

MISSING PERSONS INVESTIGATIONS



MPU

MISSING PERSONS UNIT

DISPELLING COMMON MYTHS

Misunderstandings about missing persons investigations can prevent people from getting help.

To prevent delays in reporting, this information sheet provides accurate information and dispels common myths.

Do not wait to report a person missing. Every second counts.

Myths

If the missing person is an adult with a history of mental health or substance misuse, the police may not take the case seriously.

Photos used for missing persons investigations can be used for criminal investigations.

Most missing persons reported to police will never be found.

You should not call 9-1-1 to report someone missing.

You have to wait 24 hours to report a person missing.

People who run away frequently are deemed to be runaways by police.

Facts

Every missing person case is investigated with care and compassion.

Photos provided for missing persons investigations are not used for criminal investigations.

Over 90% of people are located after being reported missing.

If you are concerned about someone's immediate safety, call 9-1-1. In less urgent situations, call the non-emergency number 416-808-2222 or attend your local police station.

Waiting can delay the investigation; report immediately.

Toronto Police only uses the term "missing person" regardless of the number of times someone has gone missing.



To learn more, visit <https://www.tps.ca/missing> and download the *Community Guide to Report a Person Missing*.

Questions? Contact the Missing Persons Unit at MissingPersons@tps.ca



Myths

Only family members can report a person missing.

Reporting someone missing is an inconvenience to the police.

The police won't start looking for a missing person right away.

Only adults can be reported missing.

The police won't investigate if the person missing is an adult with a history of going missing.

DNA samples provided for a missing person investigation can be kept and used for medical research.

Facts

Anyone with knowledge of a person's normal habits and patterns can report a person missing.

Reporting is critical to ensuring a person's safety if their whereabouts are unknown, and those close to them are concerned about a change in normal habits.

Police investigate immediately; prompt reporting is crucial.

Anyone can be reported missing.

Every missing person case is investigated.

DNA samples provided for a missing person investigation must be destroyed once the person is located and cannot be used for medical research.