

# Identification of Missing Children in Suspicious Circumstances

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**ABSTRACT:** In most cases, the authorities face cases in which the parents are desperate for the disappearance of the minor children, with the paid pedophiles, with the traffickers, with the pimp, which to some extent infringes on the fundamental rights and freedoms of the minors. The number of juveniles declared missing is increasing every year, most of them being located or returning home, but there are also cases in which minors are never found or identified as victims of crimes. Taking into account the deep pain and suffering of the parents of the missing children, who often do not know their fate for years, the authorities make every effort to speed up investigations and locate the missing children. When a juvenile is declared missing, it is essential for the investigator to know his or her signals and to have all relevant information referring to the person of the minor. If the disappearance of the child was reported many years ago, the original photograph loses its usefulness, because the minor progressively changes its appearance as time goes by. In cases where the description of a minor, after the external reports, is ambiguous, does not have sufficient information or the ones that have been rendered are not sufficient for his identification, the technique jumps to the aid of the criminals and through methods that are constantly developing, establishes certain vital details or information required.

**KEYWORDS:** disappearance, forensics, identification, minors, photography

## **Introduction**

The cases of disappearance of the minors are considered solved when the minors are found or their identification, after the localization. It should be noted that missing children may be found alive or dead. The most difficult cases are those in which there are constant indications that the missing children were victims of the murder crime, their bodies or other physical evidence not being discovered.

The ability to recognize a person can be influenced by changes in the figure of the person that appear naturally as they grow older. The progressive aging program systematizes knowledge about the anatomy of the most important 14 bones and over 100 muscles as well as how they develop.

Updating the photographs of the missing children by the digital aging technique presents a relative degree of probability, representing rather a robotic portrait of them, due to the fact that the actual height of the missing children cannot be determined, the weight or the shape of the haircut, indicators depending on the living conditions. as well as the dangers to which minors were exposed. The requests for digital aging of the faces of the missing children are discussed together with the police officers and by mutual agreement it is established what case this procedure requires.

## **Identification of minors based on photographs**

An important role in the identification of a minor is played by the forensic examination of the portrait under study, which results in establishing the identity of the minor. The possibilities of the portrait expertise are extended, expressing the description of the characteristics of the person being identified, but also as a method of solving the investigations regarding the discovery of the offenders.

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The photograph represents at present, the most used biometric method, being known as a graphical representation of a specific physiognomy or features, made under specific lighting conditions.

Considering that a number of features of the face are changing, sometimes quite quickly, some equipment uses a series of anthropometric data, which can be measured on a two-dimensional image for identification purposes. For example, it is recommended to measure the distance between orbits, the thickness of the nose, the shape of the cheeks, the thickness of the lips, etc.

Automatic comparison of the physiognomy image with the stored information makes it necessary to use digital techniques for storing and using images.

Another way that is more difficult to apply, but more secure, is to use a hologram, which has a great advantage in memorizing both the light intensity and the signal phase.

The investigator must have a most recent photograph of the missing minor, in order to identify the statements of persons who might recognize him, to publish posters and flyers and to launch on new directions of search. It is uncertain that a person will recognize a minor based on a photograph in which he is 2 years old or a photograph that is long dated.

The technical and scientific tools of the police, as well as the new support technologies in investigating disappearing cases, have made considerable progress. The process of digital aging at the same time is an art and a science that allows a graphic artist to draw a current portrait of a missing child, with a photograph of it.

The role of the aging effect in the criminal activity is found in the operative identification of the missing children long ago. The face can be likened to a 3D puzzle, with the thickness divided into distinct units around the eyes, forehead, cheeks and mouth. The young face is characterized by a smooth transition between these compartments, and as we age, there are changes in the contours of these regions due to loss or gain in volume and resetting of the compartments (Şerfesu and Lăzău 2008, 42).

The aging method of photography is based on the development of the respective figure of the child's appearance. It uses a multitude of joint anthropological data around the eyes, nose, and upper lip. These values allow the use of a certain warping program known as warping, to extend or contract the parts of the face, without altering other areas that do not concern the same types of changes.

The second factor that intervenes is the resemblance of the minor with the family members, starting from the photographs of the parents and possibly of the brothers or sisters, made at the same age as that of the missing minor, will be performed a recess of the dominant features. All these features will be used as a guide in the process of "morphing" amorphosis between the deformed portrait established after the first stage and the photographs of the family members.

In order to be able to carry out the process of digital aging of the photograph of the missing minor, the following conditions must be met:

- The child must be at least 2 years old;
- The child must have been declared missing for at least 2 years;
- Existence of photographs of the minor, obtained as far as possible at the time of disappearance;
- Existence of photographs of biological parents, as well as those of brothers and sisters made at the same age as that of the minor at the time of his disappearance;
- Photos may be color or black and white;
- Photographs should not have any notices, modifications or deletions;

Existence of as many photos as possible for the graphic designer to get a good look. What makes the digital aging process specific is that the police involved in the search for the missing child do not have the certainty that the child looked exactly like the photograph taken by the digital technique, but in the absence of other relevant evidence the digital physiognomy remains most likely closer to reality.

