



## MODULE 6:

# Runaway Reality

## Learning Goals

During this module, participants will:

- ◆ Consider why some youth decide to run away.
- ◆ Understand the services and philosophy of the National Runaway Switchboard.
- ◆ Brainstorm things a youth should consider before leaving home.
- ◆ Consider alternatives to running away.

## MODULE 6: RUNAWAY REALITY

### DEFINE THE ISSUE

If you're looking for a lesson full of scare tactics warning youth about life on the streets, Module 6 is not it. Youth choose to leave what they consider home for a number of reasons. Some may need a "time out" or some distance between themselves and their problems. Many remain close to their homes and stay away for only a short time, while others run farther or stay away longer. Although running away might feel like a youth's only option at the time, the emotional and physical risks they encounter are often worse than life at home.

At the same time, the reality is, for some youth living in unhealthy or dangerous situations, leaving home may be the best option for their well-being. The National Runaway Switchboard helps youth find support systems and resources they can count on throughout their crises. NRS' front line team members (hotline staff and volunteers, or "liners") are non-judgmental and non-directive. Our goal is not to stop youth from running away, but rather to help them consider their reasons for wanting to leave, identify their options for help and safety, and develop a plan that most suits their needs.

Module 6 provides participants with both qualitative and quantitative accounts of what being a runaway means, including the true story of a runaway from her mother's perspective. The module allows participants to brainstorm considerations and alternatives before leaving home.

### ICONS:

For further details, see the Introduction Module.



# MODULE 6: RUNAWAY REALITY

## MODULE ACTIVITIES

ACTIVITY	TIME	METHODOLOGY
A. Runaway Quiz	10 minutes	Activity/Discussion
B. <i>Augusta, Gone: A Family's Perspective</i>	20 minutes	Discussion
C. 10 Questions To Ask Yourself Before You Run Away	5-7 minutes	Activity/Discussion
D. Things To Do Instead Of Running Away	7-10 minutes	Discussion
E. Kids Call Program*	15-30 minutes	Activity



Total time required: **45 minutes** 



\*Total time for activities A-D is 45 minutes. If you would like to include the Kids Call Activity, you can do one of the following:

- ◆ Complete all activities by splitting it up into two 45 minute session.
- ◆ Complete the Activity E: Kids Call and choose two other activities during one 45 minute session.

## MATERIALS

- ◆ "Runaway Quiz" worksheet
- ◆ National Runaway Switchboard materials
- ◆ *Augusta, Gone* Parent Perspective Excerpt handout
- ◆ *Augusta, Gone* Youth Perspective Excerpt handout
- ◆ "10 Questions To Ask Yourself Before You Run Away" handout
- ◆ Poster paper or chalk/dry erase board
- ◆ Telephone/speakerphone
- ◆ NRS prizes (or other small prizes)
- ◆ "1-800-RUNAWAY" film
- ◆ "Kids Call Evaluation Form" – (for instructor only)



National Safe Connections + Community Response and Responsibility



The companion film "1-800-RUNAWAY" works well with this module.



To follow up this session, the facilitator could bring in a speaker from the local Safe Place or shelter.



For this module, it is recommended that you prepare by: ordering NRS prizes and scheduling a Kids Call with NRS in advance.



## MODULE 6: RUNAWAY REALITY

### ACTIVITY 6A. RUNAWAY QUIZ

10 minutes



If NRS materials are not ordered in advance, an alternative is to hand out wrapped candy or other prizes.



NRS encourages you to check its website ([www.1800RUNAWAY.org](http://www.1800RUNAWAY.org)) for additional statistics from your state or area code. You may also call our Prevention Specialist at 773.289.1723 for information regarding the number of runaway and homeless youth shelters in your area. Feel free to include any information you find as a bonus question to your Runaway Quiz activity.

#### INTRODUCE

"Runaway Reality Quiz."

#### STATE

*We're going to take a quiz based on recent information provided by the National Runaway Switchboard concerning runaway youth. Do your best to answer these questions, then we'll review the quiz together.*

#### HAND OUT

"Runaway Quiz" worksheets.

#### ALLOW

up to 5 minutes for participants to answer questions on their own.

#### HAVE

a different participant read each question aloud. Next, have participants guess the answer.

#### CORRECT

any wrong answers with the answers below.

1. Youth ages \_\_\_\_\_ are at the highest risk for homelessness.
  - A. 15 to 18
  - B. 12 to 15
  - C. 16 to 17
  - D. 12 to 17
  - E. 13 to 16

**Answer:** Youth ages **12 to 17 (D)** are at the highest risk for homelessness, even more so than adults.

2. The number one reason youth call NRS is:
  - A. Pregnancy
  - B. School problems
  - C. Peer pressure
  - D. Family issues
  - E. Abuse



**Answer: Family issues (D)** consistently account for the majority of all calls to the National Runaway Switchboard (29% in 2006). This category includes divorce, remarriage, problems with siblings, and conflicts with family rules.

