



# When Your Other Half is Missing

For Siblings of Missing Children



**missing children's  
network**

Keeping hope alive



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The Missing Children’s Network wishes to thank the Department of Justice Canada – National Victims Fund for its support in the creation of this resource booklet.

Please note that the use of the masculine gender in this book also refers to the female gender and is used without discrimination and for the sole purpose of reducing the volume of text.

“When Your Other Half is Missing” is dedicated to all of the brave siblings and in honour of the missing children, forever in our thoughts and prayers.

## DISPARUS

AIDEZ-NOUS À LES RETROUVER  
514 843-4333 • 1 888 692-4673  
RESEAUENFANTSRETOUR.ORG

 <b>YOHANNA CYR</b> <small>Née : 28 décembre 1976 DISPARUE : 15 AOÛT 1978 De : Saint-Laurent, QC Dossier : 14-780925-011</small>	 <b>LORRAINE LEGAULT</b> <small>Née : 21 avril 1976 DISPARUE : 25 JUIN 1979 De : Montréal, QC Dossier : 32-790625-031</small>	 <b>DIANE CARRIER</b> <small>Née : 7 juillet 1967 DISPARUE : 27 SEPTEMBRE 1963 De : Québec, QC Dossier : 2006-145196</small>	 <b>SÉBASTIEN MÉTIVIER</b> <small>Né : 6 décembre 1985 DISPARUE : 1 NOVEMBRE 1964 De : Montréal, QC Dossier : 52-8411-1045</small>
 <b>CLIFFORD SHERWOOD</b> <small>Né : 25 mars 1943 DISPARUE : 21 OCTOBRE 1954 De : Verdun, QC Dossier : 28-000522-011</small>	 <b>MÉLINA MARTIN</b> <small>Née : 12 janvier 1992 DISPARUE : 6 NOVEMBRE 2005 De : Farnham, QC Dossier : 097-950125-001</small>	 <b>DAVID FORTIN</b> <small>Né : 9 juin 1994 DISPARUE : 10 FÉVRIER 2009 De : Alma, QC Dossier : 252-090210-013</small>	 <b>MAISY ODJICK</b> <small>Née : 8 novembre 1991 DISPARUE : 6 SEPTEMBRE 2008 De : Maniwaki, QC Dossier : 135-080809-003</small>
 <b>SHANNON ALEXANDER</b> <small>Née : 29 mars 1991 DISPARUE : 6 SEPTEMBRE 2008 De : Maniwaki, QC Dossier : 135-080910-003</small>	 <b>DANIELLE BOISVERT</b> <small>Née : 29 janvier 1961 DISPARUE : 6 NOVEMBRE 1979 De : Montréal, QC Dossier : 245-797707-045</small>	 <b>MÉLANIE TEMPERTON</b> <small>Née : 9 avril 1968 DISPARUE : 21 SEPTEMBRE 1988 De : Matrouche, QC Dossier : 171-930623-001</small>	 <b>MARILYN BERGERON</b> <small>Née : 21 décembre 1983 DISPARUE : 17 FÉVRIER 2008 De : Québec, QC Dossier : 2008-18087</small>

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Gardez l'espoir en vie

missing children's  
network



Keeping hope alive



Someone has been reported missing.  
Perhaps that child is a friend of a friend.  
Perhaps that child is someone you know.  
But what if that child is your very own brother or sister?

## Foreword

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Since 1985, the Missing Children's Network has been supporting families who are living every parent's worst nightmare. The lives of these families are completely shattered and minutes race into hours as they frantically seek their child's safe return. We cannot help but imagine the depth of their anguish and the immense sorrow in their hearts and our thoughts turn towards these parents as we pray for the child's safe recovery.

But what about the silent victims? What happens to the brothers and sisters of the missing child? They also suffer from the loss of their sibling as their lives are inexplicably impacted and family patterns are irrevocably changed.

This guide is a true labour of love and was designed for these children to let them know that they are not alone in their journey ... to give them a voice ... acknowledge their fears, doubts and insecurities, but most of all to show them that we care and they are not forgotten.

