

SUMMARY OF CASES REPORTED TO MISSING CHILDREN SA

(For the term: 1 June 2012 – 31 May 2013)

Herewith the statistics of cases (of missing children and adults) reported to Missing Children SA over the past 12 months. Please note that these figures are based on cases reported only to our organisation and do not reflect all the cases reported to SAPS.

According to the Missing Persons Bureau, a child goes missing every 6 hours in our country. If you add this for a year, we look at about 1460 cases of missing children reported to the South African Police Service every year.

Currently an average between 570 – 580 cases are reported to our organisation. This figure increases every year – not necessarily because more and more individuals go missing, but we strongly believe it is because more people become aware of Missing Children SA and the service we render.

Our overall figures for the term mentioned above look as follow:

1 June 2012 – 31 May 2013

Category	Adults	Children	Total
Missing	272	304	576
Found	189	256	445

Therefore, we have an overall success rate of 77%. For the children's cases alone our success rate is 84%. It is an unfortunate reality that 3% of the children found again, were found deceased. Every year we see the success rate decreased – we cannot say for a fact it is because fewer children are found again, or perhaps because more cases are reported to our organisation.

Herewith a breakdown of our total cases per province:

Province	Adults		Children		Cases Reported	
	Missing	Found	Missing	Found	Missing	Found
Gauteng	136	93	164	139	300	232
Western Cape	94	66	70	64	164	130
KwaZulu Natal	18	15	34	25	52	40
Free State	9	7	6	4	15	11
Eastern Cape	3	2	7	7	10	9
North West	2	2	8	7	10	9
Limpopo	6	3	7	5	13	8
Mpumalanga	4	1	8	5	12	6
Northern Cape	0	0	0	0	0	0

We group the reasons children are reported missing in the following categories (see % for each category):

<u>Category</u>	<u>% of Cases Reported</u>
Getting Lost	37%
Run-Aways	23%
Unknown	21%
Kidnappings (by strangers)	8%
Parental Abductions	4%
Found Deceased	3%
Human Trafficking	3%
Family Abductions	1%

Explanations:

Getting Lost: Child is found without the parents, wandering around, walking by himself/herself and then brought to a place of safety and/or a police station.
This happens when a child is playing outside without the necessary supervision, or being sent to the shop alone when he/she is only a toddler and cannot find his/her way back home.

Run-Aways: Children run away from home, guardians, and places of safety for various reasons.

- Being abused;
- Escaping unwanted/undeserved circumstances;
- Conflict at home;
- Rebellion;
- Are being offered a better life, better circumstances by strangers or people they have befriended over a social network for instance. The grass seems greener on the other side and when they accept these offers, they sometimes find themselves in a very vulnerable and dangerous place.

Unknown: Cases reported to our organisation and the reason for the child being missing is not mentioned or is unknown. Sometimes the parents/family does not want to share more information and want to keep in confidential.

Kidnapping by Strangers: Child is taken from the parents/guardians care without their permission, by somebody not known by the family. People kidnap children for various reasons:

- Cannot have children of their own;
- Lost their own child
- Reason for revenge
- Financial benefit
- Human Trafficking (sex, drugs, etc.)

Found Deceased: Body of the child is found after he/she is reported missing.

Parental Abductions: Parents are divorced or separated and the one parent takes the child without the permission from the other and disappears with him/her.

Human Trafficking: It is the illegal trade of human beings/children for the purposes of:

- reproductive slavery;
- commercial sexual exploitation;
- forced labour;
- any modern-day form of slavery.

Family Abductions: Child is taken by a family member without the permission from the legal parent/guardians.

Please note: On a daily basis we are striving to make more and more people aware of the reality of Human Trafficking. We are sure more cases reported to SAPS as well as to our organisation are because of Human Trafficking, but at this stage it cannot be proven. According to the International Labour Organisation it is estimated that 1.2 million children are trafficked each year. Furthermore, 32 billion dollars profit is generated annually from Human Trafficking. We therefore regarded the 4% as conservative.

