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lost one

PRESS RELEASE

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Reclaiming the lost generation

The Bureau of Missing Persons (BMP) currently has approximately 860 children under the age of 18 years on the database, still missing. If this figure is deducted from the approximately 60 000 street children in South Africa, it is evident that there is a massive under reporting of missing children in South Africa.

“If the state departments haven’t got the resources to investigate these cases still on the database, who is going to fill the gap?” The newly elected South African Centre for Missing and Exploited Children (SACMEC) President and Head of the BMP, Captain Fanie van Deventer, asks.

“What we are creating is that within 10 years we will have another 60 000 criminals on the street” “We are already sitting with the lost generation because of apartheid, so we are creating another lost generation,” he added.

SACMEC intends to register all these street children on this pro-active database. This better tracking and distribution system will result in the enhanced allocation of social development resources. It will also help to establish whether children are on the street due to socio-economic circumstances or out of their own free will. Once such a database is established all these children become found children and the search for their parents and families can commence.

more



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lost two last

Fingerprints taken from one year olds (when fingerprints are fully formed) and ages above, identifying characteristics, a photograph and a DNA sample (unprocessed until needed) and other relevant information will be captured. This upfront data gathering will speed up the distribution of information when a child is reported missing.

A touch of a button will speedily send this missing child's data to all sectors of the media, police departments and other relevant stakeholders and into the community.

The problem in South Africa is that up to the age of sixteen there is no identification on any child. If the birth is registered an identification number is allocated, but the child is only issued an ID book at sixteen years old, upon application.

In the scenario in which a child is lost, reported to the Police as missing and where a crime is committed and a body eventually recovered, there is no easy way to link the body with a missing person report.

SACMEC has appealed to the public or business community for any support whether financial or in kind.

ends

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