We are touched by the courage and strength of the siblings who lived through this nightmare and survived. We thank them for letting us into their lives by sharing their experiences with us in the creation of this guide! Through their eyes, we experienced the depth of their sadness, witnessed their struggles to cope with the absence of their sibling and felt their hope for the future. Their thoughts, reflections and the wisdom of their words will surely bring comfort to all those brothers and sisters whose world may one day be rocked, just like theirs was, when their beloved sibling disappeared. They survived and through their touching testimonies, others will too.

This guide is for them with our love and thanks ... we will be forever grateful!

Pina Arcamone  
Director General  
The Missing Children's Network



## Message to Siblings

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The very thought of having someone you love disappear, seems unbearable and nearly inconceivable.

In life, when tragedy strikes, it is heartbreaking for the entire family and without a doubt, everyone is affected. What was once considered a whole unit now seems incomplete. The family must now adapt to the absence of a family member.

The disappearance of a loved one is one of the most horrific experiences any family can endure. In this situation, there are too many questions for which few answers are provided, and from these answers, many are left feeling confused, angered and sometimes betrayed. There is no question that the disappearance of a family member directly impacts each member within the family structure. However, this resource guide is particularly aimed towards those that have lost a brother or a sister.

Its purpose is to offer siblings of missing children a helpful tool that will provide coping strategies and different methods to manage their stress while providing a better understanding of the situation. More importantly, this is not only an educational tool but it encompasses a therapeutic and a personalized approach.

It is our intention that these siblings have a place of their own within this guide, to ultimately express their emotions and fears and share their hopes and dreams for the future. While breaking down the barriers of isolation and alleviating feelings of guilt, the most important message I wish to convey is that you, as a sibling matter.

Joanne Maria Lopez  
Student at Concordia University



# Introduction

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The situation you are in might feel unreal. In fact it may seem that you are living a nightmare. Some days you will manage to get through, while others will be very difficult to carry on as usual.

Life just does not seem fair and words cannot describe the magnitude and depth of your emotions. However, this resource guide is written in order to provide comfort, inspiration and strength for the many siblings who are suffering.

One day you may wake up and wonder: *How could this have ever happened to me? Was there something I could have or should have done? I know my sister or my brother.....this does not make any sense. I miss him so much. I miss his smile, his laughter and presence. I feel like I can't go on.*

There are many conflicting feelings that you may experience and they may vary on a regular basis. You may feel:

## **ANGER**

Anger is a very common emotion. You may feel enraged at the entire situation. You may be mad at yourself, your parents or your sibling. You may be frustrated with how the situation is being handled or not handled. You may be mad at the world.

## **GUILT**

Guilt is another common feeling. You may feel guilty and even directly responsible for the disappearance of your sibling. You may wonder if there was something you could have done to prevent it. You may blame yourself for not having "seen the signs" before. Even though you may realize that these feelings are often irrational, you cannot help but blame yourself in some way.

## **PAIN**

The feeling of betrayal is a very hard emotion to deal with because you may feel, in some way this was done to hurt you. Pain is a haunting feeling that never seems to go away.

## **DESPERATION**

It is at this point that you are seeking the answers you need to help bring some closure to this situation.

## **PARANOIA**

You may find yourself engaging in repetitive behaviour, for instance: looking out the window, or making sure the phone is working so you will be the first to hear of any news.

## Grieving - A Personal Journey

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The furthest thing from your mind right now may be accepting the situation. There are times when you feel like it's all very surreal and there are times when you want to escape from the world.

The world seems unfair.

### **THE LOSS OF A LOVED ONE IS TRAUMATIC.**

There is no time frame for grieving.

Elisabeth Kübler-Ross outlines the grief process in five stages. When you lose a loved one or experience a traumatic event, there are "emotional stages" you go through. The five stages do not necessarily occur in any specific order. We often move between stages before achieving a more peaceful acceptance of the loss.

Coping with loss is ultimately a deeply personal and singular experience – nobody can help you go through it more easily or understand all the emotions that you're going through. But others can be there for you and help comfort you through this process. The best thing you can do is to allow yourself to feel the grief as it comes over you. Resisting it will only prolong the natural process of healing.

