

# NCJTC Presents...



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National Criminal Justice Training Center of Fox Valley Technical College

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## AMBER Alert in Indian Country

Jim Walters  
June 18, 2019



OJJDP

Office of Juvenile Justice and  
Delinquency Prevention

**AMBER<sup>®</sup>**  
**ALERT**



# **Moderator – Melissa Blasing**

Project Coordinator

AMBER Alert Training and Technical Assistance Program

National Criminal Justice Training Center

of Fox Valley Technical College



# This training was developed and brought to you by:

The U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ)  
Office of Justice Programs (OJP)  
Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP)



**OJJDP**

Office of Juvenile Justice and  
Delinquency Prevention



AMBER Alert Training and Technical Assistance Program (AATTAP)  
(877) 712-6237 | [askamber@fvtc.edu](mailto:askamber@fvtc.edu) | [ncjtc.fvtc.edu/AMBER](http://ncjtc.fvtc.edu/AMBER)

# Webinar Information

This webinar is supported under Cooperative Agreement number 2017-MC-FX-K003 from the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP), U.S. Department of Justice. Points of view or opinions expressed in this presentation are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official position or policies of OJJDP or the U.S. Department of Justice.

# AMBER Alert Training and Technical Assistance Program

## Mission

To safely recover missing, endangered, or abducted children through the coordinated efforts of law enforcement, media, transportation, and other partners by using training and technology to enhance response capacities and capabilities and increase public participation.

# During the Webinar

- All attendees will be muted.
- If you desire to ask a question, please use the questions section of the GoToWebinar dialogue box, typically on the right side of your screen.
- Questions will either be answered directly by a panelist or asked to the presenter who will answer during the Q & A portion of the presentation.

# Certificate of Attendance

- We offer a Certificate of Attendance on our live AMBER Alert TTA Program webinars.
- To receive your certificate you must:
  - **Attend the entire live webinar**
  - **Complete the evaluation at the end of the live webinar**
- Certificate of Attendance will be emailed within 2-weeks of the live webinar event.
- We cannot offer a certificate for viewing a recorded webinar.





# Post Webinar Information

- At the conclusion of the webinar, a short evaluation will appear.
- We ask that you complete the evaluation in an effort to gather information to better serve you in future webinars.
- You will also receive an email with a link to access this webinar and related webinar material in approximately 2 weeks.

# Poll Questions

- Poll questions may be asked during the webinar.
  - They are asked so we can better understand the audience in attendance.
- As they will only be open a short period of time, please respond promptly.







**Jim Walters**  
**askamber@fvtc.edu**  
**877-712-6237**

- Program Administrator – AMBER Alert Training and Technical Assistance Program
- First liaison for the AMBER in Indian Country initiative
- Served as patrol officer, investigator, and public safety consultant to tribal communities
- Conducted/supervised more than 150 major case investigations including kidnappings, child abductions, homicides, human trafficking, and more.

# Today's Topics

- Examine past child abduction and exploitation events on tribal lands and the challenges facing tribes in protecting children
- Review the Ashlynne Mike AMBER Alert in Indian Country Act of 2018
- Develop strategies for implementing an AMBER Alert plan within your tribal community
- Discover current resources available through the AMBER Alert Training and Technical Assistance Program

# Mission of the AMBER Alert in Indian Country Initiative

- Design, develop and implement AMBER Alert programs in Indian Country
- Foster relationships between tribes and state / regional AMBER Alert partners
- Provide training and resources to tribal communities to quickly recover missing, abducted, or exploited children

# Scope and Scale of Missing Native American Children

- More than 7,000 missing Native American children in the United States (source: FBI)
- Go missing for all the same reasons as children in other parts of the country
- Runaways, thrown away, taken by a non-custodial parent, trafficked, abducted by a predator, etc.



