

# America's missing: broadcasting emergency response alert essay sample

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AMBER (America's Missing: Broadcasting Emergency Response) Alert is an alert system to let the local area know when a child under the age of 17 has been abducted. An alert instantly gets sent out over regular television stations, radio stations, law enforcement agencies, wireless phones, the back of lottery tickets, the internet, highway signs, and the AMBER Alert iPod application. It gives the local area information on the abducted child, who they are suspected to be with, and what area they might be in. AMBER Alert is effective in all 50 states of the United States, including Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Island, and the northern and southern borders of the United States. The idea of AMBER Alert came from the story of nine-year old Amber Hagerman, a little girl who was abducted on January 13, 1996 in Arlington, Texas. Amber was riding her bike around her grandparents' neighborhood that day. When she didn't return home to her grandparents' house they went looking for her. As they were driving around the neighborhood they saw a police car at a neighbor's house. One of the neighbors saw Amber being abducted and called the police.

Amber's family was notified. Four days after Amber's abduction and searching for her, her dead body was found in a creek bed. Her murderer was never found and her case was left unsolved. Because of Amber's abduction, Carles Williams, a pastor from Fort Worth, Texas wanted to prevent incidents like Amber's from happening in the future. On January 15, 1996 he called into a Dallas radio station and suggested the idea for AMBER Alert. It began in 1996 when Dallas-Fort Worth broadcasters teamed up with local police to develop a quick alert system to find missing children. Willams had the idea of Amber Alert for over nine years, though when he heard about

Amber missing he decided to come forward about it. AMBER Alert was finally signed into law in April of 2003 by former President George W. Bush. There is a criteria that must be met before law enforcement activates the AMBER Alert. The missing child must be 17 years old or younger; the law enforcement agency must be convinced that the child has been kidnapped; the agency needs to believe that the missing child is in possible harm of body or death; there must be some type of description of the child, abductor or abductor's vehicle.

Before AMBER Alert became in affect there were not any alert systems to make the local area aware a child has gone missing. When a child was abducted the only way to get out to the media was by the news. Now, with the AMBER Alert in effect, radio and television programs are interrupted to notify the public that a child has been abducted. Because 95% of people driving in their cars are listening to the radio, the alert becomes extremely effective because it provides a description of the child, the kidnapper, and the vehicle. It is known that an abductor can vanish with a child at the rate of one mile per minute, therefore, the public being notified immediately is crucial to increase the chances of finding the child. In Amber's situation, her kidnapping wasn't alerted to the area until 10: 00 pm, seven hours after her kidnapping. If there would have been an AMBER Alert about her kidnapping someone may have seen her, or her kidnapper, and she could have been saved now, as well as many other abducted children.

AMBER Alert has saved kids such as Elizabeth Smart, a 14 year old girl who was kidnapped from her bedroom in the summer of 2002. After her parents

found out about AMBER Alert they begged for an alert for Elizabeth. Since AMBER Alert was not legalized at the time she did not automatically receive one. Since they asked for an alert they got one. AMBER Alert helped shorten Elizabeth's kidnapping. After Elizabeth returned home her father told CNN news " All of the children out there deserve to come home to their parents the way Elizabeth has come back to us, and I just hope and pray that Congress will quickly pass the AMBER alert so those children will have a better chance." Elizabeth Smart's aunt also gave her opinion on AMBER Alert, " While this is being celebrated across the country, we would challenge every senator and every congressman to quickly enact the AMBER Alert, It needs to be done and every child deserves that." Every day there are 2, 208 children reported missing in the United States. That's 806, 000 yearly. Three hundred, fifty-four thousand of those children are reported abducted.

Two hundred, fifty-eight thousand, four hundred twenty of the 354, 000 kids abducted are family abductions. Ninety-five thousand, five hundred eighty are non-family abductions. Forty percent of children that are abducted by strangers are killed. The AMBER Alert is a new and useful way to inform people that a child has been kidnapped. The human idea of the AMBER Alert and the actions taken to pass the AMBER Alert has turned the public into instant investigators. The AMBER Alert is free and encourages participation to everyone. It is an effective, time-critical response to kidnappers who can disappear in seconds. It sends a powerful message to people who are planning on abducting that the community is working together to protect children. The AMBER Alert not only saves lives but has saved over 495

abducted children. Without AMBER Alert many children might possibly be dead now or still missing. America can not afford to have anymore missing children. They are our hope and our future.