### **SHOCK AND DENIAL:**

"THIS CAN'T BE HAPPENING"

### **ANGER:**

"THIS IS ENTIRELY MY FAULT." OR "THIS IS ENTIRELY THEIR FAULT."

### **BARGAINING:**

"PLEASE GIVE ME ONE MORE CHANCE. IF YOU DO, I PROMISE I'LL BE A BETTER PERSON."

### **DEPRESSION:**

"I FEEL THIS EMPTINESS INSIDE OF ME."

### **ACCEPTANCE:**

"I CAN'T CHANGE WHAT HAPPENED. I AM AT PEACE WITH MYSELF AND THE SITUATION."

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## **SHOCK AND DENIAL**

This stage of grief is usually the first phase – you can't believe what has happened. The denial aspect refers to refusing to accept this situation as real. You tend to suppress your emotions which may result in isolation and withdrawal.

## **ANGER**

This stage of grief is often the most destructive. There is internal anger and resentment towards yourself or others. You feel that someone has to take the blame for the entire situation.

## **BARGAINING**

This stage is all about compromise. Either with you, with God or a higher power, one seeks a way out of the situation by promising to do something in return. For example: "If you bring back my sister, I promise to never lie again". Here, many may turn to prayer and meditation as ways of coping.

## **DEPRESSION**

At this stage you may be experiencing intense sadness. It's like the emptiest feeling in the world. You may feel alone, hopeless and lost. Depression is often an isolating emotion because you want to be left alone and don't enjoy the company of others. This emotion is completely normal in many instances. However, prolonged depression may be destructive and we recommend that you seek professional help.

## **ACCEPTANCE**

It may take a while to reach this stage. However once you have, it is the most rewarding and fulfilling stage as you have finally come to terms with what happened. You are able to look back at the situation and say that you are now at peace. Whether you had control over the situation or not, it happened and there is a lesson to be learned. Some may argue that it is impossible to fully accept the loss of a loved one, but it is possible to accept the way you handle your emotions and what your life has become.

**EVERYONE GRIEVES AND HEALS AT THEIR OWN PACE.  
GRIEVING HAS NO TIME LIMIT.**

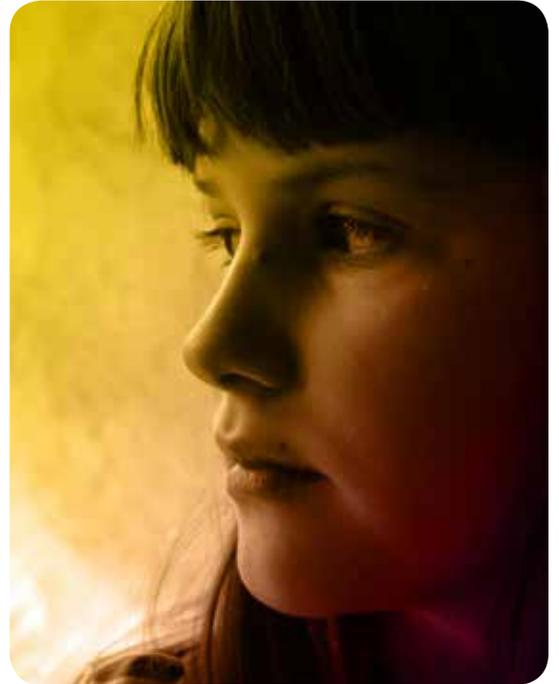
**"When the heart is ready, the healing  
process will follow."**

**JOANNE MARIA LOPEZ**

## Words Describing How I Feel

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**CONFUSION**  
**AGONY**  
**SADNESS**  
**EMPTINESS**  
**ISOLATION/SOLITUDE**  
**LOSS**  
**DESPAIR**  
**ANXIETY**  
**ABANDONMENT**  
**RESENTMENT**  
**GRIEF**  
**DISBELIEF**  
**EXHAUSTION**  
**AMBIGUITY**  
**FEAR**  
**TORTURED**  
**STRESSED**  
**HOPELESSNESS**  
**HOSTILE**  
**HURT**  
**CONFUSION**  
**CONTEMPT**  
**FRUSTRATION**  
**DENIAL**



## Coping Methods

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Mom and Dad have changed. In fact, the whole dynamic of the household has completely changed. You may feel that you do not even have time to grieve or let yourself feel.