# Lack of Data

**No comprehensive data collection system regarding missing / murdered women in Indian County**

- Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) and Tribal Law and Order Act (TLOA) have raised awareness
- Gaps in law enforcement are just beginning to be addressed



# Unique Challenges

- History of cultural intervention
- Jurisdictional complexities
- Lack of understanding of Indian child welfare law outside tribal lands
- Long term implications of victimization are magnified
- Lack of resources and specialization
- Limits to Infrastructure





# Real Impact on the Community




# Past Child Abduction and Exploitation Events on Tribal Lands



# History of Issues

- Review of over 50 cases involving missing, abducted and endangered children showed that there are lessons to be learned in five key areas:
  - Pre-planning and training
  - Call intake
  - Initial response
  - Command and control
  - Neighborhood investigation, search and canvass





CHILD ABDUCTION ALERT  
91 FORD EXPLORER/RED  
CALL 911

Many children are at risk because their tribal community does not have access to their state AMBER Alert communications plan.

Additionally, a comprehensive child abduction recovery strategy is not in place for their community.

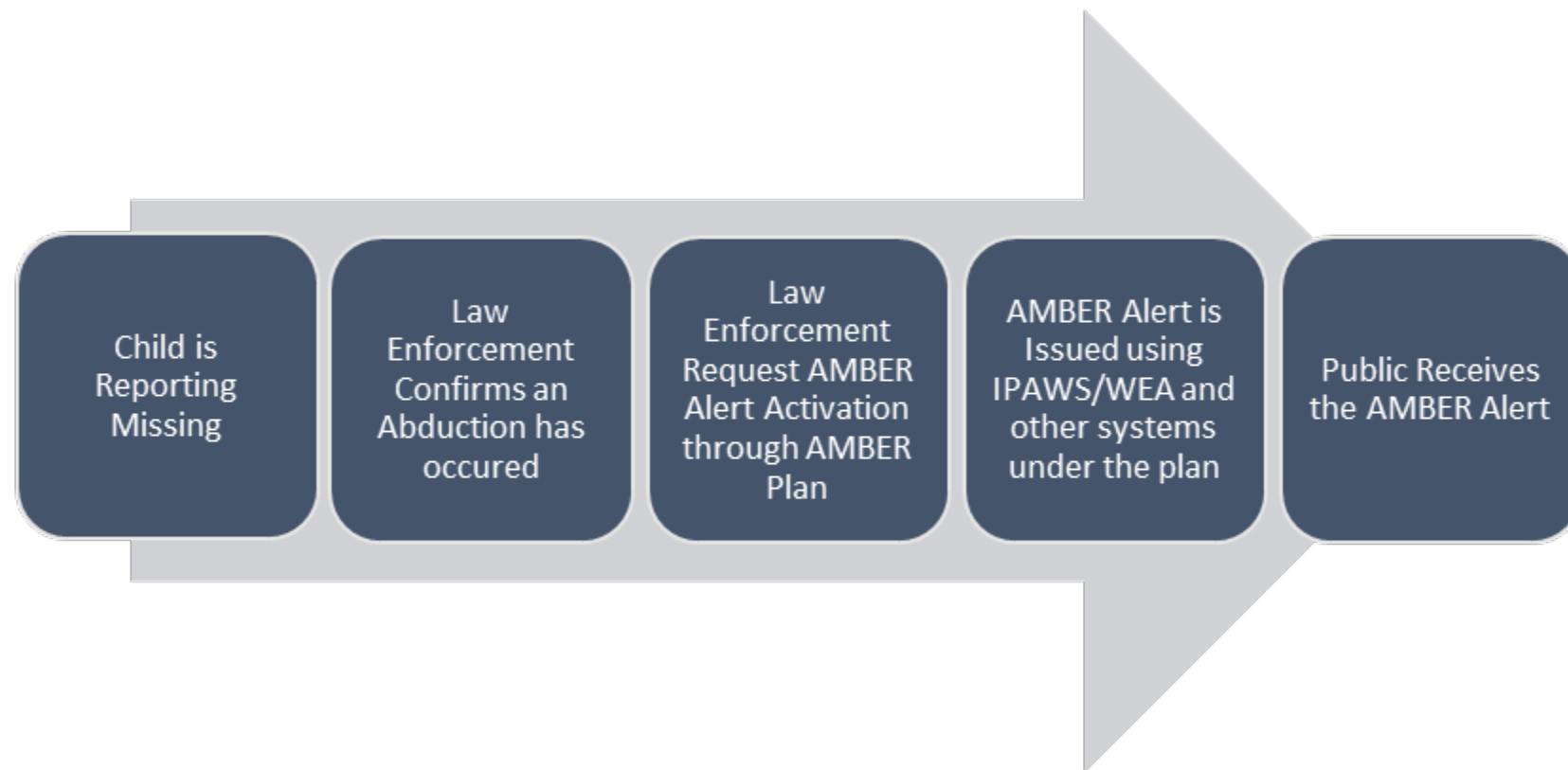


# The Need for AMBER Alert

- Obtain needed resources, equipment and personnel
- Sets in action a series of notifications
  - ✓ FBI
  - ✓ National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC)
  - ✓ State Missing Persons Clearinghouse
- Supports the investigation and location efforts