### **Identification of minors and perpetrators based on external signals, clothing and portable objects**

These elements do not constitute stable components of a person, but can contribute to the realization of the spoken portrait of the perpetrator, the victim or other persons involved. In applying this method two

categories of signals are used, respectively anatomical or static and functional or dynamic. an important role is played by the particular signs, clothing and portable objects whose characteristics make identification easy (Buzatu 2013, 92). Clothing plays a crucial role (Doraş 1996, 208) in recognizing people with unknown identities. We can list among these objects:

- Head coverings: hat, scarf, cap, etc.
- Suitable clothing: blouses, sweaters, suits, dresses, coats, skirts, etc. Footwear: shoes, boots, boots, sandals, etc.

It is very important to consider the name of the object, the color and the hue, the degree of wear, some characteristics such as defects, deteriorations, materials from which they are made, inscriptions, etc.

Particular objects represent more or less stable things that are in the possession of a person. Here we can exemplify: purses, bags, bracelets, medallions, rings, umbrellas, watches, etc. All these objects are described in terms of their size, of the materials from which they are made, the way or shape they are worn (by hand, neck, finger, arm). We mention that the success of an identification based on the external signals must be achieved through the close and fruitful collaboration of the judicial bodies with witnesses or victims. From the point of view of forensic tactics, listening and interpreting statements represent a very important role in the making of the spoken portrait, and together with understanding and circumscription, the judicial bodies will obtain categorical information related to the appearance of the person whose identity is uncertain.

### **Criminal investigation**

The criminal investigation, begins after obtaining the data that make plausible the version according to which the missing person is the victim of a murder.

All aspects related to the personality, concerns family relationships of the missing person as well as the working relationships should be clarified in the preliminary acts of the actual research as they serve to obtain information or information regarding the possible death.

It is necessary that the bodies found unidentified be studied in order to be able to make comparative examinations and to determine if there are characteristics similar to the missing person. For this operation a recognition presentation can be organized in the presence of family members or other close persons, based on the most recent photographs of the victim or specific signs indicated by relatives (Stancu 2010, 539).

The suspicion of the disappearance related to the murder is more frequent in the case of psychically balanced persons, with a normal behavior and existence, with organized families, who have not so far attempted to leave their family. It should be mentioned that there are people with a behavior and doubtful morality, who prefer to run away from family or criminal responsibilities and have the interest of simply disappearing.

The role of the forensic prosecutor leading the investigation team is to order the periodic checks of health units or other similar institutions in which there may be interned persons with unknown identity. The efficient and operative correlation of the investigations between magistrates and the police is required especially in cases where the disappearances of people enter the realm of organized crime - the abduction of persons in order to obtain money as redemption.

In the activities carried out with the occasion of the on-site investigation, in the majority of cases, in order to identify the perpetrators it is necessary to obtain data that could contribute to the realization of an image of it that can be used in criminal investigation.

The same problems can also occur in cases where it is necessary to establish the identity of a corpse. The realization of the "spoken portrait" on the spot is the result of the collaboration between eyewitnesses, victims, other persons and the forensic specialist, and in cases where bodies are found without an identity document on them, the forensic doctor also participates.

The subjectivism of some people, determined by age, sex, occupation, life experience, psycho-physiological structure, can influence the phenomena of perception, memory and playback of signals.

In criminal investigations, eyewitnesses, victims of crime or even other persons can provide valuable data on the perpetrator's signals. Recognition based on external features can be a means of proving criminal activity.

The person to be recognized is presented together with at least three other people who are not related to the investigated cause and presents some common features with the person concerned, such as age, sex, height, hair color.

The assistant witnesses will attest to the objectivity of the entire action by signing the minutes. When the recognition also includes dynamic elements, the people in the group are asked to execute the respective movements in turn. Recognition can also be made based on photographs of the person to be identified.

### **Conclusions**

In cases where the description of a person, after the external signals, is ambiguous, does not have sufficient information or the ones that have been rendered are not sufficient for his identification, the technique jumps to the aid of the criminals and by means of methods in continuous development, establishes certain vital details or information required.

An important role in identifying a person is played by the forensic portrait examination under study, which results in establishing the identity of the person. The possibilities of the portrait expertise are extended, expressing the description of the characteristics of the person being identified, but also as a method of solving the investigations regarding the discovery of the offenders.

Thus, we will deal with some of the techniques and methods successfully used in identifying people, after external signals.

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