You may feel you are forced to carry this burden to alleviate the stress your parents are experiencing. You think you need to be strong for Mom and Dad...all the time. This feeling of taking on that extra responsibility is simply too much.

It is normal to want to be strong for your parents; however you have to realize that you are only human. You also need to focus on yourself. Acknowledging that you also have needs and expressing them, can be very helpful.

“...families oftentimes respond with feelings such as desperation...because they have known the person in the full richness of their personality.”

MARIANNE DICKERMAN CALDWELL

It is also common for siblings to feel “out of the loop”. Family and friends often ask you how your parents are doing but may not ask how you are feeling. However, words may not be enough to describe how you feel. Although there may not be a definite way to change these feelings, there is a way to manage how you cope with them. You do not need to victimize or isolate yourself. Remember that you are still an important part of your family, and expressing and sharing your emotions is imperative.

In fact, you need to express how you feel. Often talking about your emotions with trusted adults and friends may make all the difference. If you are more reserved and would rather not speak about your situation, you may wish to express yourself through other means.

There may be times when you want to be left alone. This is perfectly normal. When you feel you are ready to surround yourself with people you trust, it can be very helpful. Sometimes it's the company of others that really does the trick in lifting your spirits. Surround yourself with good friends and don't be afraid to have fun.

**ACCEPT YOUR FEELINGS.**

**TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF.**

**DO WHAT YOU HAVE TO DO  
IN A REGULAR DAY.**

**MAKE TIME FOR YOUR FRIENDS –  
THEY ARE A POWERFUL SUPPORT SYSTEM.**

## Positive Self-Talk

Clearly it is hard to be positive during this difficult time. In fact, being positive may be the furthest thing from your mind. However, studies show that positive thinking is very effective and has several health benefits when trying to cope with stress.

According to the Mayo Clinic<sup>1</sup>, positive thinking may result in:

- Longer life expectancy
- Lower rates of depression
- Lower levels of stress
- Greater resistance to the common cold
- Better psychological and physical well-being
- Reduced risk of death from cardio-vascular disease
- Better coping skills during hardships and times of stress

Positive thinking starts with positive self-talk.

Here are examples of replacing negative statements with positive affirmations:

<b>NEGATIVE TALK</b>	<b>POSITIVE TALK</b>
I CAN'T DO THIS.	I AM GOING TO GET THROUGH THIS.
I FEEL ALONE.	I WILL REACH OUT TO OTHERS.
THERE'S NO WAY OUT OF THIS.	I WILL TRY TO FIND A WAY.
I HATE TODAY.	TOMORROW WILL BE A BETTER DAY.
NO ONE UNDERSTANDS ME.	I WILL DO MY BEST TO COMMUNICATE WITH OTHERS, JUST HOW I FEEL.
I AM FED UP WITH NEGATIVE TALK AND ALL THE THINGS THAT COME WITH IT.	I WILL CONTINUE TO USE POSITIVE AFFIRMATIONS AND EXPECT POSITIVE OUTCOMES.

**"Hope is like the sun, which as we journey toward it, casts the shadow of our burden behind us."**

**SAMUEL SMILES**

<sup>1</sup> The Mayo Clinic is a non-profit medical practice and medical research group of international reputation. The clinic is based in Rochester, Minnesota.

# Positivity Begins With You

## Write down 6 positive affirmations:

Ex: Today will be a wonderful day for me and my family.

1 \_\_\_\_\_

2 \_\_\_\_\_

3 \_\_\_\_\_

4 \_\_\_\_\_

5 \_\_\_\_\_

6 \_\_\_\_\_

## Today I am grateful for:

Ex: My friends who are there when I need them.

