



Writer and Editor [Tiffany Fontana](#)

Shining Hope

The "Shining Hope" newsletter offers valuable resources and support to families facing child abduction and parental alienation. Our publication provides uplifting and informative messages to parents dealing with the abduction of their children, fostering a strong and supportive community throughout their difficult journey. Stay informed and up-to-date with the latest news, events, and pressing issues through our comprehensive and timely newsletter.



Visit our [website](#) for programs, resources, and support!

Sunday night Zoom call for parents: email contact@stlforabductedchildren.org for more information. JOIN..... for yourself and your children!

Introducing the STL Zazzle store! Shop with purpose [HERE!](#)

“ Courage doesn’t always roar. Sometimes courage is the quiet voice at the end of the day saying, “I will try again tomorrow.”
Mary Anne Radmacher ”

Shining a Light on Child Abduction: STL Joins National AMBER Alert Symposium in D.C.

The [AMBER Alert system](#) was born from tragedy. In 1996, nine-year-old Amber Hagerman was abducted in Texas. Though her case ended in heartbreak, it sparked a nationwide movement to create an alert system that could mobilize entire communities to search for abducted children in real time. Today, AMBER Alerts have helped rescue over 1,200 children, proving that swift action and public awareness can save lives.

This February, Shine The Light For Abducted Children participated in the National AMBER Alert and AMBER Alert in Indian Country Symposium. Approved by the U.S. Department of Justice, the event brought together experts and advocates to (continued on page 2)



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share best practices, explore new technologies, and address ongoing challenges in child recovery efforts.

"I was deeply honored to represent Shine The Light at this prestigious event," said Randall Murphy, STL's Executive Director. "It provided a valuable platform for collaboration, innovation, and collective action. We have a responsibility to ensure that every missing child gets the attention they deserve, and this symposium reinforced that mission."

While AMBER Alerts have been instrumental in recovering abducted children, not all cases meet the strict criteria required for an alert to be issued. Many instances of parental child abduction, for example, do not qualify—despite the significant risk these cases pose. STL has long advocated for a better understanding of these situations and for policies that ensure children abducted by a parent receive the same level of urgency.

"Too often, parental abductions are dismissed as custody disputes rather than serious child welfare issues which they are," Murphy noted. "Through STL's work, we strive to change that perception and push for reforms that protect every missing child, regardless of who takes them."

The symposium featured discussions on strengthening interagency collaboration, enhancing technology in alert systems, and addressing the unique challenges Indigenous communities face in child abduction cases. Murphy found the exchange of ideas particularly insightful, noting that STL's efforts align closely with the need for expanded public education and legislative change.

"I returned from the symposium with renewed energy and a deeper understanding of the complex issues surrounding child abduction," Murphy said. "Listening to law enforcement, policymakers, and fellow advocates reinforced the importance of our work—and how much more needs to be done."

STL remains committed to raising awareness about the dangers of parental abduction and the emotional toll it takes on children and left-behind families. In many cases, abducted children are moved across state lines or even taken abroad, making recovery efforts even more complex.

How to Enable AMBER Alerts on Your Smartphone

For Android Devices:

- Open the Settings app.
- Scroll down and tap Safety & Emergency.
- Tap Wireless Emergency Alerts.
- Toggle on Emergency Alerts to enable them.



For iOS Devices:

- Open the Settings app.
- Scroll down and tap Notifications.
- Scroll to the bottom and tap Government Alerts.
- Toggle on Emergency Alerts and Public Safety Alerts.



Why It's Helpful:

Turning on AMBER Alerts ensures you're quickly notified about child abductions in your area, allowing you to act fast, share information, or assist authorities. This simple step can play a crucial role in reuniting children with their families and keeping your community safer.



AMBER Alert Symposium

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"Parental abduction isn't just a legal issue—it's a deeply traumatic experience for the child involved," Murphy emphasized. "We need better training, stronger laws, and a shift in public perception to ensure these children aren't overlooked."

The AMBER Alert Symposium was not just a place to learn—it was a call to action. STL will continue advocating for the inclusion of parental abductions in AMBER Alert criteria, promoting better training for law enforcement, and ensuring that no missing child goes unnoticed.

"We must shine a light on this critical issue and make a meaningful difference in the lives of children and families everywhere," Murphy said. "Every missing child deserves to come home, and STL will not stop fighting until that happens."



