Parents are frequently caused a great deal of anxiety by the discovery that their child is missing. Visions of the child being hurt or kidnapped flash through their minds. Mother is usually the one to make the discovery that her little toddler is no longer in the back yard. Upon making this discovery, she makes a hurried check of the neighborhood, calling for the child. If she finds the child, all is well.

The case where the child is not found in a few minutes is the one that causes parents, the police, and the Juvenile Officer real anxiety. Let it be said, however, that there are very few missing children who are not found in a few hours. There are very, very few who come to any harm.

The Juvenile Officer feels that if the parents were to do the following things, missing toddlers and young children could be located easier and sooner. Remember that all children wander at some time or another. Therefore, you should check on them frequently. If you do not locate your missing child within a short time, notify your local law enforcement agency at once. The sooner they are on the job, the easier it is for them to locate the youngster. Time is important, as young children sometimes wander great distances from their homes in a short period of time. You, as a parent, can assist a great deal if you will enlist your neighbors and the older children of the vicinity in the search. After all, these people know the child and can spot him at a distance, while the officers are working from a description. Keep someone in the home, preferably the mother. The child may return, and if no one is there, he may wander away again. When checking your neighborhood, check every house and back yard. Don't skip around. Very often, children are located in homes nearby. If it is evening, and both parents are home, one of the parents, preferably the father, should join in the search. Don't do as some people do-just sit down or go to bed and wait for the officers to find the child. Be sure to check each room in your house. Check in and under the beds. Look behind the furniture. Look under the house, in the garage, chicken house, or other out buildings. Young children often crawl in these places to hide and then go to sleep. Stop and think what the child has expressed a desire about doing or seeing. This may prove a valuable clue. If you locate the child and you have reported him missing, notify the police at once. Many times in the past, officers have continued the search long after the child was found by the parents.

It is important also to remember this. If a child comes to your house, contact his parents or the police. He may be the missing child who is being searched for. Many times Juvenile Officers have had to work all night in search of a child who was already asleep in bed with friends, because the people he was staying with felt it unnecessary to check whether or not his parents knew where he was.

**LEROY D. BACA, Sheriff**



#21

# WHAT TO DO IF YOUR CHILD IS MISSING

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PRESENTED AS A PUBLIC SERVICE
BY THE LOS ANGELES COUNTY
**SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT**

**LEROY D. BACA, SHERIFF**

KEEP THIS CARD NEAR YOUR PHONE

PHONE NUMBER OF YOUR
LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCY

**WEBSITE: www.lasd.org**