

Elizabeth Smart

The abduction of Elizabeth Smart was one of the most followed child abduction cases of our time. Smart was abducted on June 5, 2002, and her captors controlled her by threatening to kill her and her family if she tried to escape. Fortunately, the police safely returned Smart back to her family on March 12, 2003 after being held prisoner for 9 grueling months.

Through this traumatic experience Smart has become an advocate for change related to child abduction, recovery programs and National legislation. Elizabeth triumphantly testified before her captor and the world about the very private nightmare she suffered during her abduction, which led to conviction. Founder of the Elizabeth Smart Foundation, Smart has also helped promote The National AMBER Alert, The Adam Walsh Child Protection & Safety Act and other safety legislation to help prevent abductions.

Smart has chronicled her experiences in the *New York Times* best-selling book, *My Story*. In addition, she and other abduction survivors worked with the Department of Justice to create a survivors guide, entitled, *You're Not Alone: The Journey From Abduction to Empowerment*. This guide is meant to encourage children who have gone through similar experiences not to give up but to know that there is hope for a rewarding life.

Smart's abduction and recovery continues to motivate parents, law enforcement and leaders worldwide to focus on children's safety. She emphasizes vigilance by everyday people and the belief that hope always exists to find every missing child.

Smart's example is a daily demonstration that there really is life after a tragic event. Smart attended Brigham Young University, studying music as a harp performance major. She married her husband Matthew in 2012.