**If your child was missing, wouldn't you want every resource available to be used in the effort to recover them?**

# How AMBER Alert Works





# PROTECT Act

The law tasked the National AMBER Alert Coordinator with:

- Creating a National AMBER Alert network
- Supporting the development of state AMBER Alert plans
- Helping to eliminate geographic gaps in alert networks
- Providing regional network coordination
- Establishing guidance on criteria for issuing alerts



## Navajo Nation

The AMBER Alert plans created through the *PROTECT Act* formed a nationwide plan that allowed law enforcement agencies across the country to alert the public when a child was abducted.

**These AMBER Alert plans, however, did not extend to tribal communities.**

# Shiprock, NM





**AMBER**  
**ALERT**



AMBER Alert was brought to Indian Country through the **Ashlynnne Mike AMBER Alert in Indian Country Act**, nearly *two years* after Ashlynnne was abducted



# Ashlynnne Mike AMBER Alert in Indian Country Act

Amends the PROTECT Act, to allow for grants to states and federally recognized Indian tribes.

- Develop or enhance programs and activities in support of communications plans
- Integrate tribal AMBER Alert systems into state systems
- Integrate state or regional AMBER Alert plans with an Indian tribe
- Waive the matching funds requirement for grants awarded to tribes

<https://www.congress.gov/bill/115th-congress/senate-bill/772>



**AMBER Alert Training and Technical Assistance Program**  
is responsible for assisting in the implementation of the  
**Ashlynnne Mike AMBER Alert in Indian Country Act of 2018**



# Why does your tribal community need AMBER Alert?

- Involve the public in recovery efforts
- Bring more eyes and ears to the search
- Increase the number of potential sources of information

A close-up, low-angle shot of a porcupine's quills. The quills are arranged in several vertical rows, pointing upwards. They have a light brown, fibrous texture. The background is a clear, bright blue sky. The overall composition is symmetrical and emphasizes the texture and structure of the quills.

# Strategies for Implementing **AMBER Alert** in your Tribal Community

# Tribal Leadership Commitment

- Tribal officials and community leaders play important roles
  - Setting policies
  - Establishing criteria
  - Providing oversight
  - Disseminating information
- Their support is **CRITICAL**

# Tribal Leadership Support

- Understand and support the goals of the plan
- Safety of the community's children is shared concern
- Effective council resolutions, ordinances and tribal code/laws
- Seek out funding and partnerships to improve capabilities

# Communities Can Take Action

**There are challenges, but they can be overcome.**

- Develop comprehensive child abduction recovery programs
- Coordinate with the State AMBER program
- Protect tribal sovereignty
- Provide the best possible response to a missing or abducted child

# Where to Start

- **Assess capacity to respond**
- **Ask questions**
  - What is our competency?
  - What is our capacity?
  - What improvements are needed?
- **Address gaps**
  - ✓ Policy
  - ✓ Procedure
  - ✓ Practice
  - ✓ Training

# Encourage Tribal Leadership and Law Enforcement Participation in State Implementation Meetings

- Every member is responsible to the community
- Children are our precious resource
- Assure the victim's family and community that all resources are utilized
- Meetings provide an opportunity to come together to save the abducted child



# Video: September 2018 - Fort McDowell, Arizona Inaugural Event: AMBER Alert in Indian Country









# AMBER Alert Training & Technical Assistance Program Resources

**AMBER<sup>®</sup>**  
**ALERT**

A background image showing several police officers in dark blue uniforms. They are holding a large, light-colored sign that is partially obscured by a semi-transparent text box. The officers are looking towards the camera, and the scene appears to be outdoors.

