



NEWS RELEASE

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US MARSHALS RECOVER 1,000TH MISSING CHILD

WASHINGTON – This week, the U.S. Marshals Service assisted in the recovery of its 1,000th missing child. The 1,000 recoveries announced today reflect a decade of partnership between the USMS, its state, federal and local law enforcement partners, and the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children.

On November 16, the USMS received an urgent referral from NCMEC on behalf of a Texas law enforcement agency that had requested assistance in locating three missing children. The children had been abducted by a parent who was believed to have fled the state with them. Law enforcement reported that the children had been placed in social services custody by court order and were believed to be at risk. Approximately six hours after receiving the request from NCMEC, the USMS and local law enforcement partners located and safely recovered all three children in Pensacola, Fla., and arrested their abductor.

USMS involvement in missing child cases combines elements of two of its most successful public safety programs, the Marshals Service's collaborative work with the NCMEC, and the Marshals Service's expertise in tracking down violent fugitives. Safely and efficiently locating missing children requires similar resources and skill sets as tracking down fugitives. Multi-agency investigative efforts to locate child victims benefit immensely from collaboration with NCMEC, the nation's clearinghouse for missing children.

"We are proud of our friends at the U.S. Marshals Service for this milestone achievement," said NCMEC President and CEO John Clark. "Because of their resources and close partnerships with federal, state and local law enforcement agencies, the USMS has become a tremendous asset in our mission to bring children home. Every time a missing child is found safely, this gives great hope to our families still waiting for their loved ones to come home. Thank you to the U.S. Marshals Service for your incredible work to reunite families across America."

With the enactment of the Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act (JVTA) in May 2015, the USMS received enhanced authority to support requests from law enforcement agencies in missing child cases. Previously, a fugitive nexus to the missing child case was necessary for the USMS to provide assistance. Under the JVTA authority, if a law enforcement agency requests assistance from the USMS in recovering a missing child, the USMS can provide support when resources allow. Over 40% of the missing children recovered with support of the USMS since 2015 were cases that could not have been supported without the JVTA authority. The U.S. Marshals assisted in the recovery of nearly 200 children last year.

"We are committed to supporting law enforcement and NCMEC efforts in this very important mission. I am extremely proud of the USMS' contribution to 1,000 missing child recoveries," said U.S. Marshals Service Deputy Director David Harlow. "The same dedicated Marshals Service investigators conducting sex offender compliance and fugitive operations perform this new collateral duty. Voluntarily incorporating this new mission into our existing workforce reflects the Marshals Service commitment to protecting the most vulnerable among us, our children."

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