



Reuniting families since 1986



SPRING 2011

The Missing Children Society of Canada is a national non-profit organization dedicated to the active search for abducted and missing children.

Since 1986, MCSC has assisted law enforcement and searching families through professional investigations, public awareness and family support programs.

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THE DANGEROUS REALITY OF PARENTAL ABDUCTIONS

Parental abductions represent the majority of child abductions in our country. Parental abductions are far more common than abductions by strangers – which is what most of us think of when we hear about child abduction. While stranger abductions do happen, the reality is that children are more often in danger from people they know.

In 2009, there were 237 reported cases of parental abduction in Canada – that's more than four parental abductions every week.

"There is a misconception that children who have been abducted by a parent are not in danger," explained Amanda Pick, Executive Director of MCSC.

"People often say, 'Well at least they're with a parent', and they look the other way."

"The truth is that parental abduction is a very serious, indictable crime that has dangerous and life-long damaging effects on the child," Amanda continued.

"The truth is that parental abductions are tantamount to child abuse."

Just like children who have experienced domestic violence, children who have been abducted suffer psychological effects and social problems that affect them for the rest of their lives.

Psychological issues can include depression, abandonment and anger issues, eating disorders, Post Traumatic Stress Syndrome, and learning disorders.

In February, Amanda had the opportunity to travel to Toronto to personally meet with three of our searching families – all of whom have a child that has been abducted by the other parent. It was a powerful experience for her, one that left her with a renewed clarity on the damaging effects of parental abduction.

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HELP US CONTINUE THE SEARCH
DONATE ONLINE AT WWW.MCSC.CA

I STOP MOVEMENT LIGHTS THE WAY HOME: GIVE HOPE. TAKE ACTION

Each May, our annual 'Light the Way Home' campaign shows searching families that we all stand with them in their hopeful search. Last year, we asked for your Messages of Hope - and we received hundreds of heartfelt messages for our families.

This year, we also want your help. Through our I STOP movement, you

can take a personal action to stop child abduction.

This year marks the 25th anniversary of MCSC. To mark the occasion, MCSC launched "I STOP", our national grassroots campaign to end child abduction. I STOP aims to engage 1 million Canadians in taking a personal action

against abduction – with every action, no matter how small or large, combining to end child abduction in Canada.

Leading the way is Nate Hall, a young and rising recording artist from Waterloo, ON. Nate has stepped forward as the first face – and voice – of the I STOP movement.

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STILL MISSING



CHRISTOPHER WATKINS
Date of Birth
April 1, 2004
Eyes.....Blue
Hair.....Blonde

Missing Since
March 6, 2009
Missing From
Toronto, ON



ALEXANDER WATKINS
Date of Birth
June 7, 2001
Eyes.....Blue
Hair.....Brown

Missing Since
March, 6, 2009
Missing From
Toronto, ON



PEARL DA MASSA
Date of Birth
April 6, 2004
Eyes.....Green/Brown
Hair.....Brown

Missing Since
December 6, 2008
Missing From
Manchester, UK
(Last seen in Toronto)

I STOP Movement (continued from page 1)

Nate Hall, a young and rising Canadian recording artist, is donating 100% of proceeds from iTunes downloads of his single "Things". The soulful song speaks of Nate's wish for more time with a lost love - a message that resonates with our mission to support searching families.

As his debut release, Nate wrote and recorded a hauntingly soulful single for MCSC entitled "Things", which was recorded at the Calgary-based studio Ear Candy.

100% of proceeds from downloads of Nate's single "Things" on iTunes is being donated to MCSC's search for missing children. Visit www.NateHallMusic.com for a link to the single.

"Nate's generous action is a perfect example of what our I STOP movement is all about," explained Amanda Pick, Executive Director of MCSC. "People and corporations across Canada are finding a personal way to bring an end to child abduction – often its things that they are already doing."

"Our I STOP movement calls on Canadians to connect with their own communities in a way that is meaningful to them, and join us in the search for our missing children."

Join our I STOP Movement!**What is I STOP?**

- a way to make your own personal action to stop child abduction
- a way for us to celebrate and share all the individual actions - large and small - across the country
- a grassroots movement to stop the abduction of children in Canada
- all of the above

How can you join the I STOP Movement?

People across the country are taking action to stop child abduction. Here's some examples of how you can join them:

Prevention: Talk to your children about recognizing dangerous situations and how to respond to them. Visit us online at www.mcsc.ca for tips.

Investigation: Join our Facebook page and invite your friends to join too. Be part of our informed safety net.

Reunification: Sign the online petition for "Lindsey's Law" to create a national DNA databank for missing persons.

Inspiration: Get creative. Is there something you do that can support I STOP and inspire your community?

Sharing and Celebrating your I STOP action

Once you've decided on your action, let us know about it.

- Complete the I STOP personal pledge below and send it to us with some details of your I STOP story.
- Post a video of your I STOP on our Facebook page!



How will **you** fill in the blank?