# Training for the Worst

- Requires specialized training
- Child abductions are “high risk/low frequency” events
- Magnifies the need for regular training and exercises
- Challenging for tribes with limited access to training

# Child Protection Training for Tribal Communities

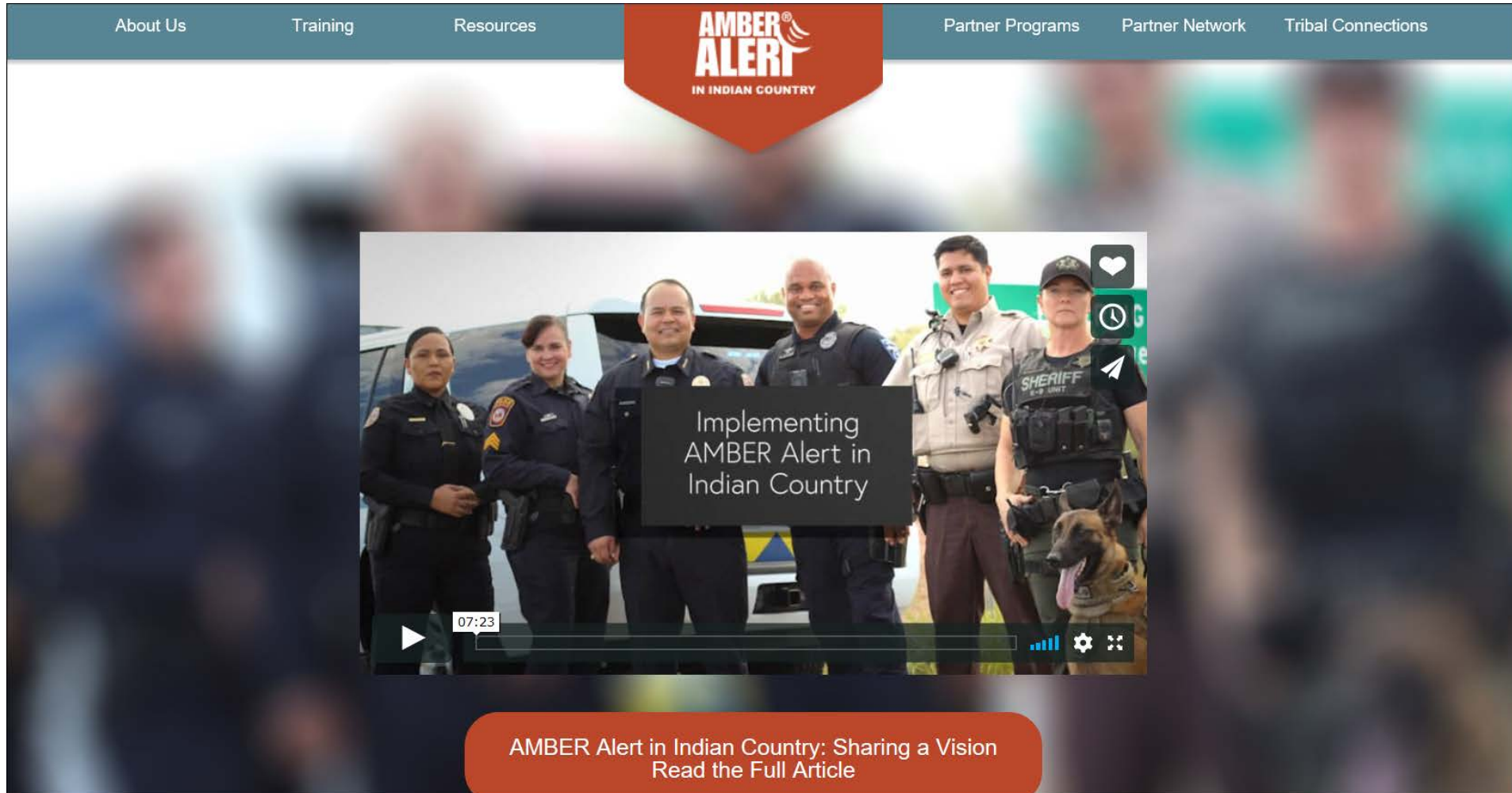
- eLearning Courses
  - *Building AMBER Alert in Indian Country*
  - *Law Enforcement & Community Response: Child Sex Trafficking and Exploitation in Indian Country*
- Child Abduction Training for Tribal Communities
- Call Taker Training for Tribal Communities

# Child Protection Training for Tribal Communities

- Effectively Working with Tribal Law Enforcement for Missing and Abducted Children
- Indian Country Child Abduction Response Team Training
- Leadership for Missing & Abducted Children in Indian Country
- Shielding Our Community for Endangered, Missing, & Abducted Children
- Plus More....

