

Marine Corps Logistics Base Barstow News

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SafeAssured; parents assured, children safe

By Cpl. Josh Carmona
Combat Correspondent

In Aesop's fable, "The ant and the grasshopper," busy ants prepared for the cold, long winter by storing food, while the grasshopper played the fiddle-- ignoring the upcoming threat. While food is plentiful in today's society, children are irreplaceable. Lori Morgan, physical security specialist for Marine Corps Police Department, is in charge of running the Safe Assured I.D. Program on base.

According to the National Crime Information Center's Missing Person File, 814,957 people were reported missing in 2007, which is why the base spared no expense in keeping children on base prepared for the worst.

A dollar amount can be placed on that security, however, said Morgan. "It cost ten grand," she said, referring to the price tag on the SafeAssured I.D. kit.

Base parents who want to enroll their children in the program will pay nothing, stressed Morgan.

Child abduction can be a nightmare for parents on base, but fortunately, Marine Corps Logistics Base Barstow, Calif., has helped parents prepare for the worst by implementing the Safe- Assured I.D. Program.

Morgan said the identification process is comprehensive.

All 10 fingerprints are electronically processed, a digital photograph is taken, streaming video showing mannerisms and walking gait with linked audio file providing the child's voice inflection and accent is also recorded, along with other private information, such as general physical description, street address, date of birth, life-threatening medical conditions, and identifying scars or marks, and tattoos. The information is crucial for police and parents in the event that their child becomes missing.

Morgan said SafeAssured made its last appearance during the MCLB Fall Family Festival Oct. 2, and more than 40 children were registered with the system. The festival doubled the number of children from its first appearance at the base's Spring Family Festival earlier this year.

"You've got nothing to lose," said Morgan.

After the personal information has been written to a data disk, even the paper the parents filled out with that information is shredded.

None of the personal data is saved anywhere else. The disk also has a security code, ensuring that only law enforcement agencies will be able to access the information. Morgan noted even the parents can not read what is on the disk.

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Photo by Cpl. Josh Carmona
Headquarters Battalion Executive Officer, Capt. Topper Johnson and his son, Topper Jr., prepare for the photo portion of the Safe Assured I.D. package, during the Spring Fling earlier this year. The base participates in the program to aid parents in the event of a kidnapping. [Full story](#)

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Parents also receive a guidebook with safety tips and information detailing what to do when a child goes missing.

"Every Friday we are taking appointments at Bldg. 236," said Morgan.

The physical security specialist added that the SafeAssured I.D. kit can be used for anyone of any age. Elderly family members suffering for Alzheimer's disease should be registered with the kit.

Thankfully, none of the Safe- Assured I.D. data disks have had to be activated on base, but, as with Aesop's fable, just because the weather is warm and sunny right now, doesn't mean we shouldn't prepare for the possibility of a cold winter.

For more on this story contact the author at joshua.carmona@usmc.mil



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