

Bureau County Mounted Search and Rescue

Typical Traits of Lost Persons

Children under 3 years usually do not understand being lost, wander aimlessly, and seek the most convenient location to rest or sleep (under a log, rock, or heavy brush).

Children 3-6 years usually are more mobile, will generally try to return home, are easily distracted, might run away from strangers, will sleep when tired.

Children 6-12 years may intentionally run away, can and will climb, will often not answer when called, darkness brings willingness to be helped, will feel greater loss or helplessness than an adult.

Elderly often suffer from senility, are easily distracted, and are very much like children, orientation based more on past than present, are likely to over-extend and exhaust themselves, and may be hard of hearing.

Mentally retarded will often act like children, and will seek shelter from elements or because of fright, usually will not respond, many stay in same spot for days.

Emotionally Depressed seek solitude, will often not respond to searchers, will generally be within sight or sound of civilization, and be found near prominent locations (lookouts).

Hikers will rely on trails, drainage, and travel aids for navigation, become lost when trails are hidden, tend to be young but not well prepared, misjudge distances & time, often communicate. Most found within 5 miles.

Hunters concentrate more on game than navigation, often become excited pursuing game, tend to over-extend themselves into darkness, typically unprepared for severe weather, most are in good mental & physical condition.

Rock hounds, berry pickers, photographers often intend to stay in one location, carry no survival gear or extra clothing, are often misled by terrain, are a high risk for survival, most are between 8 & 65, most good physical & mental condition, communicative, likely to wander.

Fishermen are generally well oriented; usually overdue because of an accident (often water related) and rescue will mostly be a recovery mission.