Screen shots from the new Australian Police Child ID App. The app is available for download from the Apple Store or Google Play.

Smartphone application launched

A new smartphone application or 'app' has been developed to help Australian parents quickly find their children if they go missing.

The Australian Police Child ID application was launched on 28 November, 2012, as part of an initiative to reduce the impact and incidence of missing persons.

The National Missing Persons Coordination Centre produced the Australian version of the application in partnership with the United States Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI).

The app was adapted from the FBI's version and launched at the American Embassy in Canberra.

It allows families to store photographs and vital information about their children on their mobile phone.

While the vast majority of children who go missing are quickly returned to safety usually within 24 hours of going missing, the information stored on the phone can be used to promptly provide crucial information to police.

AFP Commissioner Tony Negus says the new app is a welcome initiative to help build a safer community for children.

"By receiving this information so quickly, police will have an enhanced ability to find missing children and remove them from potentially dangerous situations," Commissioner Negus says.

United States Ambassador to Australia Jeffrey L Bleich said he is pleased to see such strong collaboration between the FBI and the AFP.

"US law enforcement will continue to work closely with Australian counterparts on future projects, especially those with the aim of keeping our children safe," Ambassador Bleich says.

"Time is of the essence. In the event your child was to go missing, every second counts, and this smartphone app will provide police the chance to expedite their search."

The application is available at no cost for iPhone and Android phone users, includes safety advice, check lists for parents and emergency contact phone numbers for quick and efficient access.

The Australian Police Child ID App is available for download from the Apple Store or Google Play.

Anyone with information relating to a missing child should contact their local police or contact the National Missing Persons Coordination Centre on 1800 000 634 or email missing@afp.gov.au.