

MISSING

Black Children

Shedding light on missing Black children's cases in Iowa

Black children make up about 14 percent of the U.S. population. Despite this, they also represented around 37 percent of the 424,066 missing children listed in 2018 according to CNN. Iowa is not exempt from the overwhelming numbers of missing Black children. After the heart wrenching story of 10-year-old Davenport girl, Breasia Terrell, who was missing for nearly nine months, the Black community should be on high alert in preventing the unnecessary deaths of our children.

A major tool in finding missing children is utilizing the power of the

media. Though when observing the differences between media coverage of Black missing children and other cases, you realize that Black children are extremely underrepresented in this vital resource. CNN reported a 2015 study found that despite Black children making up over a third of missing children in the FBI database, they only represented around 7% of missing children's cases covered in the news.

"Media coverage is vital when looking for a lost person. The first 48 hours are when the person who disappeared is most likely to be found. When Black children go missing, they are often labeled runaways and/or they aren't given Amber Alerts until days after they disappeared (both happened with Breasia Terrell)," Movement 515 Teaching

Artist, Jalesha Johnson said.

When compared to the undeniably heartbreaking disappearance of Mollie Tibbets, the media coverage of the Breasia Terrell case was minuscule in comparison.

"When

Molly Tibbets went missing, it was national news. There wasn't a household or politician or news station in America who did not speak to her story. Because the public was demanding answers, the people in power had to give us them. That's why Molly was a big deal. Because millions of people cared about what happens to a white girl," Johnson said.

In order to prevent the disappearances



By: Arabia Parkey
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and deaths of all young people, community and school action should be taken immediately. According to DMPS school board member Teree Caldwell-Johnson, community action plans such as neighborhood safety initiatives, parenting support, and youth engagement programs are a few of many ways that action can be taken at the community level.

Within schools, both Johnson and Caldwell-Johnson encourage the implementation of safety training, teaching students the signs of possible predators to prevent children from finding themselves in dangerous situations. In both schools and the community, continuously creating safe spaces for children to turn to in times of need is also of importance.

In times where Black children are not receiving the support necessary from the media or public officials, it is up to the community to increase vigilance and make the difference in the safety of children.

“Tell the stories of Daa, Breasia, and Abdi. Show your students you haven’t forgotten them and God forbidden but if anything happens to them, you will fight to find them every time. Listen to your students,” Johnson said.

Protect Black children.