3. Youth of what age call NRS most often?

- A. 13
- B. 14
- C. 15
- D. 16
- E. 17

**Answer: Youth who are 17 (E)** call NRS most often, followed closely by 16 year old youth.

4. Who calls NRS for help?

- A. Any youth
- B. Runaways
- C. Parents of runaways
- D. Police officers
- E. All of the above

**Answer: All of the above (E).** That is, anyone who cares about runaway youth can call the National Runaway Switchboard for help. In fact, NRS calls consist of almost equal numbers of youth and concerned adults (47% youth callers, 49% guardian/relative/adult callers).

5. Who calls NRS more often?

- A. Males
- B. Females

**Answer: Females (B)** outnumber male callers 3:1. This ratio includes youth, adults, and professionals (police officers, social workers). However, statistics show that males and females run away from home equally as often. So, why do you think it is that over 75% of NRS callers are female?

- Females are more likely to seek assistance than males
- Females are more socialized to talk about their problems.

6. How do most NRS callers find the 1-800-RUNAWAY 24-hour phone number?

- A. Friends
- B. School
- C. Phonebook
- D. Ads
- E. Internet

**Answer: Though these are all methods of obtaining NRS' number, callers (26%) report getting the number from the phonebook (C) or directory assistance more often than other sources.**



7. Approximately, what percentage of youth crisis callers have run away before?
- A. 10%
  - B. 26%
  - C. 32%
  - D. 54%
  - E. 80%

**Answer:** 32% (C) of National Runaway Switchboard's youth callers report that they have previously run away at least once before.

8. What is the average length of time that a youth is on the run before calling NRS?
- A. 0-3 days
  - B. 4-7 days
  - C. 1-4 weeks
  - D. 1-6 months
  - E. Over 6 months

**Answer:** 42% of runaway youth who call the National Runaway Switchboard do so within **0-3 days (A)** of leaving home. 15% call within 4-7 days. 24% call within 1-4 weeks, 16% call in 1-6 months, and 3% call after being away for over 6 months.

9. According to NRS statistics, what's the most-cited way in which youth report supporting themselves once on the streets?
- A. Stay with family/friends
  - B. Prostitution
  - C. Steal
  - D. Sell drugs
  - E. Shelters

**Answer:** 49% of NRS callers report surviving with help from **family or friends and relatives (A)** while on the run.

10. How many housing options are in the NRS database for youth 18 and under?
- A. 600
  - B. 750
  - C. 430
  - D. 1000
  - E. 2500

**Answer:** The NRS database lists **750 (B)** options for alternative housing in the United States for youth under the age of 18. Yet, estimates are that anywhere from 1.6 million to 2.8 million youth run away each year



\*\*SAMPLE BONUS QUESTION can be created with statistics from:

[http://www.1800RUNAWAY.org/news\\_events/call\\_stats.html](http://www.1800RUNAWAY.org/news_events/call_stats.html)

11. In 2006, it was estimated that \_\_\_\_\_ calls were made to the National Runaway Switchboard by youth who live within the (insert local area code) Area Code.

- A. Between 25 and 50
- B. (insert correct answer here )
- C. Between 300 and 400
- D. Between 500 and 750
- E. Over 1000

\*Runaway Quiz based on 2006 NRS call log data

*Did anyone have all questions correct?*

**ASK**

**HAND OUT**

NRS materials to everyone who got all answers correct. If no one got all 10 correct, ask if anyone got 9 out of 10 and so on. OR, you may give materials to the entire class.

**STATE**

*Good job with this quiz! If you would like to learn more statistics about runaways, visit the National Runaway Switchboard at <http://www.1800RUNAWAY.org>!*

**ASK**

*Do you have any questions or comments?*

**DISCUSS**

responses.



## MODULE 6: RUNAWAY REALITY

### ACTIVITY 6B. AUGUSTA, GONE: A FAMILY'S PERSPECTIVE

20 minutes



If you want to hand out the excerpts, make copies in advance. You can then allow participants to read on their own or aloud.

#### INTRODUCE

*Augusta, Gone.*

#### STATE

*Youth run away for a variety of important reasons. The staff members and volunteers at the National Runaway Switchboard believe they can learn a lot from the perspectives of youth who run way.*

*The story Augusta, Gone is a true story written by a mother whose daughter frequently runs away. As we read the following excerpts—one from the mother's perspective and one from the daughter's—from the book, think about what important reasons motivated Augusta to run away.*

#### READ

aloud "Augusta, Gone Parent Perspective Excerpt" and "Augusta, Gone Youth Perspective Excerpt" to the participants. You may choose to have participants take turns reading the excerpts.