1 \_\_\_\_\_

2 \_\_\_\_\_

3 \_\_\_\_\_

4 \_\_\_\_\_

5 \_\_\_\_\_

6 \_\_\_\_\_

**IT IS IMPORTANT TO COUNT YOUR BLESSINGS. OFTEN, ACKNOWLEDGING WHAT YOU ARE GRATEFUL FOR REALLY MAKES YOU FOCUS ON THE POSITIVE ASPECTS IN YOUR LIFE.**

# My Private Thoughts and Doodles

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A large, empty rounded rectangular box with a thin green border, intended for doodling or drawing.

# Adolphe Carrier's Testimonial

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BROTHER OF DIANE CARRIER

LAST SEEN ON SEPTEMBER 27, 1963 FROM QUEBEC CITY

On September 27, 1963, Adolphe Carrier was only 7 years old when his six-year old sister Diane disappeared. Diane was on her way to the local park to call her brother home for supper. Her brother returned home but Diane has not been seen since.

Over 50 years later, Adolphe still struggles with feelings of guilt. What frustrates him the most is the lack of information. "We have nothing... not even a piece of clothing. Absolutely nothing! Even the file was lost".

Adolphe Carrier feels that back in 1963, there were not enough resources available. The only organization that really helped him was the Missing Children's Network. To this day he is very grateful for all of their efforts and their continued support.

After 50 years of searching for his sister, his message to the siblings of missing children is to "Always have hope". He also says to not be afraid to ask for help, even though it might not always be that easy.





## My Hero

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“The thing about a hero is even when it doesn’t look like there’s a light at the end of the tunnel, he’s going to keep digging, he’s going to keep trying to do right, and make up for what’s gone before, just because that’s who he is”.

JOSS WHEDON



Insert/draw an image of your hero.

“HEALING TAKES COURAGE AND WE ALL HAVE COURAGE, EVEN IF YOU HAVE TO DIG A LITTLE”.

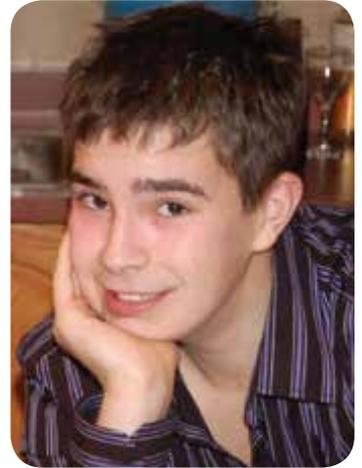
TORI AMOS

## David Fortin's Disappearance

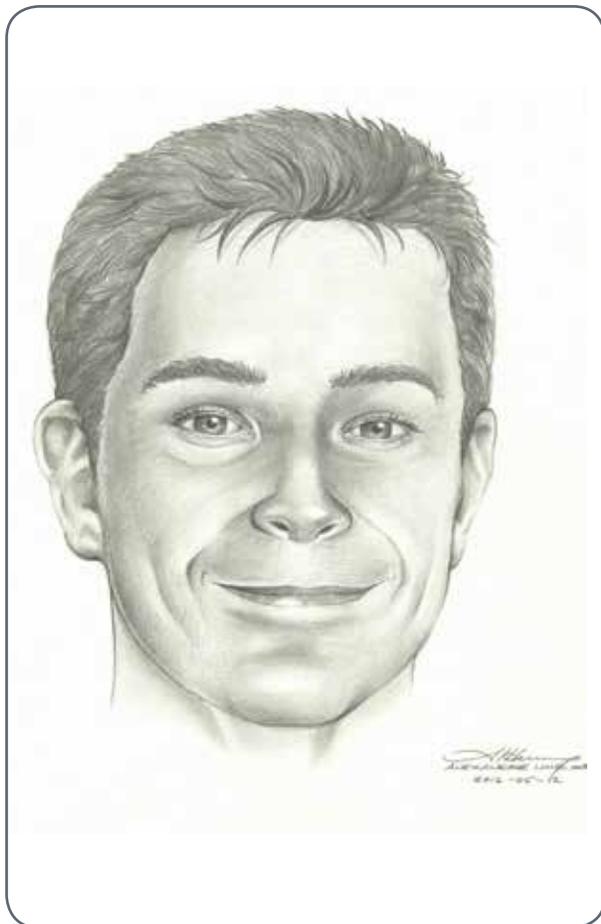
LAST SEEN ON FEBRUARY 10, 2009 FROM ALMA, QUEBEC

On February 10, 2009, 14-year-old David Fortin left his home in Alma just before 8 a.m. to wait for his school bus. However, the young teen never stepped onto the bus nor reported to school. He has not been seen or heard from since that fateful day.

