

# ECB Missing Child Guidelines

**These missing child guidelines are a new addition to the Safe Hands Manual for 2007.**

A child going missing could be an extremely traumatic event – for adults and for children. However, if everyone is aware of some simple pre-defined guidelines, panic levels can be minimised, and even more critically, the missing child can hopefully be found in an organised and efficient way. Hopefully no child will ever go missing from your team / event. If they do, please remember most children are found within a few minutes of their disappearance.

## ECB Missing Children Guidelines

If a child for whom your club has responsibility goes missing, the following guidelines have been devised to clarify actions that should be taken.

- Ensure the other children in your care are looked after appropriately while you organise a search for the child concerned.
- Inform the child's parents if they are present at the event, or nominate an appropriate person to telephone them and advise them of the concern. Reassure them you are doing all you can to locate their child. Remember that the child may contact the parents directly so this is very important.
- Organise all available responsible adults by areas to be searched. It is best to take a short time to organise the search properly so that all places are searched fully.
- Search the area in which the child has gone missing including changing rooms, toilets, public and private areas and the club grounds.
- Request all those searching report back to a nominated adult at a specific point.
- This nominated person should remain at this specific reference point and must be making a note of the events, including detailing a physical description of the child including approx. height, build, hair and eye colour as well as clothing the child was wearing and where / when they were last seen, as this will be required by the police. If the search is unsuccessful you should then report the concern to the police
- A report should go to the police no later than 20 minutes after the child's disappearance is noted, even if the search is not complete.
- If the police recommend further action before they get involved, follow their guidance.
- If the police act upon the concern always be guided by them in any further actions to take.
- At any stage when the child is located, ensure you inform all adults involved including the parents, searchers and police if they are by then involved.
- All missing child incidents MUST BE notified at the very earliest opportunity to the Club WO, who must immediately notify the County WO, and they must then notify the ECB CPT.