

## Children in Care Are at High Risk of Going Missing

12% of the approximately 70,000 children in care are moved 20 miles away from their homes to be looked after by the state which is ridiculously unfair. In unfamiliar places, children become vulnerable and open to exploitation to potential abusers, without the support of close family, friends and social networks, looked-after children often go missing. In a report by the Department of Education they revealed around 4,890 children live in children's homes run by social services, of this 46% live out of their local area and a third live more than 20 miles away.

There are an astonishing 22,000 missing people cases for under-18 year olds; in 2014 17,882 under-18 year olds were reported missing and the year after 25,622 young people went missing. Kidnappings and abductions went up by 13% in 2013-14; the majority of kidnappers are strangers however abduction by parents has gone up by 6%.



It is more likely for 12-17 year olds to run away, and it is even more likely for 'looked-after' children than those from other backgrounds. In London an average of 70 children are reported missing every day; the largest threat is also the sexual exploitation of children, where a quarter of young children are at risk and falling into crime is another danger.

Missing children, can be "some of the most vulnerable in our society." They can be running and hiding from problems such as "abuse, neglect, conflict, family breakdown and parental drug and alcohol misuse," and from adults looking to exploit them.

Without support and action, many more children will go missing "exposing them to increasing risk of sexual exploitation and other crimes," And young missing people may try and get help from an adult, who in reality, are looking to exploit them. It can be common that these issues don't get "addressed early enough."

Twitter is an excellent way to raise awareness of missing people, there is an average of one tweet per 30 minutes about a missing person. People will retweet, and this can lead to the finding of people "Invaluable." There is "simply no excuse not to get involved."

If these shocking statistics moved you, you can help prevent the young generation from going missing! Help with the mission to find young people that have already had their vulnerability exploited by checking Twitter and the Missing Persons website.

By: Alesha, Lauren, Sam and Sasha