



VIII – Action Checklist

As the parent of an abducted child, you are facing a very difficult situation. The very first thing you should do is enlist the support of family and friends to help you manage and cope with the trying and complex efforts of recovering your child.

This checklist assumes that your child has been or is suspected to have been abducted abroad, to a country that is not a party to the Hague Convention. If the country in question *is* a signatory country to the Convention, one of your first steps should be to contact the provincial/territorial central authority. If you are unsure, contact the central authority for your province/territory, the federal central authority or the Consular Affairs Bureau (addresses are given in Section VI).

A. Emergency Action – What to Do Right Away

- ✓ Contact your local police and file a missing persons report.
- ✓ Contact the Consular Affairs Bureau. Explain the circumstances and request that a search be initiated to find your child and determine his/her welfare.
- ✓ Advise the RCMP's Missing Children's Registry in Ottawa.
- ✓ If you do not have a judicial custody order or one that prohibits your child from travelling without your permission, contact a Canadian lawyer. Such an order can be obtained even after a child is abducted and, while not essential under Canadian law, will be valuable in dealing with foreign authorities.
- ✓ Contact the central Passport Office (or Consular Affairs Bureau) to see if a passport was issued for your child and, if you have not already done so, have your child's name entered into the Passport Control List.
- ✓ If you have joint credit cards or banking facilities with the other parent, establish your liability and take appropriate action.

B. The Search

- ✓ If your child is a dual national, inform the diplomatic or consular mission of that country in Canada of what has happened and find out if a passport was issued for your child or if the child was included in the other parent's passport. The Consular Affairs Bureau can do this if you so request.
- ✓ If your child has only Canadian citizenship but the other parent has close ties to a particular country, inform the diplomatic or consular mission of that country in Canada of what has happened and enquire whether or not a visa was issued for your child. Again, the Consular Affairs Bureau can do this if you so request.
- ✓ Ensure that you have several certified copies of your custody order from the issuing court.
- ✓ Obtain information on the family and child welfare laws and customs of the country to which your child has been abducted. Also, learn and understand the various legal aspects of your situation under Canadian law.
- ✓ Establish contact with relatives and friends of the other parent in Canada and abroad and try to enlist their support.
- ✓ Advise your child's school, doctor and hospital that he/she has been abducted and request that they inform you should they be contacted by the abducting parent.
- ✓ In consultation with your lawyer and the local police, consider whether it would be beneficial to obtain information from telephone and credit card companies on the whereabouts of the abducting parent.