

VOLUNTARY FINGERPRINTING

Adopted by Convention Delegates May 1983

Reviewed by Board of Managers July 2012

- WHEREAS,** Thousands of children are listed as missing in the United States each day; and
- WHEREAS,** Thousands of children are buried unidentified each year; and
- WHEREAS,** Appearance, height and weight may change rapidly in children, and the very young may not be able to identify themselves; and
- WHEREAS,** Many children have no “track marks in life,” such as dental records, drivers’ licenses, military records, etc.; and
- WHEREAS,** The Missing Children Act (PL 97-292) provides for the listing of missing children with descriptive data in the FBI’s National Crime Information Center (NCIC); now therefore be it
- RESOLVED,** That the California State PTA strongly urge its units, councils and districts to implement a voluntary fingerprinting program for all children and youth; and be it further
- RESOLVED,** That the California State PTA encourage its units, councils and districts to cooperate with local law enforcement agencies in the implementation of this program; and be it further
- RESOLVED,** That the identification materials be the sole property of the child’s parents or guardian; and be it further
- RESOLVED,** That the California State PTA urge the National PTA to recommend a voluntary fingerprinting program of children throughout the United States.

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BACKGROUND SUMMARY

On October 12, 1982, the President signed into law the Missing Children Act (PL 97-292), the provisions of which closely conform to a National PTA resolution.

Footprinting at birth is useless because there is no scientific classification system for footprints to allow matching an unknown set to a known set. Many prints were poorly taken by nurses. Some hospitals have discontinued the practice.

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Voluntary Fingerprinting - continued

According to the *Los Angeles Times*, 19,000 children are listed as missing in the United States each day, and 2,000 to 5,000 children are buried unidentified each year. Therefore, methods should be sought to insure the best means of identifying found children who can't, or won't, identify themselves.

Now that PL 97-292 is law and expands the descriptive data on a missing child that would be put into the National Crime Information Center (NCIC) file, and as a natural follow-up to the National PTA resolution, consideration should be given to the voluntary fingerprinting of young people, the prints to remain the sole property of the parent or guardian.