

# Credit Unions Urge Protection of Kids with ID Kits

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WASHINGTON -- America's credit unions, through their largest trade group the Credit Union National Association (CUNA), are distributing thousands of child fingerprint identification kits during the Democratic National Convention to draw attention to the need to safeguard children.

CUNA is kicking off its involvement to protect kids through the child ID kits, which the credit union group sponsors in partnership with the National Child Identification Program. The program already has the strong endorsement of the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the American Football Coaches Association as well as support from key members of Congress and other groups.

"America's credit unions have a history of assisting needy children through such worthy organizations as the Children's Miracle Network," said CUNA President and CEO Daniel A. Mica. "Our partnership with the National Child Identification Program is a natural extension of the credit union movement's dedication to community involvement and our 'people helping people' philosophy."

Mica said approximately 30,000 fingerprint kits are being distributed at the DNC. Each of the kits has the "America's Credit Unions" logo imprinted on it. The kits are being placed into all bags provided to convention delegates, as well as members of the media and the others. CUNA is working with the host committee, Boston 2004, to distribute the kits.

The American Football Coaches Association created the National Child Identification Program in 1997 as a community service initiative to help protect America's youth and change the statistics related to missing children.

The National Child Identification Program uses inkless fingerprint kits that allow parents to take and store a child's fingerprints in their own home. The process takes only about five minutes.

According to the Program, more than 800,000 children are reported missing each year as runaways or as the result of abduction by strangers or family members - one child every 40 seconds. John S. Hooks, Jr., supervisory special agent with the FBI, has called the National Child Identification Program's I.D. kits "an unprecedented addition to our current programs and a wonderful benefit to all communities throughout the nation." The FBI partnered with the AFCA in this community service project in January 2002 as a joint effort to fingerprint all 60 million children across the United States and for families to have an important record at home to provide law enforcement in case of an emergency.

Since 1997, more than 14 million ID kits have been distributed, making the National Child Identification Program the largest child identification effort ever conducted. Under the partnership with CUNA, the nation's 10,000 credit unions may distribute the kits to their members. More than 85 million Americans belong to credit unions, which are not-for-profit financial cooperatives.

#### **About CUNA & Affiliates**

With its network of affiliated state credit union leagues, Credit Union National Association serves more than 90 percent of America's nearly 10,000 credit unions, which are owned by more than 85 million consumer members. Credit unions are not-for-profit cooperatives providing affordable financial services to people from all walks of life. For more information, visit [www.cuna.org](http://www.cuna.org). <<http://www.cuna.org>>