Randall Murphy, Executive Director of Shine The Light for Abducted Children, Inc.

Advocacy in Action



Shine The Light For Abducted Children, Inc. is collaborating with Ep.Log Media to bring about positive change through an informative survey on child abduction.

This survey aims to explore the complex and often painful issue of parental child abduction by gathering insights from those who have experienced it firsthand. The information collected will shed light on the emotional, legal, and personal challenges parents face while trying to reunite with their children, as well as the effects on abducted children being alienated from their parents.

All responses will be kept strictly confidential and used exclusively to support research for the upcoming docuseries.

Parents, relatives, and individuals who have experienced the abduction of a child by a parent or legal guardian are invited to participate. More information can be found on the official [Facebook page](#). To fill out the survey, click [HERE](#). Have more questions? Please email: bonjour@eplog.media.

Powerful Perspectives

Quotes from parents, experts, and advocates highlight the emotional challenges families face, offer encouragement, and emphasize the urgent need for greater awareness and action.

"In the deepest moments of uncertainty, always remember: even when the world feels out of your control, your love and resilience remain your strongest compass—keep holding on to HOPE."

— *Mandy Kelly, Mother two abducted sons of Ireland to Egypt (March 2022)*

"Trauma creates change you don't choose. Healing is about creating change you do choose."

— *Michelle Rosenthal, Trauma Recovery Specialist*



From Broken Steps: **Navigating Housing Challenges After Reunification**

By Tiffany Fontana

When discussing recovery after parental abduction, conversations typically center around emotional healing, legal processes, and rebuilding trust. Yet one of the most fundamental needs—stable housing—often goes unaddressed.

Many left-behind parents spend everything they have advocating for the return of their child, pouring their savings into legal fees, travel expenses, and investigative efforts. Some lose their jobs altogether, while others struggle to keep up with bills, mounting debt, and other responsibilities. These challenges often lead to a loss of stability and housing insecurity, adding even more weight to an already heartbreaking situation.

Rebecca (name changed for privacy), a parent in STL's support community, knows this struggle well after spending years fighting to bring her two daughters home. "When we finally reunited, I was overjoyed but also terrified about our housing situation," she recalls. "I couldn't bring my girls to a shelter after everything they'd been through.

They needed stability and safety—a real home where healing could begin, not another temporary place that would only add to their trauma."

A home is much more than just shelter—it's a sanctuary for the family. It provides the foundation where healing, trust, and connection can grow. Above all else, children recovering from abduction need consistency, having already endured profound disruption in their lives. They require quality time, genuine conversation, and a stable sense of belonging—things that cannot flourish in an ever-changing environment.

With the help of specialized housing programs, families facing crisis situations can regain stability and security. An important first step is to contact a [local housing authority](#). It's essential to explain the situation clearly and inquire specifically about [emergency priority status](#), which many jurisdictions now offer for families in crisis. (continued on page 5)

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These additional steps may increase a person's chances of securing assistance:

- Gather documentation: Collect proof of income, family size, and identification.
- Apply for emergency assistance: Learn where to apply locally for Section 8 housing vouchers.
- Explore additional resources: Contact organizations like Catholic Charities, Salvation Army, or United Way for support.
- Follow up regularly: Stay in contact with housing authorities to track your application.

The best place to find up-to-date information on federal programs is through the following reliable resources: [The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development \(HUD\)](#) offers programs such as the Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG), [Continuum of Care \(CoC\)](#), and the Family Unification Program (FUP) for emergency shelter and housing support. HUD also provides loans through the [USDA](#) to help low-income families purchase or repair a home.

Every family deserves the chance to rebuild in a place they can call home, where stability allows them to heal, reconnect, and move forward with hope.

SHOP WITH PURPOSE!



STICKERS

Check out the STL Zazzle store for merch that supports the cause and helps raise awareness for parental abduction.

Every purchase makes an impact!

More items coming soon!

[CLICK HERE TO SHOP](#)

Reading Resources

[The Guide For Separated Parents](#)

[From Broken Steps: A Guide to Healing After Parental Abduction](#)

[Adult Children of Parental Alienation Syndrome: Breaking the Ties That Bind](#)



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Share your stories, ideas, or feedback with our Editor at info@tiffanyfontana.com. We value your input and look forward to hearing from you!