The Missing Children's Network marked the 5<sup>th</sup> anniversary of disappearance of young David Fortin by unveiling a new personal safety program intended for High School students. S.T.A.Y. (Safety, Trust, Awareness and You) is an interactive one-hour workshop designed to enhance the students' awareness to recognize and avoid potential risks and empower them to help prevent victimization by making safer choices both on the Internet and in the real world.

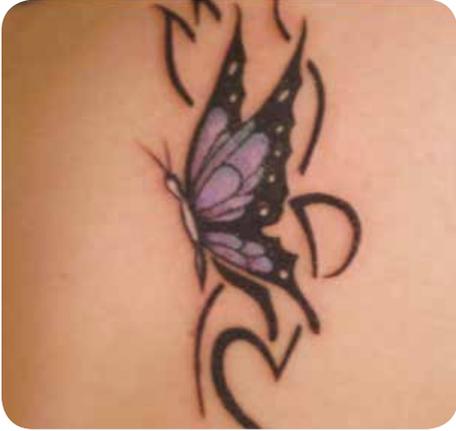


Five years later, the grief is still very palpable for the Fortin-Lachance family; however they remain undeterred and continue to keep hope in their hearts. "The last five years without David have been long and painful for our family. Luckily, we can count on the support of many people, including the team at the Missing Children's Network who have helped us in our search since the very beginning," said Mrs. Caroline Lachance. "I am overwhelmed to see that David has left his mark on this new prevention program. It is comforting to know that my son has not been forgotten. If this new program helps prevent another incident similar to David's, it will bring some solace to our family."



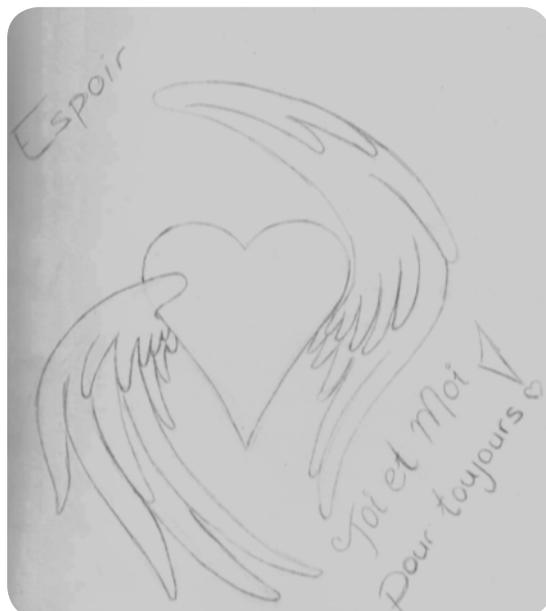
## Sometimes Words Aren't Enough...

Marjorie, David's sister, expresses her longing for her brother through art. These are Marjorie's tattoos commemorating her brother.



“The tattoos represent the freedom to fly like a butterfly while the letters M and D and the half-formed heart express Marjorie’s broken heart”.

CAROLINE LACHANCE (MOTHER OF DAVID FORTIN)



# Remembering my sister Marilyn Bergeron

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## Marilyn Bergeron

LAST SEEN ON FEBRUARY 17, 2008 FROM QUEBEC CITY

Dear Marilyn,

For five years now you have been missing from my life. I hope that this is a personal choice, but doubt and anxiety torment me.

I know you would not leave without telling me. What happened to you?

I live with the reality of your disappearance every day, but I cannot accept it. I have been looking for you and will continue to do so. I am having a hard time living with the uncertainty. It hurts my heart... No answers to my questions. Your voice only resonates in the past.

I wish I could tell you once more how much I love you. Fortunately, I still have the memories and the hope.