# AMBER Alert in Indian Country Website

[www.amber-ic.org](http://www.amber-ic.org)



The screenshot displays the website's navigation menu at the top with links for "About Us", "Training", "Resources", "Partner Programs", "Partner Network", and "Tribal Connections". The central focus is a video player with a red banner above it that reads "AMBER<sup>®</sup> ALERT IN INDIAN COUNTRY". The video frame shows a group of law enforcement officers, including a sheriff's deputy with a dog, standing in front of a vehicle. A text overlay on the video reads "Implementing AMBER Alert in Indian Country". The video player includes a play button, a progress bar showing 07:23, and standard control icons. Below the video player is a red button with the text "AMBER Alert in Indian Country: Sharing a Vision Read the Full Article".

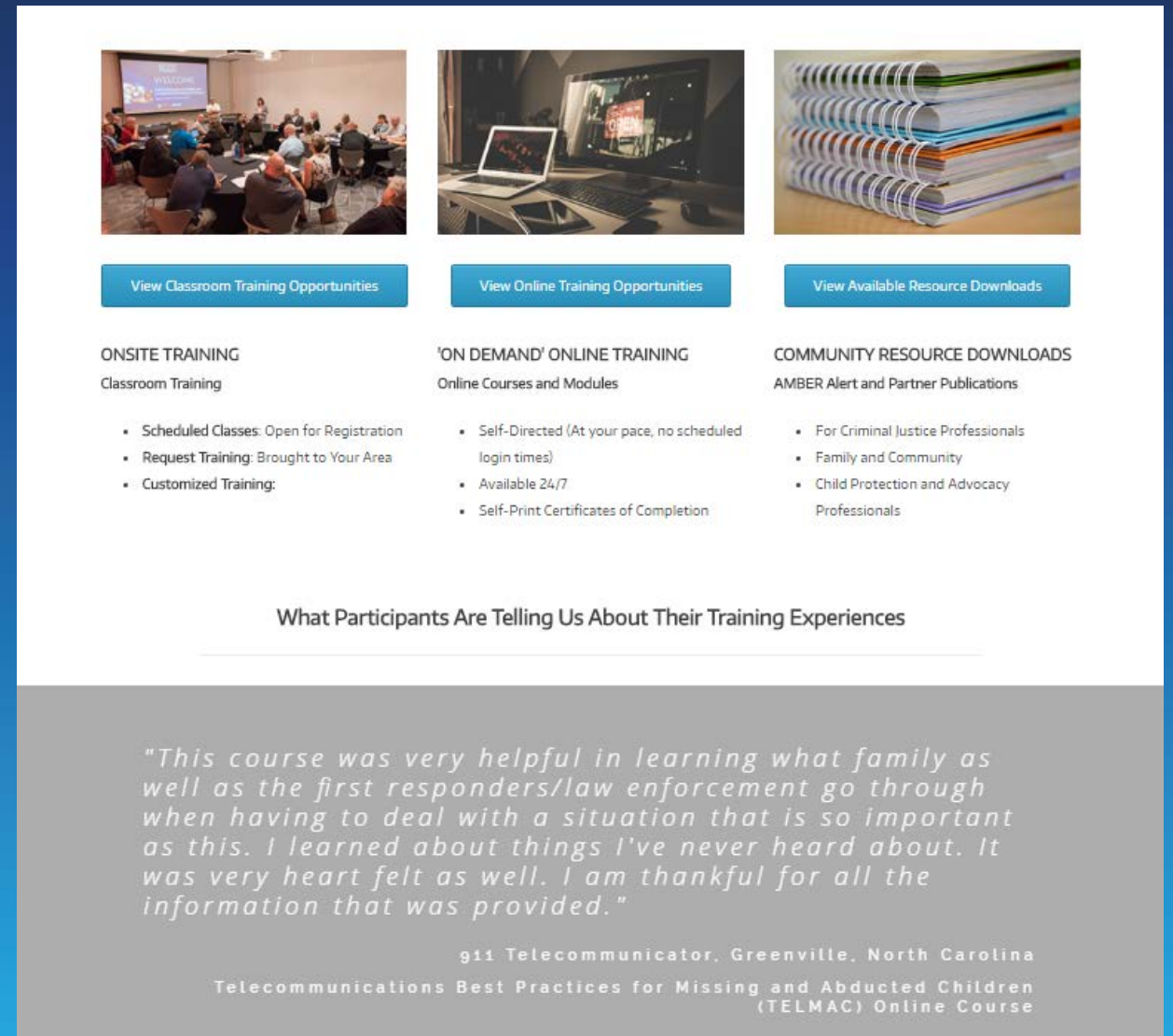
# AMBER Alert in Indian Country

- Gateway to the AMBER Alert in Indian Country website
- <https://amber-ic.org>
- Features information about the Indian Country initiative and implementation
- Highlights news of AMBER-IC work across the nation

The screenshot shows the homepage of the AMBER Alert in Indian Country website. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the AMBER Alert logo and 'THE AMBER ADVOCATE' logo. Below the navigation bar is a header with the text 'AMBER Alert in Indian Country'. The main content area features a section titled 'The Mission of AMBER Alert in Indian Country' with a paragraph describing the program's goal to assist Tribal communities in developing programs to safely recover missing, endangered, exploited or abducted children. Below this is a section titled 'AMBER Alert in Indian Country Website' with a paragraph stating that the website provides integrated, 'one-stop' access to training, technical assistance and resources for Tribal law enforcement, public safety professionals and others in the community working with child protection and community safety efforts. A blue button labeled 'VISIT THE AMBER ALERT IN INDIAN COUNTRY WEBSITE' is positioned below the text. Further down, there is a section titled 'Featured Articles: AMBER Alert in Indian Country' with two article thumbnails. The first thumbnail shows a person entering a building with a sign that says 'ENTERING Ft. McDowell Indian Reservation'. The second thumbnail shows a group of people holding a banner. Below the featured articles is a section titled 'History of the AMBER Alert in Indian Country Initiative' with a paragraph describing the program's history and its focus on providing resources to Tribal communities.

