



## “LOST! ... But Found, Safe and Sound.”<sup>®</sup>

### HANDOUT FOR PARENTS

The “LOST! ... But Found, Safe and Sound.”<sup>®</sup> Program was developed by the Association of National Park Rangers, Inc. It is a program for children on how not to get lost, how to stay comfortable if they do get lost, and how they can be found more quickly. We hope your child never needs this knowledge, but if you discuss this handout and the CD of the videotape with your child (preferably each time you go on an outing), then if he or she does get lost, it may help him or her to remember one or more of the facts that will make the search short and successful.

**The following points are covered in the CD or videotape that will be, or has been, seen by your child:**

1. When you realize you've become lost, STOP! Don't run because you might fall and get hurt. Remember the things you learned in the videotape and that your parents discussed with you.
2. Look around for a comfortable place. One of the greatest fears a person of any age can have is being alone. Snuggling up to a tree or other

stationary object as if building a nest calms you down and prevents panic. By staying in one place you can be found far more quickly and you also can't be injured in a fall.

3. Always carry a trash bag and whistle on a picnic, hike, or camping trip. Making a hole in the bottom of the bag for the face,\* and putting it on over your head, will keep you dry and warm. The whistle can be heard much further away than your voice can be, and it takes less energy to use.
4. Your parents won't be angry at you. Time and again, children like you have avoided searchers because they were ashamed of getting lost, and afraid of punishment. Anyone can get lost, adult or child. A happy reunion, filled with love, is waiting.
5. Make Yourself Big. You are hard to see when you are in a group of trees, and when you are wearing dark clothing. Find your “nest” near a small clearing if possible. Wear a brightly colored jacket when you go near the woods or desert, or take a brightly colored scarf or pack and place it in an open place near you so searchers can see it. From a helicopter or plane you are harder to see when you are standing up. Lie down so you look bigger if the helicopter flies over.
6. There are no animals out there that want to hurt you. If you hear a noise at night, blow your whistle at it. If it is a searcher, you will be found. Fears of the dark and of “lions and tigers and bears” might make you afraid and want to run. The best thing you can do is to stay in your “nest.”

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\*A hole is necessary to prevent possible suffocation.

7. You have hundreds of friends looking for you. Most searchers are volunteers who work with other professionals and who do it because they care. Many children who are lost don't realize that if they sit down and stay put, one of the many searchers will find them.

#### **Additional helpful information for parents:**

1. Before going on a hike or on a camping trip, put together a small back- or fannypack for your child. In addition to snacks, some water and other personal articles, be sure to include a large trash bag and a loud whistle. Remind your child to take the pack whenever she or he is away from the developed area. Remind your child that the whistle and trash bag are in the pack.
2. Be sure your child is wearing brightly colored outer clothing, or has a brightly colored scarf or other item whenever on a hike or going into the “backcountry.”
3. Try to keep your child from getting lost in the first place. Since children are easily distracted, teach them to stay on the trail and to stay close to you. Never let your young child walk trails alone.
4. Although not essential, “footprinting” your child is a five minute exercise that might cut down the time of a search by several hours. Have the child step (with her or his hiking shoes or boots) on a piece of aluminum foil on a soft surface, such as carpeting or a folded towel. Mark the foil with the child's name and keep it from being “flattened.” With this print, trackers can separate your child's track from the many others in the area, and more quickly determine the direction of travel.

- When you notice that your child is “missing,” call the local authorities – or send someone to call – IMMEDIATELY! Don’t wait! You can initiate an immediate search of the area after you call, if you decide to. Searchers would rather show up only to find that the child has returned or been found safely than to be delayed and face a more difficult, larger search area.
- After you call the authorities, make sure you or someone stays at the specified location to give the detailed information to the first responder. If you have to be “searched for,” it will further delay the search.
- Since search dogs now are frequently used, it could be helpful to have a “scent article” available for the dog handler if he/she asks for one. The best scent articles are unwashed articles of clothing that have been immediately next to the child’s skin (such as underwear or bed sheets). Keep such articles “uncontaminated” by handling them with a stick or clean eating utensil, and place them on a coat hanger or in a paper bag (not plastic, since they sometimes have been treated with deodorants).

Additional copies of the video or CD can be obtained from:  
 Association of National Park Rangers, Inc.  
 PO Box 108  
 Lamed, KS 67550-0108

Contact NJSAR for a presentation to your group of children (and adults). Our volunteers will help you learn how to keep safe and what to do if lost in the woods.

Send email to  
[psar@njsar.org](mailto:psar@njsar.org)



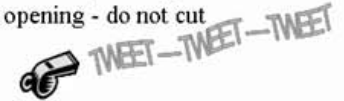
## Lost in the Woods - Child Survival Kit

by Gary O'Brien, SARBC  
 Shared with you by Members of  
 New Jersey Search and Rescue [NJSAR]



Make an Emergency Survival Kit (and practice using it):

- Large Garbage Bag**, bright color is best, for a poncho
  - pre-poke hole to stretch for face opening - do not cut
- Whistle** used to signal for help
  - three short blasts
- Signal Flag** approximately 4 inches by 40 inches
  - for example, cut from an orange plastic garbage bag
- Reflector** for sending signals
  - for example, tin foil pasted to cardboard, with no sharp edges
- Snack** of high energy trail mix
  - keep food in zip lock bag, which also can be used as a cup
- Container**
  - such as a small pack fastened around the waist



## Lost in the Woods – 9 Rules for Survival

**A** “Hug a friend, a pet or tree”

- Stay Together If You are With Another Person or a Pet
- Stay in One Place**; don’t wander around

**B** “Take care of yourself”

- Keep Warm
  - With your Jacket, Hat, and Plastic Bag
- Find a Cozy Waiting Place, Not a Hiding Place
- Make a Nest to Lie Down
- Eat Only What You Brought with You
  - Do not eat or drink anything you are not sure of
- Stay away from large rivers and lakes

**C** “Help yourself be found”

- Put Out Something Bright
- Look Bigger for Searchers
  - Use your Whistle and Reflector

Certificate

[Write your name in here]

attended the session to  
 “Prepare for Search  
 and Rescue”  
 presented by NJSAR