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## Investigative Committee of Russia analyses cases of children disappearances



This year a number of Russian regions feature an increasing number of children disappearances. According to statistics, the results of the first six months of 2019 show an increase in the number of reports on missing children--over 6,500 reports, which exceeds the last year number by 7 percent.

Upon report about a missing child, investigative bodies of the Investigative Committee of Russia engage all assets to locate the missing child and establish all circumstances of the incident. The time factor is essential for the search activities; therefore, investigators of the Investigative Committee are instructed to act immediately. In order to reach the goal, investigators cooperate not only with law enforcement bodies and EMERCOM but also with search teams and other volunteer-involving movements. Depending on the circumstances, the Investigative Committee uses its entire forensics potential for the search for children, including unmanned aerial vehicles, geolocation, sonar sensors, and non-linear transition detectors.

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Fortunately, most of such cases end safely due to well-trained collaboration algorithms.

Recently, the timeliness, consolidation, and coordination of all efforts helped to find a child in Omsk Region. On August 13, his parents came to a forest for berry picking and left a three-year-old son alone in their car. Upon returning, they discovered that the boy was missing. As a result of search activities, the boy was found alive in a wetland of the forest.

Several days after that, a 5-year-old girl disappeared in Nizhny Novgorod Region. She went to a forest to look for her grandmother who had left her under adult supervision and got lost. Within a few days, the girl was found alive in one of the areas specified for the search activities.

On September 4, 2019, in Vologda Region, a mother of the two-year-old girl left her in a sandbox with two young sisters (six and four years old) and went to the neighboring house of her friend to feed her newborn child. Upon returning, she did not find her two-year-old daughter. Search activities for the child lasted until September 6, 2019 - the girl was found alive.

On September 5, in Krasnodar Region, a man went to a forest to pick mushrooms and his wife stayed at home with four children, the eldest of whom was 4 years old. She left her two older children to play in the vegetable garden and was taking care of the younger children. Approximately 30 minutes after, the woman went outside and could not find her 4-year-old son who had gone to a nearby forest. During the search activities, shoe marks were found in approximately 1.5 kilometers from his home and a little later the boy was found alive.

Certainly, the situation when a child is missing, even if they are located in the shortest period of time, is traumatic for both the minor and their parents. However, despite all measures taken for the search, it is not always possible to find a child alive. Death of a child left unattended can be caused both by accident or a crime.

Thus, on September 2, 2019, search activities for a 9-year-old boy in Kirov of Kaluga Region revealed his body in Verkhneye Lake. The boy had disappeared on August 31 after leaving an apartment of acquaintances where he had previously come with his mother and brother.

During the day of June 26, 2019, in one of the settlements of Chishminsky District of the Republic of Bashkortostan, a 7-year-old boy had left his home to herd geese and disappeared. On the same day, his parents had reported his missing to the police. The massive search activities for the child were carried out both on land and water. Unfortunately, the boy was not found alive--his body was taken out of a river on June 28, 2019.

On May 12, 2019, in Magadan Region, a mother reported to the police her 4-year-old daughter missing. The child had been walking outside unattended. The search activities led to disappointing results--the girl's body was found showing signs of violent death. Investigators established that the child had been killed by a man visitor. Investigators have already collected the necessary evidence to

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prove his involvement in the committed offence and the probe will be soon referred to court.

When the tragedy has already happened, whether it is an accident or an offence committed by third persons, it is no longer possible to bring back the most valuable thing--the life of a child.

Officers of the Investigative Committee of Russia thoroughly inspect all causes and conditions that led to the death of a child in every case of an accident involving children. They also study all circumstances of children disappearance cases with successful results of search activities. The results of this work prove that many children disappearance cases could have been prevented by proper attention and due diligence of the adults. Sometimes their carelessness and shortsightedness cause unfavorable and traumatic consequences for children. When making decisions, the one responsible for the life and health of their child must firstly properly evaluate and understand all possible consequences for the minor. They are the one responsible for the fate of their child.

Parents, guardians, and relatives of a child must realize that they are primarily responsible for the safety of a child. A simple inattentiveness of an adult might cause a tragedy and cost the life of a child.

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