# Training and Resources Homepage

- Quick information and access to training resources
  - Classroom
  - Online
  - Downloadable training
  - Downloadable resources



The screenshot shows a webpage layout with three main columns. Each column has an image at the top, a blue button, and a list of options. The first column is for Classroom Training, the second for Online Training, and the third for Resource Downloads. Below these columns is a section titled 'What Participants Are Telling Us About Their Training Experiences' with a quote and attribution.

View Classroom Training Opportunities	View Online Training Opportunities	View Available Resource Downloads
<b>ONSITE TRAINING</b> Classroom Training <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Scheduled Classes:</b> Open for Registration</li><li>• <b>Request Training:</b> Brought to Your Area</li><li>• <b>Customized Training:</b></li></ul>	<b>'ON DEMAND' ONLINE TRAINING</b> Online Courses and Modules <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Self-Directed (At your pace, no scheduled login times)</li><li>• Available 24/7</li><li>• Self-Print Certificates of Completion</li></ul>	<b>COMMUNITY RESOURCE DOWNLOADS</b> AMBER Alert and Partner Publications <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• For Criminal Justice Professionals</li><li>• Family and Community</li><li>• Child Protection and Advocacy Professionals</li></ul>

**What Participants Are Telling Us About Their Training Experiences**

*"This course was very helpful in learning what family as well as the first responders/law enforcement go through when having to deal with a situation that is so important as this. I learned about things I've never heard about. It was very heart felt as well. I am thankful for all the information that was provided."*

911 Telecommunicator, Greenville, North Carolina  
Telecommunications Best Practices for Missing and Abducted Children (TELMAC) Online Course



Q&A



**Jim Walters**  
**askamber@fvtc.edu**  
**877-712-6237**

# Thank you for your participation!

For assistance, please contact us:



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