

Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention

National Missing Children's Day Poster Contest

The National Missing Children's Day Poster Contest is a nationwide contest designed to promote awareness among teachers, parents/guardians, and children and engage them in discussions about safety.

Important information about this contest, including the application and consent and release form, can be found within this packet.

The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention thanks you for participating in this contest and we look forward to seeing your creativity shine through your artwork!

Questions about the poster contest? Contact the State Contest Manager in your state!

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43rd Annual National Missing Children's Day Poster Contest Fact Sheet

Contest Rules

1. Applicants must be in the fifth grade.

2. Artwork should reflect the theme, "**Bringing Our Missing Children Home."** This phrase must appear somewhere on the poster.

3. The theme may be depicted in the student's artwork through one illustration or a combination of illustrations (e.g., signs and symbols, people, abstract images, industry, wildlife) and can be created using media such as acrylics, watercolors, pencils, charcoal, magic markers, spray paint, crayons, and pastels. Digitally produced images, collages, cut-outs, and stamping will not be eligible for consideration.

4. The finished poster must measure **8½ x 14 inches**.

5. The poster must be submitted with a completed application, which includes a description of the poster and a brief biography of the artist, either typed or written legibly.

Judging Criteria

1. All contest rules must be followed at every level of the competition. Incomplete packages and incorrectly sized posters will not be eligible for judging.

2. Artwork will be judged on:
    a. Creativity
    b. Reflection of the contest theme
    c. Originality in design

3. Written applications will be judged on:
    a. Comprehension of the theme
    b. Clarity
    c. Grammar and syntax appropriate to fifth graders



Competition Procedures

1. Contact your State Contest Manager to confirm your participation in the contest and to obtain the submission deadline for your state.

2. Submit your poster, completed application, and signed consent and release form to your State Contest Manager by your state's submission deadline.

Awards

State Level

1. Each state winner whose poster is selected to go to the national judging competition, will receive a national award certificate from the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP).

   State managers are responsible for facilitating all statewide events, activities, and awards for participating children.

National Level

1. The national winner, his/her teacher (or designee from the winner's school) and parents/guardians (typically two people), and the state manager will be invited to Washington, DC, to participate in the 43rd annual National Missing Children's Day event on **May 26, 2027.**

2. Transportation and lodging will be provided.

3. The national winner will also receive a national award certificate and a professional print of their poster.

Winning Poster

The national winning poster:

a. Becomes the property of OJJDP and will be displayed at the Department of Justice, congressional offices, and other locations as determined by OJJDP. Any applicable copyrights will be held by those offices.

b. May be used in publications, exhibits, displays, and on websites, as determined by OJJDP and/or the U.S. Department of Justice.



c. Will be presented as the national symbol for the 43rd Annual National Missing Children's Day event and associated activities.

d. Photos of the winner and his/her poster will be available through OJJDP and may be posted wherever contest information is available.

Contest Timeline

1. November 2026
    a. Poster contest begins.

2. March 2027
    a. Submission deadline at the state level. *Please contact your State Contest Manager to obtain the deadline for your state.*

3. April 2027
    a. National winner will be notified.
    b. Travel arrangements are initiated for attendance at the 43rd Annual National Missing Children's Day event in Washington, DC on Wednesday, May 26th.

Questions?

Contact the State Contest Manager in your state.



Poster Contest Application

Thank you for participating in the 43rd Annual National Missing Children's Day Poster Contest! Please be sure to complete this application and ask your parent/guardian to complete the consent and release form before submitting your poster to your State Contest Manager. Posters that are submitted without an application and consent and release form will not be considered for the contest.

Name: _____

Age: _____

School: _____

School Phone: _____

School Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____

Zip Code: _____

Educator's Name: _____

Educator's Email: _____

Salutation (circle one): Mr. / Mrs. / Ms.

Principal's Name: _____

Principal's Email: _____

Salutation (circle one): Mr. / Mrs. / Ms.



42nd Annual Missing Children's Day
Poster Contest Winner
Jax S. | Ohio



Please tell us about your poster and why you created it: (*100 words or less*)

Artist's Biography - Tell us a little bit about yourself! (*100 words or less*)



Parent/Guardian Release and Consent Form

I hereby grant permission to use and reproduce the picture of my child, _____, and use my child's name in U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention-related publications, news features, blogs, or other advertisements relating to the 43rd Annual National Missing Children's Day Poster Contest. I also grant permission for my child to participate in any interviews with media relating to this event. I understand that any written statements may be edited or used, in whole or in part, or adapted with other materials, and I hereby waive all rights of privacy, compensation, control, or royalties that I may have.

I have read this document before signing below and warrant that I fully understand its contents.

