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MASONICh.I.P. program this weekend ? protect your child

The Masonic brethren of Ontario in partnership with Shelburne Cubs and Scouts and the Shelburne District Fire Department are pleased to offer the MASONICh.I.P program to the community free of charge.

Taking place this Saturday October 3rd from 1 ? 5 p.m .at the Lorne Lodge Masonic Hall located at 377 William Street, Ontario Masons will be on hand to further the safety of area children.

Sponsored by the Grand Lodge A. F.& A. M. of Canada in the Province of Ontario, the MASONICh.I.P program consists of five major components, digital photographs, digital video, digital fingerprints, vital child information and a dental bite impression or Intra Oral Swab for DNA. The photographs, video, fingerprints and child data are burned onto a CD that is compatible with Amber Alert. The dental impression provides a virtual diagram of the child's biting surface, which like fingerprints are unique to each individual and further supplies saliva to provide a DNA sample. Combined, this five part process provides a dramatic, time-sensitive recovery tool for authorities.

Parents are urged to gather pertinent information about their child prior to the even such as an emergency contact name, address and phone numbers as well as the child's height and weight. For those concerned with privacy they assure us that security and privacy are of the utmost importance and all information and specimens are collected on site, processed and provided to the parent or guardian in an envelope along with the sentiment of all the Masonic volunteers ?We hope you never need to use it?. After each child is processed the data is deleted and erased from the computer using state-of-the-art software. The only item retained by MASONICh.I.P Ontario is the signed permission slip.

No parent wants to believe that the unimaginable could happen to them, however the truth is that nearly 55 children are reported missing to Police in Ontario every day (164 every day in Canada). According to Canada's ?Our Missing Children?network and ?Ontario Child Find?, a current good quality photo is the single most effective tool in locating a missing child. Parents are encouraged to be prepared by assembling their child's photos and vital information ahead of time. Enter MASONICh.I.P Ontario (Child Identification Program) ? deemed ?one of the most comprehensive child recovery and identification programs in the nation? by The National Center for Exploited and Missing Children brought exclusively to Ontario families by dedicated Masons free of charge.

By Michelle Janzen