

306-015

March 1987

AMERICA'S HEARTACHE

According to the United States Department of Health and Human Services, approximately 1.8 million children disappear from home every year. Many are runaways. Others are abducted during custody fights between parents. Some are stolen by strangers. They may be held only a few hours, a few days, or in some cases, may never be seen again.

AMERICA'S HEARTACHE is designed to help make parents and other caring adults in the Commonwealth more aware of the abduction and sexual molestation problem and to provide specific suggestions on how to keep children safe.

Experts have identified the major types of abductors and molesters:

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| Profiteers | Criminal exploiters who use children for pornographic purposes. Also, adoption rings who sell children and those who kidnap for ransom. |
| Psychotics | Usually females who desperately want children but cannot conceive. |
| Serial Killers | People who murder children repetitively. |
| Pedophiles | People who are sexually attracted to children. |

These criminals are very cunning when devising ways to lure children into dangerous situations. Parents or caretakers must be aware of the various "lures" used and must take steps to teach children safety measures.



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The Community Resource Development staff of the Virginia Cooperative Extension Service realize that discussing abduction and molestation with children must be done with care. It is important that parents or caretakers not frighten children, but make them understand that it is necessary to know how to protect themselves when parents are not present.

This may be done effectively through the use of "What If" games. Here, you suggest potentially dangerous situations with your child, then act the situation out, showing your child what to do in each case. A "What If Quiz" is provided in this manual for that purpose.

Sexual molestation of children is often committed without a long-term abduction. A child may be lured into a situation where the molestation can be carried out and the child then returned to his home. Children who are molested are frequently threatened with harm if they report the crime, thus parents and caretakers must be alert to signs of sexual abuse in children. **AMERICA'S HEARTACHE** provides that information.

SUGGESTED USES:

AMERICA'S HEARTACHE is a "Trigger film" which will stimulate action leading to solutions for the abduction and molestation problem. The program presents an educational program on a very difficult and sensitive real crisis.

RECOMMENDED FOR:

Community and corporate drug prevention and rehabilitation programs. Substance abuse prevention programs and health classes, in schools, colleges and universities. 4-H youth programs.

PRODUCERS:

Syndistar, Inc.
648 Hickory Avenue
New Orleans, LA 70123
Ph. 1-800-841-9532

CONCLUSION

The Community Resource Development (CRD) Program of the Virginia Cooperative Extension Service, as a part of its crime prevention programming effort, purchased from Syndistar, Inc., **AMERICA'S HEARTACHE**. Abduction and sexual molestation is a major problem facing each resident of the Commonwealth.

Detailed questions concerning any form of crime prevention should be directed to your local police or sheriff's department. Consult your local Extension office for additional crime prevention resources made available by the CRD program.



Community Resource
Development

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