

MESSAGES OF HOPE

When we were writing this guide, we thought it might help you to know that no matter what happens, your life will go on. Things do get better. One way or another, you'll be able to move forward. Here are our stories.

A Message from Amy, Trevor, and Carmen

When our brother, Jacob (age 11) was abducted 17 years ago, Amy was 13, Trevor was 10, and Carmen was 8. None of us had any resources to help us through such a horrible time.

In some ways, we were lucky. We had a wonderful network of relatives and family friends who surrounded us with love and support. But we didn't have any way of knowing if what we were feeling and experiencing was "normal." It would have been good to have that reassurance.

Jacob's abduction affected our entire family and community. As his siblings, however, we feel that we experienced things on a deeper level than those around us. As Jacob's siblings, we were in a unique situation—one that very few others could relate to.

The experience of creating this guide enabled us to meet some of those few others. We shared our experiences with them and were surprised that even though we all had different situations and circumstances, we were more alike than different. It was a relief—even after all this time—to relate to other people who had been through similar experiences.

That is our hope for you. We hope that this guide will help comfort you as you are experiencing probably the worst thing that has ever happened to you. We hope that by reading about our experiences, you are reassured that what you are thinking and feeling is okay. We hope that, as difficult as it may seem now, you realize that you will make it through.

We were never sure that we would be normal again. But here's what happened to each of us:

Carmen is now 25 years old. She graduated from the University of Wisconsin at Madison with a degree in human development and family studies. She married an Englishman and they now live in Minnesota, where Carmen works as an Independent Living Service Worker. She and her husband, Kristian, just welcomed the newest member to their family: a black lab/german shepherd puppy named Bean.

Trevor is now 27 years old and has finished his degree in human development and family studies at Colorado State University. He continues to live in Colorado with his girlfriend, Trish. He works for RE/MAX Professionals, Inc. as a real estate agent.

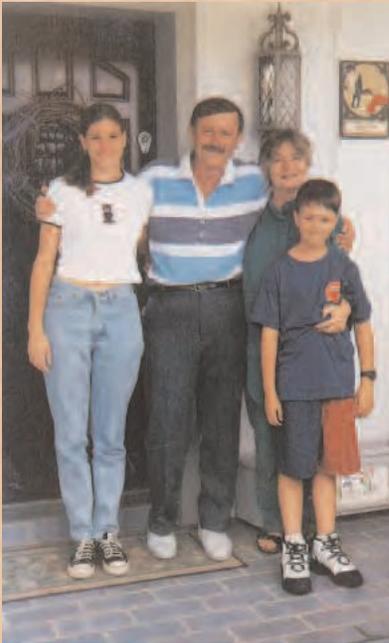
Amy is now 31 years old. She graduated from the University of Minnesota with a degree in psychology.



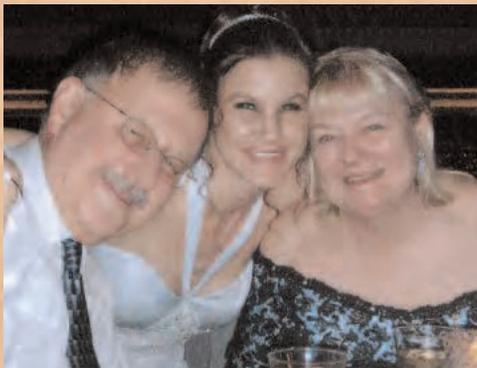
The kids in 1989. Back, left to right: Jacob and Amy. Front, left to right: Trevor and Carmen.



The family in 2006. Front, far left, Carmen; center, Trevor; far right, Amy.



Martha, her parents, and Jimmy in 1995.



Martha and her parents at her wedding in 2007.

She went to graduate school and obtained her license to teach special education and is working on finishing her master's degree. She is in her fourth year of teaching high school students with moderate to severe developmental and cognitive disabilities. Amy lives in Minnesota with her husband, Chris. They have two young daughters and two Italian greyhounds.

We want you to know that it is possible to lead a normal life after all you have been through. Our brother has been gone for more than 17 years. Although that may seem like an eternity, and we certainly hope your experience does not last as long as ours has, we want you to know that we turned out okay. We want you to believe that you will be okay, too.

Our thoughts are with you.

A Message from Martha

I do not know exactly how you feel, but just like you, my brother was kidnapped. Hard as it may be to believe right now, I want you to know you are going to be okay. My hope is that this guide will help you navigate your way through this extremely difficult time. My hope is that through our words in this guide, we are reaching out to you and can help you through your pain. You are not alone.

I was 16 when my 9-year-old brother Jimmy was kidnapped. Our family went through a dizzying rollercoaster ride of emotions with the media, law

enforcement, family, friends, and the community all helping us to search for him. After 3 months, we learned that Jimmy was kidnapped and killed.

