 2005, Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA) officers recovered 69 missing children. Since the inception of the program in 1986 we have brought home over 1,400 children.

CBSA officers pay extra attention to children as they enter Canada. Recognizing which children have a valid reason to accompany adult travellers is an essential aspect of the program. This additional attention helps to ensure children's safety.

To avoid delays at international borders, travellers should consider this advice:

- All adults should carry identification for the children travelling with them, regardless of the children's age.
- Parents who share custody of their children should carry copies of the legal custody documents.
- The Canada Border Services Agency suggests identification such as a birth certificate, baptismal certificate, passport, or immigration document. If none of these are available, get a letter stating that you are the children's parent or guardian from your doctor or lawyer, or from the hospital where the children were born.
- Any adult who is not a parent or guardian should have written permission to supervise the child from the parent or guardian, as well as the child's identification. A letter would also facilitate entry for any one parent travelling with their children. This permission letter should contain addresses and telephone numbers where the parent or guardian can be reached.
- When travelling with a group of vehicles, the parent or guardian should travel in the same vehicle as the children when arriving at the border.

**If you have information about missing children, please call the program toll-free 1-877-318-3576.**

### General safety advice

- Never leave children unattended.
- Discuss scenarios with your children. Teach them what to do if they get lost in shopping malls, busy streets, or other crowded areas.
- Keep up-to-date photos of your children - school photos are best. You may want to use some kind of I.D. kit.
- Have your children fingerprinted. Your local police force can tell you which agencies in your area offer this service.
- Have your children memorize your home or office telephone number and teach them how to reach you by phone.
- Teach your children how to use the 9-1-1 telephone service in case of emergency.

- Explain to your children that they should refuse invitations to enter the vehicles or homes of strangers. Discourage your children from taking anything from strangers unless you approve.
- If you are separated or divorced, let your children's school administrators know about visitation rights. For example, tell them if your ex-spouse is allowed to pick up the children. You should also ensure school bus drivers are notified.

For more information, consult the *Our Missing Children* Web site:  
[www.ourmissingchildren.gc.ca](http://www.ourmissingchildren.gc.ca)