



UNIVERSITY OF
FLORIDA

College of Nursing



Preparing the General Community to Assist in the Safe Return of Cognitively Impaired Individuals

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The Problem

- 'elderly man killed by train...man wandered from personal care home'
- 'Hawthorne woman..found dead..found in a heavily shrubbed area exposed to rain, heat and chill'
- 'man killed by fire truck sent to assist him'
- 'man found dead by pond..bled to death from alligator bites'

Clinical Problem

- persons with dementia become lost in the community
 - *under what circumstances do they become lost*
 - *where are they found*
 - *who finds them*
 - *what are signs someone needs help*
 - *what circumstances are linked to deaths after becoming lost*

Research Studies

- | | |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Study 1 – Found Alive<ul style="list-style-type: none">– <i>Safe Return discovery files</i><ul style="list-style-type: none">• 625 cases– <i>Safe Return missing files</i><ul style="list-style-type: none">• 55 cases– <i>post hoc descriptive design</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Study 2 – Found Dead<ul style="list-style-type: none">– <i>newspaper articles</i><ul style="list-style-type: none">• ongoing study• 100 cases / 50 cases– <i>post hoc descriptive design</i> |
|--|--|

Research Studies

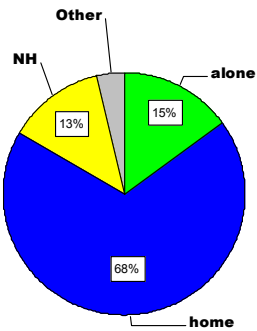
- Study 1 – Found Alive

- age
 - range 48-102
 - mean 78 ± 9.0
- gender
 - males 52%
- transportation
 - walking 88%
 - driving 7%

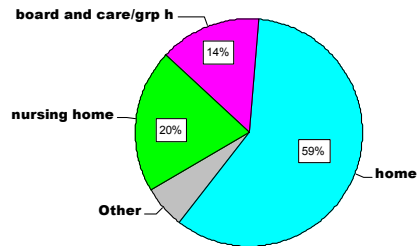
- Study 2 – Found Dead

- age
 - 60-91
 - mean 78 ± 6.5
- gender
 - male 67%
- transportation
 - walking 90%
 - driving 9%
 - hitchhiked 1%

Live Study

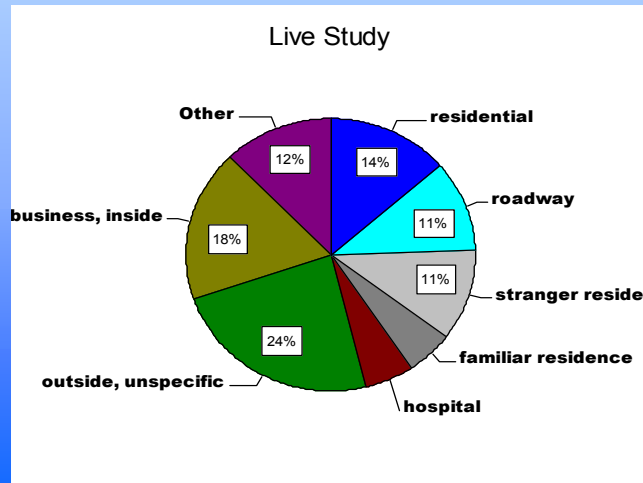


Dead Study

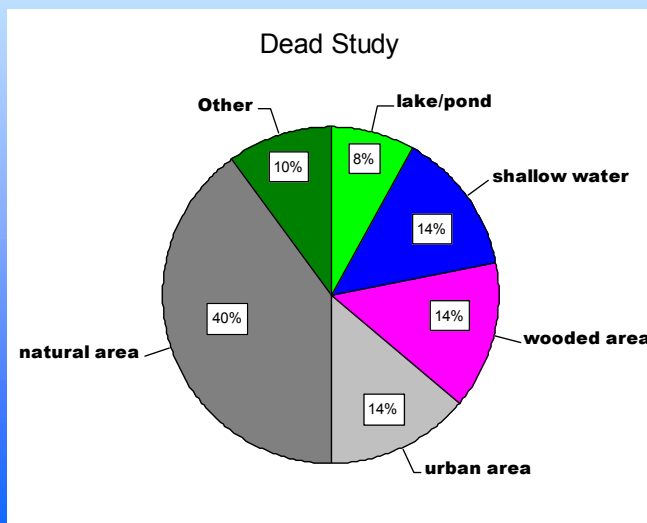


Where did the person live?