At that time, there were no resources available to help me through the search for my brother and the aftermath of what happened. Helping write this guide and connecting with other siblings who have gone through the same things helped me tremendously. I felt normal and as if an enormous weight had been lifted off of me. I learned that even though our stories are different, we share many of the same feelings and thoughts.

Know that how you feel and what you are thinking are not wrong in any way. You will work through your thoughts and feelings and come out okay on the other side. I did.

I am now 27 years old. I have bachelor's degrees in English and telecommunications from the University of Florida. After graduating college, I moved to Atlanta, Georgia, and I am getting married in June 2007.

I will always remember my brother Jimmy, and one way that I honor him is to not take my life or the people that I have in my life for granted. I am very thankful for each day that I have.

My thoughts are with you during this difficult time.

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A Message from Heather and John

If we had this guide when our sister was abducted, I'm not sure that we would have been able to read it right away. But, as the journey continued and we faced events that we could have never imagined, I think it would have been comforting to read the words from other siblings who have had to cope with such a loss. We don't think that there are any answers, just words that may relieve your anxieties, fears, and fury. We would have used this guide to get some idea of how to handle certain situations and perhaps avoid others. When our sister Molly was abducted and murdered, we felt disbelief that such things could happen and had happened. If we had a guide like this, we may not have felt so alone and freakish.

We hope that this guide helps reassure you that the feelings you are undergoing have been felt by all of us at one time or another. We would like you to keep this guide and open it when the time feels right. There may be some parts that you read now and some parts that you save for later.

Today, we continue to wonder what happened to our sister on June 27, 2000. It has been almost 7 years, but we still meet with police every 3 months or so. Our hearts rise and fall with new information regarding Molly's murderer.

Life expects you to keep going, though, and we have. John is a successful builder and just completed refinishing his first house. He is surrounded by supportive

friends who have stayed by his side, cheering him, distracting him, and helping him remember that life goes on. An athlete in high school and college, John continues his athletic regimen on a daily basis and makes it an important part of his life.

Heather completed her master's degree in special education and is in her sixth year teaching fifth and sixth grade students. She has a beautiful and amazing 7 year-old daughter, and a family that, although fractured, is surviving together. She works with her parents for the Molly Bish Foundation, educating the community about the risks of abduction. Every week, the entire family gets together for dinner on what they call "fragile Fridays" where they spend time together despite their busy schedules.

We are lucky to be able to offer our words, thoughts, and feelings about the most devastating experience in our lives in the hope that they will envelope you and sustain you.



Heather with her parents, John and Molly in 2000.



Mom, Dad, John, Heather and Mikaela in 2001.

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The kids in 1988. Back, left to right: Robin and Ericka. Front, left to right: Tamara and Marcus.



Ericka, Robin, Mom, Marcus, and Tamara in 2003.

A Message from Ericka, Marcus, and Robin

You haven't met us, but, hopefully you have read some of our words, and they seem familiar to you. We want you to know that you are not alone. When we lived through our sister's abduction, it seemed that we were the only persons feeling the way we did. But by helping to put this guide together, we learned that we were not alone. Other people have gone through very similar situations, and it helps to know that.

We know that your situation might be different from ours, but we all have the same feelings. What you feel is valid and important; please don't let anyone tell you otherwise. You are your own individual and deserve to live your life because life does not stop when something terrible happens, no matter how badly it feels. We are still successful in the career paths we were on before the abduction.

Yes, the experience changed us. We value our family and friends more because we no longer take them for granted. But we are still living and trying to be the best "us" that we can. Remember these things: take care of yourself, find someone you can talk to. And remember you are not alone.

Let us tell you a little bit about ourselves.

Robin was 20 years old when Tamara was abducted. She attended West Point and graduated in May 2004. Although she did not serve as an officer in the Army due to an honorable medical discharge after graduation, she was accepted to a graduate program at

Vanderbilt University in July 2004 and is in her third year working toward a doctorate in biological sciences. She and her husband Alan have two cats—AJ and Brad. She hopes to become a professor in the Chemistry-Life Science Department at West Point.

Marcus was 18 years old when Tamara was abducted. Despite the difficulties associated with the abduction of his sister, he secured an appointment to West Point Military Academy, where he quickly distinguished himself as one of the top cadets in his class. He won the first ever national championship in crew for the Military Academy in 2005. He will graduate on May 26, 2007, with a degree in economics and will serve as an Army aviation officer. He will be in flight school for the next 1 1/2 years before reaching his first unit. He plans to continue his education while concurrently serving in the Army and leading soldiers.

Ericka was 24 years old when Tamara was abducted. At that time she was a first lieutenant in the Army stationed in Seoul, South Korea. About 3 weeks after Tamara was rescued, Ericka went back to Korea to finish up her tour there. Since then, Ericka was promoted to captain, commanded a company, was deployed with that company to Iraq, and brought them back and moved to Fort Gordon, Georgia, where she currently instructs junior officers on leadership and radio/telecommunications. Ericka has two cats—Gusgus and Cinder. She hopes in the future to obtain her master's degree.