*I have dreams that are as light as wings, that leave their joy in my heart, in remembrance, they fly away but always return. I have dreams that are like swallows.*

*-Translation of "Rêves" by Albert Lozeau. (5-8)*

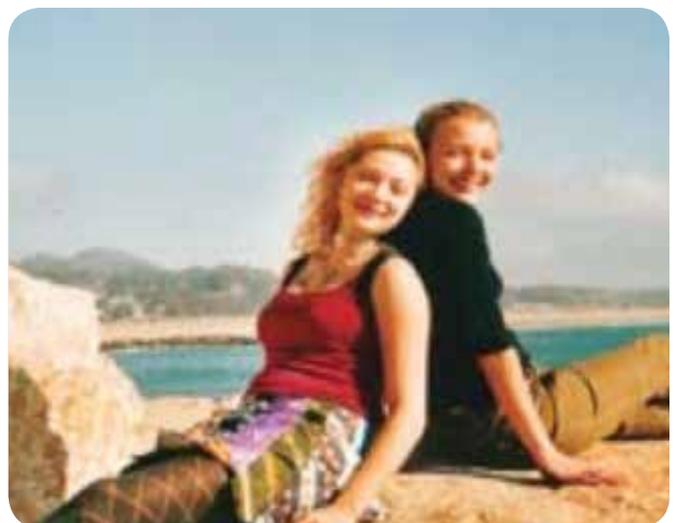
Write me if you can.

(<http://www.trouvermarilyn.com>)

If you can't, know that I will never forget you.

I love you!

Nathalie xxx



## Vera Sarrah Cyr's Testimonial

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SISTER OF YOHANNA CYR

LAST SEEN ON AUGUST 15, 1978 FROM SAINT-LAURENT

Vera Cyr dreams of one day meeting her sister Yohanna, who has been missing since August 15, 1978. Vera clearly remembers the evening she and her sister Melissa learned that they had an older sister. They were watching a movie with their mother, when she suddenly broke down in tears. The movie was about a young boy who had gone missing. Their mother finally opened up about their missing sister and her continuing efforts to help find her.

Vera often feels as though a piece of her is lost and always wonders what her life would be like today if her sister was present. Throughout the years Vera has experienced a roller coaster of emotions...sadness, anger and rage. However she remains hopeful that one day her family will find the answers they are so desperately searching for. Vera wants her sister to know, that even though they've never met, she loves her deeply and misses her immensely.

Today, music plays a very important role in Vera's life. She expresses herself through composing and singing. She feels alive whenever she performs before an audience and always takes the opportunity to dedicate one or two songs to her sister.

Vera's message is simple ... Never lose hope! Speak about your missing brother or sister with those you love; keep their memory alive by sharing those special moments you've shared and don't ever be afraid to feel your emotions.





# Louise Chaput's Testimonial

SISTER OF JACQUES CHAPUT

LAST SEEN ON OCTOBER 15, 1977 FROM TROIS-RIVIÈRES, QUÉBEC

On October 15, 1977, Louise was staying at a friend's house when she received a phone call from her very worried mother saying her brother Jacques had not come home. The thought of a disappearance never crossed her mind; she assumed her brother had simply forgotten to call their Mom. Minutes turned into hours and hours turned into days. Nothing seemed to make any sense. No one, not even his friends seemed to know where he was. Perhaps because she was the closest of all the siblings to her brother, Louise took it the hardest.

Thirty-nine years later, Louise still experiences feelings of isolation, anger and guilt. Although these feelings are not as strong as they once were, Louise explains how the guilt and self-blame are ever-present. She cannot help but wonder if she had been home that night, would this have happened and would Jacques have been safe. She is still very hurt by this incident and feels that there were not enough measures taken to find her brother. Things were different back in 1977 ... the family assumed he had run away, so they waited six months before reporting him missing to police. This is one of her biggest regrets.