Where found?



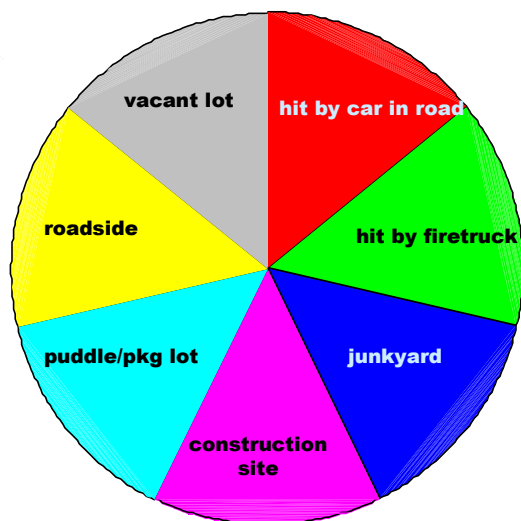
Where found?



Natural areas

- bike path
- cactus bed
- corn field
- creek bed
- ditch/thick vegetation
- dry creek bed
- dry riverbed
- field
- hitchhiked/quarry
- ravine
- construction site
- salt creek channel
- snowy ditch/road
- wetland tree/brush

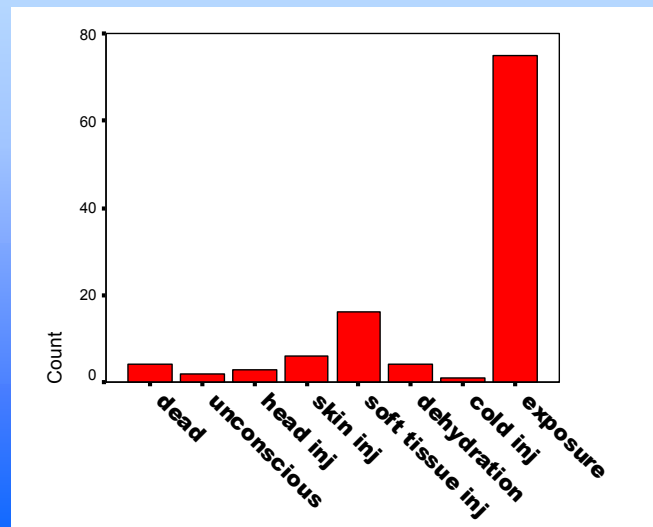
Found in urban areas

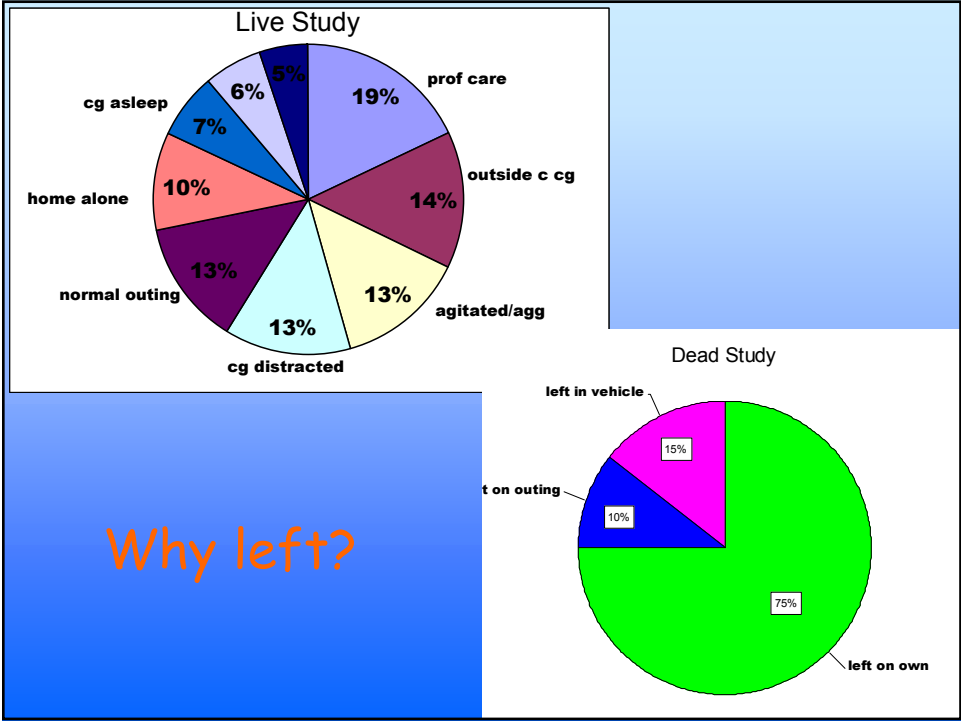
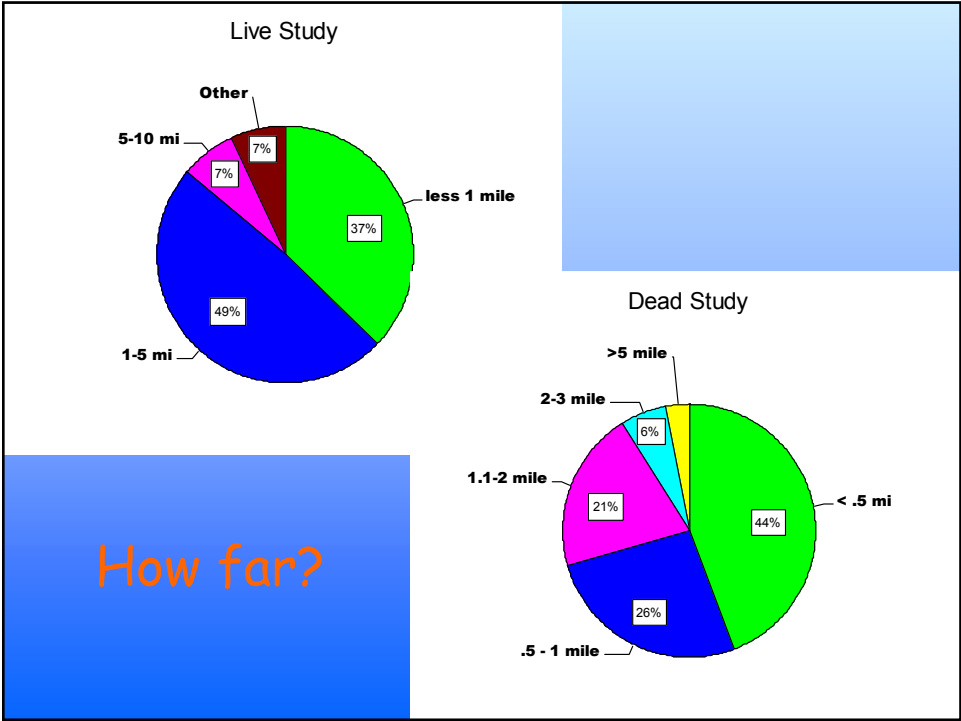


