

FindingHome

A website to inform children & young people about international parental child abduction



www.findinghome.world

Developed in partnership with young people

What is international parental child abduction?

Sometimes families go through difficult times when, for lots of different reasons, things can get really hard. When this happens, it may mean that one parent takes their child or children to a different country without the other parent agreeing to that, or does not let them go back at the end of a trip away. This is wrongful and can hurt and upset everyone involved, especially the children.

The 1980 Hague Child Abduction Convention

The 1980 Hague Convention was introduced to deal with international parental child abduction and to help prevent it. Over 100 countries are now involved in this international agreement. This means that if a child is abducted to one of those countries from another one of those countries, a judge in the country to which a child was taken, or where a child has been kept, can make the arrangements to return the child to where they lived before. There are some special reasons in the 1980 Hague Convention, called 'exceptions to return', that might mean a child is sometimes not returned to where they usually live. You can find out more about this on the website under the **What the Law Says** tab.

In many countries it is not just the 1980 Hague Convention that deals with parental child abduction as there may be other laws that play a part too e.g., in Europe. There are also some countries where the Convention will not apply because their government has not yet signed up to it e.g., India, Egypt, Saudi Arabia etc.

Stories

The website has stories about **Deepa & Preethi**, **Anna**, and **Lethabo & Blessing**. These are 3 examples of the many different situations and circumstances that can occur in parental child abduction cases.

What happens after a child has been abducted?

Sometimes **the parents** are able to make the decision together about what happens next. But, if they are unable to agree, then people like **counsellors, lawyers or mediators** can help them. If an agreement still can't be reached, then **a judge in a court** will be asked to make the decision for the family. The children will usually be returned to where they lived before, unless an exception applies. It is therefore very important for children to let the adults know about their thoughts, feelings and views when they are being asked about what has happened. Every child or young person has **the right to have a say** in matters that affect them and for their views to be considered in accordance with their age and understanding.

Looking for some more information and help?

The website has lots of information, including answers to **common questions** that children and young people have about international parental child abduction: warning signs; what to do if you are worried a friend or family member may have been, or may be about to be, wrongfully taken overseas; what can happen after a child has been abducted by a parent; or how children can have a say about where they live.

Check out the **Information & Support** tab for organisations that can assist children and young people to better understand international parental child abduction or to get help.

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