

Monday, 15th Decemberr 2003.

Parents pray for answers as police review new information

A MYSTERY blue sedan and information from a passing cyclist could hold vital clues to the whereabouts of missing Palmwoods teenager Daniel Morcombe.

Sunshine Coast detectives will today continue to follow up new leads from witnesses in the hunt for the 13-year-old schoolboy, who vanished last Sunday from a bus stop at the Kiel Mountain Road overpass on the Nambour Connection Road.

New information revealed over the weekend has widened the search for Daniel, but police were still keen to hear from anyone who may have seen the teenager and an unidentified man about the time of his disappearance.

Fresh leads include: - A witness said he saw Daniel and the man standing at the overpass last Sunday near a parked blue 1980 sedan, with a rear door open; - A beige/off-white commercial van was also seen parked in the area about the time of Daniel's disappearance; - Another witness told police he saw a male cyclist, aged between 30-40 and wearing a black helmet, riding a black 10-speed bike near the Big Pineapple just before Daniel vanished.

Police also yesterday staged a re-enactment of events leading up to Daniel's disappearance, in the hope that it would jog the memories of passing motorists.

A mannequin, dressed in clothes similar to those Daniel was last seen wearing, was placed on the roadside near the overpass.

Regional crime coordinator Detective Inspector John Maloney said a witness came forward with new information about the blue sedan on Saturday night.

"The car ... was pulled over to the side of the road, and the witness has seen (Daniel) and a male person standing next to it, with a rear door open," Det Insp Maloney said.

"We don't have much more information than that.

We're urging any person, who either has that particular vehicle who may have stopped, or knows of a particular vehicle like that, to contact Crimestoppers." He said police were also keen to speak with the cyclist and the van driver so they could be eliminated from investigations.

"We will also have further searches ... (they) will be assessed during the week, and what further areas will be searched." Standing just metres from the bus stop where their beloved son vanished more than a week ago, Daniel Morcombe's parents yesterday pleaded for any information that would help bring their wide-eyed boy home for Christmas.

A desperate and visibly upset Denise Morcombe, flanked by husband Bruce and Sunshine Coast detectives, made an emotional plea for anyone who has spotted her 13-year-old son since his disappearance to come forward.

"It's getting desperate, we need him back, we want Daniel back," Mrs Morcombe said.

"I just want to say that we both want Daniel home, it's been seven days since he was last seen.

It's a matter of urgency, someone must have seen (Daniel) somewhere." Mrs Morcombe said her family was "taking one day at a time".

"It's all we can do ... the police have been fantastic (in their search for Daniel)," Mrs Morcombe said.

If you have any information about Daniel's whereabouts, please phone Crimestoppers or Maroochydore Police Station on 5475 2444.