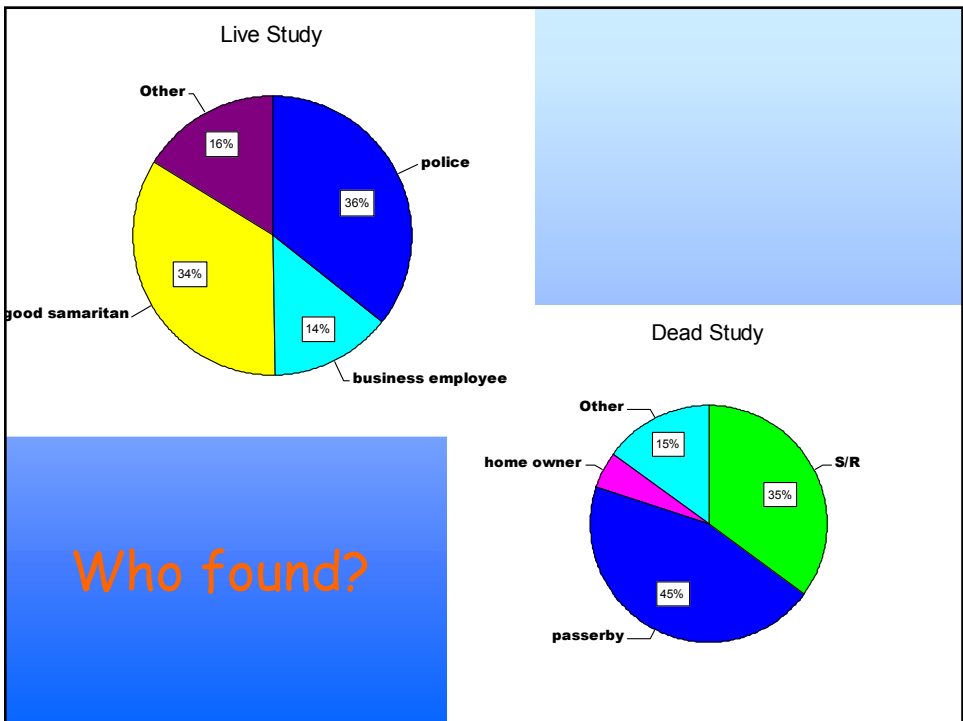
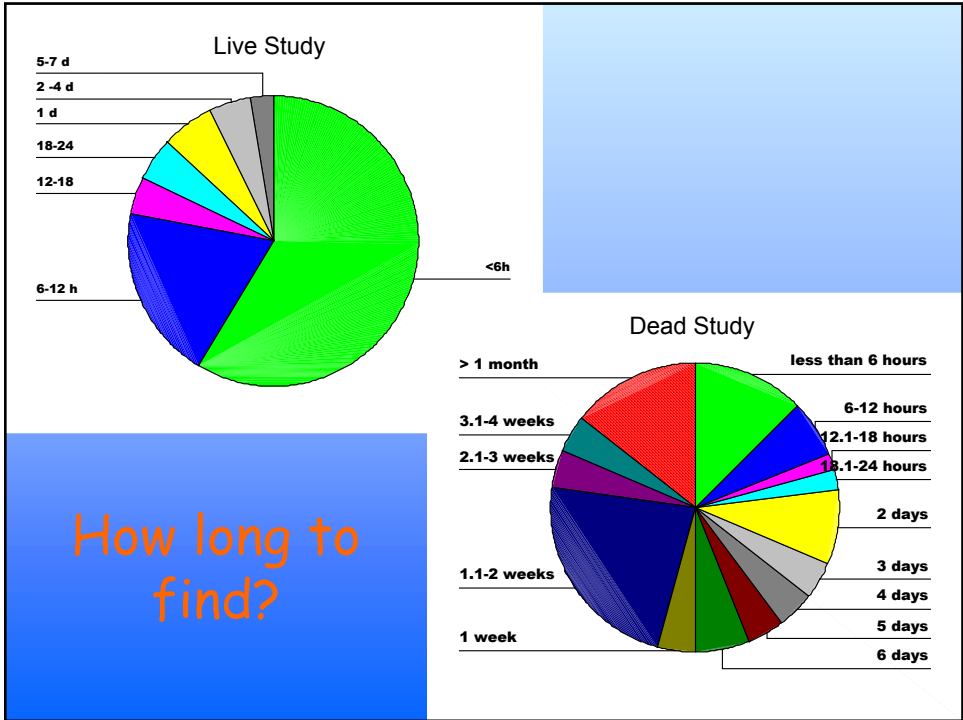
Residence by state