My action to stop abduction is

_____.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Date: _____ Signature: _____

SEARCHING IN ROMANIA: A TALE OF TWO CASES

MCSC's missing child cases frequently go far beyond our provinces and territories. Particularly in parental abduction cases, children are often taken across the border and into other countries. This can complicate cases immensely, and in many cases slow investigations to a grinding halt.

This was the experience of MCSC Investigator, Ted Davis, in his work on two separate parental abduction cases – both involving Romania - over this past year.

One case was closed this February with a happy reunion of a father, John Galle, and his daughter, Maribel. Maribel had been abducted by her non-custodial mother in March 2010, and taken to the mother's homeland of Romania. A persistent man, John fought the case in the courts in Romania, ultimately getting an order through the Hague Convention. However the case continued to drag out for a further four months, while John and our investigator Ted navigated the Romanian bureaucracy. Eventually, Maribel and her mother were returned to Canada in February 2011 – shortly after Maribel's 6th birthday. The mother is now facing charges in Canada, and John has been happily reunited with his daughter.

The second case, however, continues to stymie Davis, as well as the searching mother, Mirela Sima. Mirela has not seen her son, Mihai, for over 2 years. The young boy – who is now 6 years old - was taken to Romania by her father in November 2008. The family immigrated to Canada from Romania together, but the marriage ended and the father returned to their homeland – unlawfully taking the boy with him. Mirela, who is now a Canadian citizen, knows exactly where the boy is in Romania. Interpol has issued a yellow alert for the boy, and last spring a panel of three Romanian judges ordered Mihai's return to his mother in Canada. Inexplicably, the Romanian authorities have yet to enforce the ruling. Working alongside Mirela, MCSC and Canadian authorities continue to push for Mihai's return.

"In my personal view after working on these cases in Romania, it seems like if you want something done, you either have to pay to get it done or you need friends in high places with influence," reflected Davis. "But in John's daughter's case, we had neither. We managed to find a sympathetic supporter who knew how to help get things done. Each case is unique – but we always learn something new to help with the next case. And it gives us hope to continue."

CONTINUING THE SEARCH VIA FACEBOOK: AMBER ALERTS & CHILD SEARCH ALERTS

It's a common misconception that MCSC is responsible for issuing AMBER Alerts. In actuality, only the police can activate an AMBER Alert in Canada. In fact, each province across the country has an AMBER Alert Program which partners with the province's law enforcement community, media broadcasting agencies and the public.

The past year has seen several provinces begin to issue AMBER Alerts through Facebook. To date, five Canadian provinces have created AMBER Alert Facebook Pages: Ontario, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, Newfoundland, and Quebec. (Visit our Facebook page for links to these sites.)

Users who become members of these pages will receive any AMBER Alerts in their area through a Facebook message.

Whether by traditional methods or by Facebook, AMBER Alerts are designed to provide the public with immediate and reliable

information about a child abduction in order to get the public's help in locating the child. The AMBER Alert system is only used in the most serious, time critical cases when a child has been abducted and it is believed that their life is in danger.

By contrast, our "Child Search Alerts" are designed to provide the public with updates or new developments in our ongoing investigations of a missing child. Sent out through traditional media and our social media networks, our Child Search Alerts are an important way of ensuring our missing children remain in the public's mind - even after the media and police have needed to move on.

By liking our Facebook page or following us on Twitter, you will be notified about our Child Search Alerts and our active case investigations. Visit us at www.mcsc.ca for links to our social media properties.

Parental Abductions (continued from page 1)

"While meeting with one of the searching fathers, Henry da Massa, and hearing about his daily reality in the search for his daughter Pearl da Massa, I had an 'ah-ha' moment," Amanda revealed.

"I had a moment of clarity when he said that this isn't about him. This is about his daughter and what she is going through."

"He said that he wants people to continually focus on the fact that his daughter is in danger. His daughter is not going to health appointments, his daughter is not getting proper schooling, his daughter is not experiencing what it's like to

have friends or a family. His daughter's identity is not her own. How will that affect her for the rest of her life?"

To view a video blog from Amanda about her trip to Toronto and her "ah-ha" moment, please visit our blog at:

[http://missingchildrencanada.blogspot.com/2011/03/ed-
amanda-pick-video-blogs-about-her.html](http://missingchildrencanada.blogspot.com/2011/03/ed-amanda-pick-video-blogs-about-her.html)





Proudly Hosted By:



Candlelight Gala 2011



Join us
because the search must continue

To do your part in the search for missing children,
purchase tickets online at
www.mcsc.ca

Date Thursday, May 26, 2011
Location Fairmont Palliser Hotel
133 9th Avenue SW
Calgary, Alberta

Tickets
Single \$175.00
Table For Eight \$1400.00
Dress..... Formal, Semi-Formal,
Business Formal



JOIN THE SEARCH. STAY IN TOUCH WITH MCSC!



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Join the conversation at
www.missingchildrencanada.blogspot.com



MISSING CHILDREN

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THANK YOU TO OUR SEARCH PARTNERS



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