

Title: Morals, mobiles, and mandatory alerts: A study of Amber Alerts and Canada's emergency alert system

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What is this study about?

This survey aims to investigate what people think and how people feel about Amber Alerts and Alert Ready in Canada.

Police services may issue an **Amber Alert** if a child has been abducted, if there is a belief that the child is in imminent danger, or they are deemed missing and at risk. They intend to ask for the public's help to safely and swiftly recover the child and may be sent over radio, television, social media, and emergency alerts via cell phone notifications.

Alert Ready is Canada's national emergency alert system. It is a mandatory system (meaning you cannot opt in or out) that sends a message accompanied by a unique siren and vibration to all compatible cell phones near an emergency event. Alert Ready was launched in April 2018 and may be used to alert people of natural disasters, biological disasters, and Amber Alerts, as well as other emergencies.

Why is this study important?

From this study we hope to gain a better understanding of Amber Alerts and non-voluntary emergency alert notification systems for cell phones (like Alert Ready). By participating you will have the opportunity to share your views on Amber Alerts and

Alert Ready, respectively. Please note that this project is not associated with the Canadian Government or any governmental plans to evaluate or make changes to these systems

What will participation involve?

Participation in this study involves completing a short (approximately 15-20min) online survey. This includes some questions regarding your thoughts about Amber Alerts and Alert Ready, some questions about decision making, and some demographic questions about you (e.g. age).

Consenting to participate in this study

Before you can participate, you will be asked to read this participant information statement and indicate your consent by a checkbox. By selecting the consent checkbox you are indicating that you have understood what this study is about and that you agree to participate.

Withdrawing from the study

All participation in this survey is strictly voluntary, you do not have to participate if you do not wish to. You are free to withdraw at any time before the completion of the survey.

Risks

As part of this study, you will be asked to consider some circumstances which may lead to an Amber Alert for a missing or abducted child. Some people may experience emotional distress from these descriptions.

If you should become distressed or emotionally affected by this survey, please contact one of the following organisations, free of charge, and as is appropriate and comfortable to you:

- The Government of Canada mental health support page for additional services <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/mental-health-services/mental-health-get-help.html>
- First Nations and Inuit Hope for Wellness Help Line 1-855-242-3310
- The Canadian Association for Suicide Prevention crisis centres: <https://suicideprevention.ca/need-help/>

Confidentiality

No identifiable information will be collected or used for analysis.

Data from this project will be kept for at least 7 years and stored securely using the University of Queensland's Research Data Manager system. Only members of the research team will have access to this data.

Questions

If you have any additional questions about this research, please contact Monique Lynn, PhD Student at the University of Queensland, Australia via email m.lynn@uq.edu.au

Where you can find the results of this study

A short summary of the results will be made available on this webpage in approximately March 2020.

Ethical Clearance

This study adheres to the Guidelines of the ethical review process of The University of Queensland and the *National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research*. Whilst you are free to discuss your participation in this study with project staff (contactable at m.lynn@uq.edu.au), if you would like to speak to an officer of the University not involved in the study, you may contact the Ethics Coordinators on +617 3365 3924 / +617 3443 1656 or email humanethics@research.uq.edu.au