	Frequency	Percent
fl	7	14.0
ca	6	12.0
ar	3	6.0
oh	3	6.0
wi	3	6.0
il	2	4.0
ms	2	4.0

Injuries







Individual Stories - walking

...was found by police around 4:30 am in lower Manhattan

...found on a sidewalk close to hospital...laceration on the back of his head

...had been found wandering around the street...he was completely naked (5:45 am - Nov. 11 Michigan)

Individual Stories - walking

...found wandering through the streets...officer suspected she is intoxicated

...found searching through the garbage in Brooklyn

...wandering down the street wearing a turtle neck shirt, pajama pants and socks

...walking down sidewalk completely naked

Individual Stories - driving

...was found in Mexico driving his car...customs in Mexico stopped him
...apparently drove into San Bernadino county on his way to New York... stopped and asked a couple for directions to NY

Individual Stories - found dead

....badly decomposed remains were found last night near the New Orleans airport...someone had called the police reporting a woman matching description _____ was seen being pursued by a vagrant male... preliminary autopsy reveals no foul play
...body found in the corn field behind the NH where he disappeared

Individual Stories - found dead

...._____ reported that she was found
dead hit by a train (left from a NH)

...._____ was found in the woods, under
a brush 1/2 mile from the NH where he
lives ... gone from NH ~ 5 days

Stories from searches

- officers searched all nearby areas but not successful; one officer went back on trail leading between buildings and saw what looked like a little footpath where some grass was bent over. The officer walked down the hidden trail to the edge of some water - the victim was back there floating in a swamp
- because the victim's body was found in bushes, the searchers at first didn't find him - he was hard to spot

Stories from searches

- the field where victim was found had been searched soon after her disappearance but she was not found. We were probably within 40 feet of her - you would have to walk right on top of her to find her.
- officers and dogs unsuccessfully combed the junkyard where victim was eventually found 300 yards from his home. An employee noted an odor coming from a car several days later and found the victim on the floorboard laying inside the car.

Stories from searches

- victim was found 4 years after her disappearance by 2 youths playing in field about 1 mile from her home
 - *despite a massive search that used tracking dogs, a heat-seeking helicopter and hundreds of volunteers, victim was not found*
 - *search was concentrated mostly to west of the home, not the south where she was found*
 - *psychics gave their impressions*
 - *family posted 15,000 fliers*

Successful search strategies

- develop a search strategy
 - *cover an increasing circumference of where last seen*
 - **start with 1 mile**
 - **go out to 5 miles**
 - **> 5 mi unusual, but not usually associated with death unless driving**
 - *cover all possibilities within that range*
 - **streets, highways**
 - **residential yards**
 - **easily accessible buildings**
 - convenience stores, hospitals
 - *continue through night*

After initial search

- reconsider search strategy after
 - ~ 6 hours
 - *identify natural areas within 1 mile range*
 - *conduct intensive search*
 - **must visually inspect every space**
 - **concentrate on secluded spaces**
 - **shoulder-to-shoulder through dense vegetation**
 - **don't leave any space out (junkyards, abandoned vehicles, roofs)**
 - *increase circumference to about 2 miles*
- rework same area if not successful

