

Fort Smith Police Department

Press Release

Date: 6-3-2009

In our continuing efforts to build a strong response capability to missing & abducted children calls, the Fort Smith Police Department is proud to announce our latest addition to this capability. Last year The National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC) published a set of model policies for communication/dispatch centers. This was a joint effort with The Association of Public-Safety Communications Officials – International. (APCO) This guide helps call takers be more prepared to gather the necessary information which helps increase response time and planning. Since every second counts towards the safe recovery of a child, this streamlined process fits perfectly into our current efforts. Working with Sergeant Gerald Schafer of the Fort Smith Police Department's Communications Center, these guidelines have been incorporated into a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) that is given to all communication center personnel. APCO quick reference cards were already purchased and in place at each workstation so the integration of this policy with the cards means that a call taker has constant access to this resource. It also means that a standardized format can be followed to ensure proper handling of the critical information the call taker must obtain. This change to communication center policy also means that the Fort Smith Police Department has now rewritten its entire response policy and has also done so in line with the National Center's recommended guidelines. Working together as one community we can all make a difference in keeping our children safe.

Link to Press Release from NCMEC about the new standards

http://www.missingkids.com/missingkids/servlet/NewsEventServlet?LanguageCountry=en_US&PageId=3603

Link to a PDF file of the Standards

<http://www.missingkids.com/911standards>