_____
Name of Parent/Guardian *(please print)*

_____
Signature

_____
Address

_____
Date

_____
City, State, Zip

_____
Phone Number

_____
Email Address



State Contest Manager Contact List

Alabama 10
Alaska 10
Arizona 10
Arkansas 10
California 10
Colorado 10
Connecticut 10
Delaware 10
District of Columbia 10
Florida 10
Georgia 10
Hawaii 10
Idaho 10
Illinois 10
Indiana 11
Iowa 11
Kansas 11
Kentucky 11
Louisiana 11
Maine 11
Maryland 11
Massachusetts 11
Michigan 11
Minnesota 11
Mississippi 11
Missouri 11
Montana 11
Nebraska 11
Nevada 11
New Hampshire 11
New Jersey 12
New Mexico 12
New York 12
North Carolina 12
North Dakota 12
Ohio 12
Oklahoma 12
Oregon 12
Pennsylvania 12
Puerto Rico 12
Rhode Island 12
South Carolina 12
South Dakota 12
Tennessee 12
Texas 12
Utah 13
Vermont 13
Virginia 13
Washington 13
West Virginia 13
Wisconsin 13
Wyoming 13



Alabama
Mrs. Katrina Todd
Alabama Department of Education
334-694-4778
ktodd@alsde.edu

Alaska
Lt. Benjamin Enres
Alaska State Search & Rescue
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Arizona
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Arizona Dept. of Public Safety
602-644-5855
missingpersons@azdps.gov

Arkansas
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Arkansas Department of Public Safety
501-618-8440
Cassie.Harris@asp.arkansas.gov

California
Ms. Megan Eschleman
California Department of Justice
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916-210-3090
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Colorado
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Delaware
FVTC/NCJTC
877-798-7682
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District of Columbia
FVTC/NCJTC
877-798-7682
mc.day@fvtc.edu

Florida
Melissa Batchelor
Florida Department of Law Enforcement
850-445-5013
MelissaBatchelor@fdle.state.fl.us

Georgia
Ms. Emily Butler
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Hawaii
Ms. Amanda Leonard
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Idaho
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Illinois
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Indiana
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Kentucky
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Caitlyn.Cole@ky.gov

Louisiana
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MA Children's Alliance
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Michigan State Police, Missing Persons Unit
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HardestyJ2@michigan.gov

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Olivia.Kellogg@state.mn.us or
bca.missing-persons@state.mn.us

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Montana Department of Justice
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Nebraska
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Nebraska Attorney General
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Nevada
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Nevada Child Seekers
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New Hampshire
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New Jersey
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New Jersey State Police: Missing Persons Unit
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New Mexico
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Outreach@nmdoj.gov

New York
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NY State Division of Criminal Justice Services
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North Carolina
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North Carolina Missing Persons
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chorne@bismarcknd.gov

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Oklahoma
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Oregon
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Pennsylvania
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PA Internet Crimes Against Children
610-891-8746
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Puerto Rico
Alicia Denis
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ALICIA.DENIS@usss.dhs.gov

Rhode Island
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Rhode Island State Police
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Jacquelyn.Applin@RISP.GOV

South Carolina
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South Dakota
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University of South Dakota
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Tennessee
FVTC/NCJTC
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Texas
Ms. Melissa Turnquist
Texas Center for the Missing
713-986-3542
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Utah
Ms. Michelle Busch-Upwall
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Missing Children's Day Discussion Guide

This is a guide intended for a facilitator (i.e., teacher, parent) to reference as a discussion starter with students. We hope this discussion will make the subject less scary, provide students with an understanding of the poster contest topic, and help generate ideas for their artwork.

What is Missing Children's Day?

- An annual commemoration honoring the heroic and exemplary efforts of agencies, organizations, and individuals who help to protect children.
- These people include law enforcement officers, social workers, prosecutors and everyday people (i.e. teachers, moms, dads, brothers, sisters, and neighbors).
- The theme is "Bringing Our Missing Children Home."
    - There are people in this world that do bad things and break the law.
    - This is why we have police and judges.
    - Sometimes these people do bad things to kids, like take them away from their families.
    - Police can help by searching and helping to return these children to their homes.

Questions for Students

- Have you or anyone you love ever been lost before?
- How did you feel?
- Did anyone help you or your loved one return home?
- Who found you or your loved one?
- How do you think your family felt?

Provide Guidance for Students

- *When you create your art, think about:*
    - How you felt when you were lost.
    - Who helped you?
    - How your family felt when you were lost.

Attention 5th Graders

We invite you to participate in the
U.S. Department of Justice's
National Missing Children's Day Poster Contest

You, your parents or guardians, and your teacher could win a trip to Washington, DC!

Contest Rules

Students create posters illustrating the theme, "Bringing Our Missing Children Home."

1. **Your finished poster must be 8 ½ x 14 inches.**

2. **The slogan "Bringing Our Missing Children Home" must appear somewhere on the poster.**

3. **Your poster must be created by hand. Posters with printed images, collages, or stamping will not be accepted.**

4. **Be original and be creative! Don't copy someone else's design. Use acrylics, watercolors, pencils, charcoal, magic markers, spray paint, crayons, pastels, etc., to bring your ideas to life. To view artwork from previous years, visit ncjtc.org/mcd.**

5. **You must submit both your poster and your completed application, which includes a description of your poster and a brief biography telling us about yourself.**

Be sure to submit your poster to your State Contest Manager by the submissions deadline! Winners of state poster contests move on to the national contest.

2025 Winner: Jax S. | Ohio



"On the left, a family photo wall shows a missing child marked by a question mark. Sad parents stand in front, while the child sits alone in a dark corner, lost and disconnected."

Want to know the name of your State Contest Manager? Reach out to the National Poster Contest Manager at genevieve.croasdale8341@fvtc.edu.

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