Below, please find the break-down (in percentage) of the different ages of children reported to our organisation (1 June 2012 – 31 May 2013):

<u>Age</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
0 – 6 years	23%
7 – 12 years	19%
13 – 18 years	58%

The months with the most cases reported to our organisation were:

**November 2012 with 90 cases,
March 2013 with 57 cases,
January 2013 with 56 cases.**

The month with the least cases reported was **February 2013 with only 34 cases.**

Totals of individuals found deceased:

Children - 10
Adults - 18

The racial groups (in percentage) according to cases we have worked on and of which flyers were distributed (available on our website), as follow:

Black Africans	Brown/Coloured	Caucasian	Other (Indian, Asian)
37%	27%	28%	8%

About Missing Children SA

Missing Children SA, is a **registered NPO and PBO** that **assists the authorities when an individual goes missing in South Africa, for any reason whatsoever**. We work closely with the South African Police Service and other government bodies as well as other NGO's and private initiatives, to assist in the recovery and safe return of any missing person.

Our first tier is that of an emergency response service. We have a national helpline for incident reports and callers are advised on which immediate steps to take in logging the incident officially so as to ensure efficient and timeous action. **Secondly, by activating a vast national social and media network** we distribute flyers of missing children, creating mass awareness of the individual and maximising the chances of that child being recovered. **Lastly, since prevention is the most efficient way to keep our children safe, we strive to educate** both parents/guardians and children on the dangers of abduction and human trafficking etc. We also liaise with the investigating officers on the case so as to ensure a continuous flow of information between the parents and authorities.

Our website www.missingchildren.org.za acts as an emergency report facility as well as being platform for informational and educational material with regards to child safety.

We have over 37 000 members on our Facebook page alone excluding the individual networks of our board members, volunteers and other affiliates which makes for **incredibly efficient, instant mass distribution of flyers, within moments of an incident.**

We are based in the **Western Cape** but operate on a **national** level and as such, are the **most recognised, free community service for missing children** (and adults), in the country.

The service MCSA offers to the community and government is invaluable and as you can imagine we certainly have our work cut out for us. We provide **our services free of charge** to every and anyone who needs us, sadly we **don't necessarily enjoy the same privilege** for our needs and our financial requirements quite often outweigh our resources! **We rely solely on the goodwill of individuals and corporations for financial support.**

Some General Safety Tips:

- There is NO WAITING PERIOD for reporting a person missing to the nearest police station.
 - Should you report a person to the police station and the police officer tells you to come back after 24 hours, demand to speak to the station commander. Or, alternatively, contact Missing Children SA and the organisation will intervene and assist wherever possible.
- When reporting a person missing to the police station, the following information will be required:
 - Full name of missing person
 - Age of missing person
 - Description of missing person
 - Eye colour

- Hair colour/style
 - Height
 - Weight
 - Distinctive marks – scars/birthmarks
- Where was the person last seen
- Clothes the person was wearing
- We have an informal document that serves as a guideline to parents about what will be needed by SAPS when a child goes missing. We call it the Interim ID Kit. It can be downloaded from our website or sent us an e-mail and we will be sure to send you an electronic copy.
- Teach your children the basic safety tips, also available from our website.

To help us fight Human Trafficking – SMS ‘fight’, followed by your name and surname to 42141 to donate R10 towards Missing Children SA and stand a chance to win in our monthly draw. For more information, visit www.missingchildren.org.za.

For other ways to get involved, please visit www.missingchildren.org.za/involved.

To report a missing person, go to www.missingchildren.org.za/report.

Contact Details for Missing Children SA:

Emergency Number: 072MISSING / 072 647 7464
 General Enquiries/Office: 021 950 1546
 E-mail Address: info@missingchildren.org.za
 Website: www.missingchildren.org.za

Join our Facebook Group: Missing Children SA Page
 Follow us on Twitter: @072missing

For more information, please feel free to contact us on the numbers above or visit our website.

Missing Children SA Team