

Caminho De Volta: A Brazilian program with technology and research on missing kids and teens

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In Brazil the “Caminho de Volta” program was developed to offer to the population and governmental organizations, research and technology on missing kids’ issues. The frequencies of missing cases are studied with the objective to identify the possible causes of the disappearances using psychological interviews with families and with those children and adolescents that are found. The project also offers a DNA database to these families in order to help the missing children identification. It will be presented the results of 717 family interviews that include 332 missing boys (45%) and 385 missing girls (55%) that run away from home in 77% of the cases, with a high index of recurrence (51%). The majority of them (70%) were between 13 and 17 years old. Domestic violence was identified in 68% of the cases, in addition to alcohol abuse (42%), illicit drug abuse (35%), sexual exploitation (5%), physical and/or intellectual disabilities (10%) and 4% were adopted. Only 245 (34%) children and teens were interviewed and the majority (66%) left home alone, while 21% with colleagues or love partners. It is interesting that in only 4% of these cases where the domestic violence was involved, the children returned home, being conflicts with parents (32%) and adventure (28%) the main reasons for them to runaway. While missing 14% of them were in the street and 9% were sheltered by strangers. By the DNA database it was possible to identify six cases including four corpses and two sheltered children. FAPESP/LIM-40-HC-FMUSP.

Biography

Claudia Figaro-Garcia has her Ph.D from the Psychology Institute of Sao Paulo University. She is psychoanalyst and is responsible for the group of psychologists that interview the missing kids families, giving psychoanalytical supervision of the cases presented. She has published articles about domestic violence and missing kids.

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