

HOW TO PLAN A TAKE 25 EVENT

As you begin planning, consider these important steps

1. Choose an event to host

- Materials Distribution
- Child ID
- Safety Presentation
- Town Hall Meeting
- Press Conference

2. Identify local contacts

- Include elected and appointed officials, media, community leaders, educators, law enforcement, clergy and other community members whose support could be valuable.
- Remember to include local contacts in the planning and execution stages of your event.
- Recruit volunteers as needed to support the event.

3. Secure the support of local organizations and agencies

- Consider hosting a planning meeting to discuss the responsibilities of each participating organization.
- Invite representatives from the non-profit, corporate, faith-based, and government sectors to participate.
- Divide responsibilities among media outreach, event planning, and programmatic details.
- Approach your local law enforcement agency and/or Fire Department – many law enforcement agencies have organized child identification and community events in the past and may be good resources when planning your event.
- Talk to faculty members and staff persons at your local schools, including colleges and universities, and encourage their participation in planning and hosting events.
- If possible, contact potential partners at least 60 days prior to your event.

4. Develop an event strategy

- Identify goals for the event, which may include raising awareness, increasing community involvement, or highlighting cases of missing children.
- Determine the local and national statistics involving missing or exploited children. Visit www.missingkids.com for national statistics and consult your State clearinghouse to find out how the issues are relevant in your community. Make sure to use this information while talking to law enforcement and local media.
- Identify local programs and resources to help address this issue. Based on your goals and existing programs, consider what other resources the community may need.
- Consider the demographics of your audience while planning the event.
- Determine which materials you will distribute to attendees.
- Develop a timeline that will guide you in the planning process.



5. Determine a location

- Consider where the event will take place. Possible locations include a local community center, school, or park.
- Determine what date and time will allow for maximum participation.
- Estimate the number of children and families that will attend.
- Make sure your venue will hold the estimated number of attendees, has adequate parking, and is accessible by public transportation.
- Establish a back-up plan in case of inclement weather.

6. Engage your community—make sure they know about it!

- Network with existing local organizations to promote the event, such as local service clubs, Chambers of Commerce, faith-based organizations, and community groups.
- Reach out to local schools and parent organizations to request they notify parents and guardians about events in the community.
- Promote your event on local community event calendars.
- Contact your local media, keeping in mind that radio stations often provide free event information to their listeners.

7. Develop a media strategy

- Develop a list of media representatives to invite to attend the event, including television and radio stations, newspapers, and magazines.
- Designate a spokesperson such as a community leader, law enforcement representative, or local celebrity or athlete to speak on behalf of the event.
- Invite local radio stations and cable access channels. Make sure to ask your local newspaper to post an event notice.
- Distribute a media advisory to local media outlets, along with an invitation to the event. Prepare media kits with personalized press releases for media attending your event and offer to send a follow-up memo with pictures to those who cannot attend.
- Videotape and/or photograph the event for later use.

8. Work out last-minute details

- Provide attendees with Take 25 resources for their review.
- Plan to meet your participants' needs and ensure their comfort while attending the event. Make sure that drinking water and restrooms are accessible.
- If you are expecting a large crowd, consider entertainment for children who are waiting in line. Face-painting, costumed characters, safety talks, law enforcement demonstrations, and storytelling are all fun ways to keep children engaged.

9. Follow-up with supporters

- Issue surveys to event organizers and attendees.
- Form a task force in your community to work on missing and exploited children's issues.
- Keep the issue of child safety at the forefront of community members' minds.