



Dr. David A. Tesini, inventor of Toothprints, takes a toothprint of Katie Harte, as "Rollo" (Ernest Pearlstein), Shrine clown, looks on.

Missing Child Report Demands Action

By Dr. David Harte

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Although the above headline probably caught your attention, it seems

Each year close to one million children are reported missing to the Na-

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tional Center. Half of these are teenage runaways; one-third are family abductions, usually estranged ex-spouses, most of the remainder are "throw-aways" - exploited, abused children "thrown away" by broken, dysfunctional parents, and usually reported by social workers, relatives, or school officials.

The remainder of the reported missing make up what is considered every parent's nightmare an abduction by a non-family member. Over 100,000 attempted abductions of children by nonfamily members are reported to NCIC every year. Of these, 3,000 are successful, - some children are returned alive, many are not; and some are never found.

Another shocking NCIC statistic is that currently there are more than 4,000 unidentified human remains in morgues across the country, many of which are children. Massachusetts currently has about 30 unsolved cases; California has about 1,800.

Twenty-five years ago identification was a relatively easy process. Dental records and radiographs were compared to remains; multiple silver fillings were common, and were a very distinctive feature on radiographs for identification purposes.

With modern dental advances of fluoridated water, dental sealants, and public dental awareness, a generatic

dren was created. Seventy percent of Americans under the age of 25 are currently cavity and filling-free.

On July 17, 1996 the tragedy of TWA Flight 800 shook the world. It shook the dental world even more. Two hundred thirteen of the 230 passengers aboard were recovered. The flight was bound for France. Many teenage exchange students were on board. Many had to be identified by DNA testing, a process which took many heart-breaking weeks to complete. The need for a more thorough means of identification was self-evident.

On August 12, 1998, in the basement of the Milton Town Hall, the world premiere of a new technology was introduced called Toothprints™. The process, invented by Dr. David A. Tesini, consisted of a child biting into a warm thermoplastic wafer. Toothprints, like fingerprints, are unique to every individual - even identical twins can be distinguished by their toothprints. Teeth are the most durable part of the human anatomy, and consequently an excellent identifier. Children 2 years old have teeth that will last for 10 years. Six-year-olds usually have their 6 year molars at that age, which should last the rest of their lifetime. Toothprints are quick, easy and fun for children.

Recently, it was discovered that Toothprints can

field two more very valuable purposes: 1.) the salivary proteins on the wafer can actually be used as a DNA sample, and 2.) the salivary proteins left on the Toothprint wafer can also serve as a "scent tracer" for FBI dogs which are trained to track missing children by tracking the salivary protein scent.