



Advancing Collaboration with National Center for Missing & Exploited Children

Approach to Collaboration

Collaboration is integral to the work that we do at the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children (NCMEC). In order to accomplish our mission of finding missing children and preventing child exploitation, we work closely with many other organizations from law enforcement agencies and nongovernmental organizations worldwide to corporate partners that are leaders in their industry. We believe that the strong relationships we have with each of our partners is key to our ability to collaborate successfully. A relationship-centered approach to collaboration foregrounds transparent communication, emphasizes building trust over time, and understands that feedback is a valuable resource. NCMEC continues to prove that when you prioritize people and relationships, you can do amazing things; last year, NCMEC assisted law enforcement with more than 29,000 cases of missing children and our CyberTipline processed over 16.9 million reports related to child exploitation.

At NCMEC, our motto is “Hope is why we’re here” because we will never stop searching for missing children and working to end child exploitation. We believe that every child deserves a safe childhood.

Application of the 9 Considerations for Collaboration

Build Trust

A solid foundation of trust is the bedrock of any successful collaboration. Cultivating trusting relationships is important because it means that when the right opportunity presents itself, we are prepared to make the most of it. For example, NCMEC recently helped law enforcement solve a 55-year-old cold case due in part to the strength of the relationships we have with our partners. In 1966, Jolaine Hemmy vanished at the age of 17 leaving her family in the dark for 55 years until NCMEC received information about a Jane Doe case in Texas and immediately contacted local law enforcement. We worked quickly to put the police department in touch with our partners at Othram Inc. and Innovative Forensic where they conducted the DNA and genealogy testing that led to the identification of Jolaine Hemmy. It was our collaboration with law enforcement and forensic experts that enabled us to finally give Jolaine's family the answers they deserved.

Have a Vision

At NCMEC, our motto is "Hope is why we're here" because we will never stop searching for missing children and working to end child exploitation. We believe that every child deserves a safe childhood. It is important to us that our partners share this vision and believe in our mission. That's why NCMEC offers training courses to public safety and child-serving professionals to help them better understand and accommodate the needs of the children and families that we assist. So far, we have trained 367,460 professionals in all 50 states and in 33 countries. We also now provide online courses through NCMEC CONNECT, which are designed to provide easy access to training materials for professionals on the frontlines.

Seek to Assure the Success of Your Collaborators

When we consider partnerships, it's not just about what potential partners can bring to the table, it's about how we can work together to

keep children safe. All of our partnerships are mutually beneficial collaborations. For example, we collaborate with many technology companies, such as Facebook, Google and Microsoft that work closely with NCMEC to combat online child sexual exploitation. These companies are proactive in detecting child sexual assault material on their systems and then report it to our CyberTipline, the nation's centralized reporting system for the online exploitation of children. Last year, our CyberTipline received and processed 16.9 million reports, thanks in large part to companies like these, that provide the majority of the reports. Tips from service providers help us find and review this material and, in turn, make their networks a safer place for their users.

Take Stock

As the nation's leader in the fight against child abduction, abuse and exploitation, we are always looking for new and creative ways to better serve children and families. For example, the growth of our social media presence over the last decade has enabled us to tackle the challenges of an increasingly connected and online world. Thanks in large part to corporate partnerships with companies like Facebook and TikTok we've been able to combat the growing threat of online enticement and exploitation, educate children and families about internet safety, as well as fundraise. Although 2020 was a difficult year for many families financially, NCMEC received \$500,000 in donations from virtual fundraisers organized by the expanding network of individuals that follow us on Facebook, Instagram, TikTok and Twitter.

Start Small

At NCMEC we know that even the smallest act can make a big difference in the life of a child and their family. Sometimes all it takes is one phone call or report from the right person to be able to locate a child and bring them home. A key component of many of our partnerships is the simple act of sharing NCMEC missing

child posters. Our posters are featured directly on the Neighbors App by Ring to reach millions of engaged community members who can help bring more children home. Ring also donates funds to support NCMEC's geo-targeting efforts on Facebook to reach users who may have valuable information to aid the search for a missing child.

Fail Fast, and Build Rigorous Feedback Loops

We make sure to let our partners know that we are always open to feedback because we know that it will only make us stronger and better able to combat the challenges that we face as the national clearinghouse for all issues related to missing and exploited children. We feel lucky to have partners that consistently provide us with open, honest and constructive feedback.

Take a Portfolio Approach

At NCMEC, we are constantly looking for new partnerships and to grow and strengthen our relationships with existing partners. From corporations to law enforcement agencies and other

nonprofit organizations, we know that partners in the fight to end child abductions and exploitation can come from many sectors and bring diverse strengths to the table.

Consider Non-Traditional Partners

Sometimes a great partnership is not the most obvious one. For instance, one of our most valuable partnerships is with American Airlines. While partnering with an airline may not have been the first idea that came to mind when considering potential collaborations, American Airlines has generously donated mileage to assist NCMEC with the reunification of many families in need.

Keep Your Donors Apprised of Your Collaborations

NCMEC's blog serves as a virtual newsroom that provides the most up to date information about new collaborations and exciting partnerships. request wallet cards and download posters to share with veterinarians and stylists, two groups who are commonly told about abuse in the home.

Future Collaborations

We are currently seeking to collaborate with educators and other child-serving professionals as well as youth programs to promote Season 2 of NCMEC's educational web series, Into the Cloud™, which debuts on February 12 of this year. Into the Cloud teaches data-driven lessons about online safety inspired by actual CyberTipline reports in an age-appropriate and entertaining manner for children ages 10 and under. We will have to work in collaboration with our partners in order to ensure that this valuable resource reaches as many children and families as possible.



Gavin Portnoy, VP of Strategic Advancements & Partnerships

About the Organization

The National Center for Missing & Exploited Children is a private, non-profit 501(c)(3) corporation whose mission is to help find missing children, reduce child sexual exploitation, and prevent child victimization. NCMEC works with families, victims, private industry, law enforcement, and the public to assist with preventing child abductions, recovering missing children, and providing services to deter and combat child sexual exploitation.

Disclaimer: All participants were interviewed about past collaborations through the framework of the 9 Considerations for Collaboration. Naturally in some organizations, not every one of the considerations are applicable to their circumstances.

Credit: This article was composed by Rachel Romana Liu.