Today, Louise expresses a lot of gratitude to the Missing Children's Network. Decades after Jacques' disappearance, the Network re-opened the case and helped create an age-enhanced photo of what he might possibly look like today. This photo alone provided Louise with inspiration and support that she had never found years ago. Although there are many questions still left unanswered, the Missing Children's Network helped Louise find a lot of inner peace. The fact that they are always available and willing to listen without judgment was more than she could have asked for. Louise encourages those in a similar situation to share their story. Although it may not always be easy, it does help break the isolation. Embracing your spirituality and practicing meditation are also means of maintaining one's health. Louise's message to Jacques is that she loves him and he will always be an integral part of her life.



# Self-Forgiveness

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Out of despair and anger, people will look for someone to blame. Whether it is directed towards others or at yourself - sometimes even placing blame is not enough to express how you feel. Rage and pain reflect the emotions you may be suffering. When you accept blame for what happened, you are taking responsibility for the situation - this can be very overwhelming.

Forgiveness may not have even crossed your mind and forgiving others may not be something you are ready to do. Although forgiveness may be difficult, it is possible that with time, healing can take place. The key to forgiveness is that feeling of liberation you will get. When you forgive, you rid yourself of heavy burdens, and you accept yourself and others for who you are. Self-forgiveness is not something that will happen overnight - it is a process that involves strength and courage over a period of time. Remember that you can't change the past but you can certainly change your future.

Everyone has their own idea of forgiveness and it is ultimately whatever brings peace to yourself and others that is the most important. One way to look at forgiveness involves separating the person from the behaviour. There are many qualities and characteristics that define you (both good and bad) and accepting these is the way to self-forgiveness and inner peace.

WRITE DOWN 5 QUALITIES THAT YOU LIKE ABOUT YOURSELF.

- 1 \_\_\_\_\_
- 2 \_\_\_\_\_
- 3 \_\_\_\_\_
- 4 \_\_\_\_\_
- 5 \_\_\_\_\_

ASK A FRIEND TO WRITE 5 QUALITIES THAT HE ADMIRES ABOUT YOU.

- 1 \_\_\_\_\_
- 2 \_\_\_\_\_
- 3 \_\_\_\_\_
- 4 \_\_\_\_\_
- 5 \_\_\_\_\_

WHAT DO YOU FORGIVE YOURSELF FOR?

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# My Family

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RACHEL ANGELYN LOPEZ  
AGE: 3





# Message to Parents

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## Supporting Your Children

This section is dedicated to all those parents whose child(ren) have gone missing. Oftentimes, parents do not know how to handle the situation, nor how to manage their emotions or those of their children.

It is difficult to determine what your child is going through because he may not always express how he feels. Sometimes your child might feel pressured from others to be on his “best behaviour” in order to take care of his parents. He may offer to take on the role of their missing sibling. Children also observe the dynamics between the Mother and Father in the household and may find ways to take on that burden. They evidently blame themselves. This is a difficult time for the entire family and everyone is affected differently, both emotionally and physically. The purpose of this resource guide is to help reduce feelings of isolation for the left-behind siblings, which may be present due to lack of support and attention.

The left-behind children may have many needs that are not being met. There is a lack of attention or involvement and the child may feel ignored and emotionally abandoned. As a result, the child may isolate himself from the family or may start engaging in attention-seeking behaviour. For parents of toddlers (1-3 years), it is important to note that these children are too young to understand what has happened to their missing sibling. The toddler however, will react more to the environment he is exposed to rather than the incident itself. Older children will more often than not, express themselves in words or through make-believe. Parents should seek professional help if their child refuses to speak or engage in play, as this may be a warning sign. Children need emotional and physical structure within the household. Communicating with your child about how you are feeling is important as it puts your behaviour into perspective. Your child will better understand the situation and his own feelings as well.

Some helpful tips to support your child:

- Involve him and update him about the progress of the investigation;
- If you feel that you need additional support seek professional assistance or talk to a friend;
- Understand that the ways in which you cope with the experience may differ, either slightly or significantly;
- Be aware that your family’s identity is not just a “family of a missing person” but that you all have lives in which other achievements can be realised;
- Spend time with your child;
- Encourage your child to pursue activities or hobbies that he was previously involved in;
- Remember to take care of yourself so that you have the strength to search for your missing loved one and motivate others to assist in your search.

## Acknowledgements

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Joanne Maria Lopez



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