Conclusions

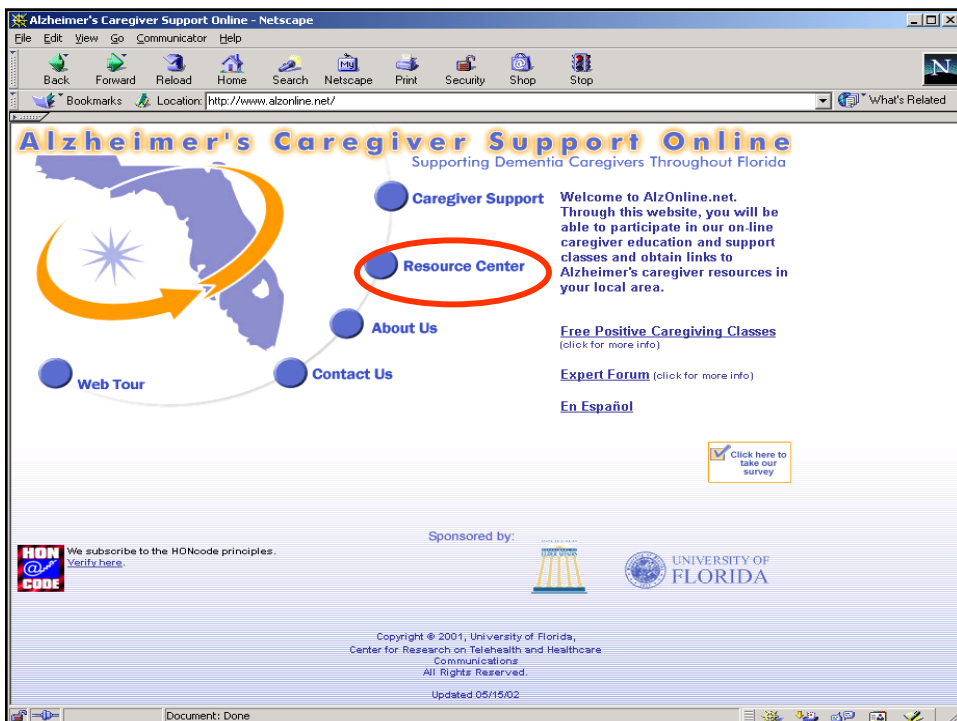
- community-wide effort required
 - *caregiver education*
 - register for **Safe Return**
 - use resources
 - pre-planned search strategy
 - *health professional education*
 - discuss problem with caregiver
 - require **Safe Return** registration
 - *general public*
 - education on identifying / helping at-risk elderly
 - education on **Safe Return**

Conclusions, con't

- law enforcement
 - *education on problems that result from dementia*
 - *education on effective search strategies*

FLIPS modules

- PowerPoint presentations
 - *basic presentation*
 - caregivers, good samaritans, law enforcement
 - *search strategies*
 - law enforcement
 - search and rescue teams
- handouts
 - *caregiver fact sheet*
 - *good samaritan fact sheet*
 - *search strategies fact sheet*
- full presentation
 - *www.alzonline.org - expert forum - expert forum archive*



File Edit View Go Communicator Help

Back Forward Reload Home Search Netscape Print Security Shop Stop

Bookmarks Location http://www.alzonline.net/books/index.html What's Related

Resource Center

Welcome to the AlzOnline Information webpage

Helpful Publications and Information:

- ["Helping People With Progressive Memory Disorders" A guide for you and your family.](#)
- [Florida Injury Prevention Programs for Seniors \(FLIPS\)](#)
- [Warning Signs of Dementia](#)
- [Checklist on Family Matters](#)
- [Tips for Memory Loss](#)
- [Department of Elder Affairs: Elder Update](#)
- ["Disaster Preparedness Guide for Elders" \(PDF, 1.38MB\)](#)
- [The Hartford's: Alzheimer's, Dementia & Driving"](#)

Resource Links to Library Services:

- [Alzheimer's Association's: Benjamin B. Green-Field Library and Resource Center](#)
- [National Library of Medicine's: MEDLINEplus Health Information](#)
- [MEDLINEplus Alzheimer's Disease Link](#)
- [MEDLINEplus Caregivers Link](#)

Media:

English - Español

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