#### DISCUSS

excerpts with the participants. The following are some sample questions:

- *What did you think about the excerpts?*
- *How might Augusta's mother be feeling? How would you feel if you were in her situation?*
- *How might Augusta be feeling? How would you feel if you were in her situation?*
- *Are these reasons why someone might choose to run away?*

#### ASK

*Do you have any questions or comments?*

#### DISCUSS

responses.



## MODULE 6: RUNAWAY REALITY

### ACTIVITY 6C. 10 QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF BEFORE YOU RUN AWAY

5-7 minutes



**INTRODUCE** the activity.

**STATE** *Let's imagine that you are planning to run away. What questions should you consider before you decide to run away? These can also be referred to as "reality checks," which are meant to encourage reasoning, thinking, and planning on the youth's part. They are NOT meant to sound patronizing.*

**ALLOW** participants to generate questions.

**WRITE** the questions on poster paper or chalk/dry erase board.

**HAND OUT** "10 Questions To Ask Yourself Before You Run Away" worksheets.

- What else can I do to improve my home situation before I leave?
- What would make me stay at home?
- How will I survive on my own?
- What makes running away unsafe?
- Who can I count on to help me?
- Am I being realistic?
- Do I have a plan that is well thought out?
- What are my other options?
- If I end up in trouble, whom will I call?
- If I return home, what may happen?

**SELECT** participants to read each question out loud.

**ASK** *Do you have any questions or comments?*

**DISCUSS** responses.

**STATE** *These are all questions the National Runaway Switchboard can help you consider. Just call 1-800-RUNAWAY and speak to a trained NRS liner 24/7.*



## MODULE 6: RUNAWAY REALITY

### ACTIVITY 6D. THINGS TO DO INSTEAD OF RUNNING AWAY

7-10 minutes



- INTRODUCE** “Things to Do Instead of Running Away” activity.
- STATE** *We’re going to brainstorm, or think out loud, about things to do instead of running away.*
- DIVIDE** participants into groups of 3-4 people.
- DISTRIBUTE** 1 sheet of poster paper and several markers to each group.
- DIRECT** each group to spend 5 minutes creating a poster of things to do instead of running away. **ENCOURAGE** participants to use their imaginations when creating their posters.
- STATE** *Now, let’s share our results. Each group has up to 2 minutes to tell us about its poster.*
- ALLOW** 2 minutes for each group to present its poster.
- STATE** *If you are ever considering running, these might be some ideas to think about. You can also call 1-800-RUNAWAY to talk to someone at any time.*
- If you or someone you know has run away and wants to return home, call 1-800-RUNAWAY and ask about the Home Free program. The National Runaway Switchboard, in collaboration with Greyhound Lines, Inc., offers a free bus ticket home to youth ages 12 to 20 who qualify.*
- ASK** *Do you have any questions or comments?*
- DISCUSS** responses.



## MODULE 6: RUNAWAY REALITY

### ACTIVITY 6E. KIDS CALL PROGRAM\*

15-30 minutes



This activity requires that the facilitator work with a representative at the National Runaway Switchboard. This preparation should take place at least 4-5 business days before the activity. Follow the steps below to ensure that Activity 6E runs as smoothly as possible.

- **Materials:** Telephone with speaker phone capability and complimentary materials from NRS (optional).
- **Preparation steps:**
  - **CALL** the NRS Prevention Specialist at 773.289.1723.
  - **ASK** that an NRS representative call you at the time you are planning to facilitate this activity.
  - If you are calling at least 4-5 business days in advance, you may **REQUEST** that an NRS representative send you materials to include in your Kids Call activity (e.g., pencils, wallet cards, bookmarks, etc.). These materials are provided free of charge by NRS.

The Kids Call program provides information relevant to runaway youth. This includes spreading awareness of issues regarding runaway youth, informing callers about resources available to them, and providing skills regarding communication and stress management/problem solving.

#### INTRODUCE

the activity.

#### BRAINSTORM

questions with the participants to ask an NRS liner. Here are some samples:

- What makes someone run away?
- Why would someone call a hotline?
- How do we know a call to the National Runaway Switchboard is really confidential and anonymous?
- What are the most common reasons for calling the National Runaway Switchboard?
- Where do runaways go?
- Do runaways go to jail?
- How long are runaways gone?
- Do all runaways go home?
- When do runaways decide to go home?
- How do runaways get home if they don't have any money?





This activity will take place between an NRS liner and a student actor in your group. In brief, the activity consists of a student actor playing the part of a distressed caller who is curious about resources to deal with her or his distress. During the mock call, other participants will be responsible for helping the student actor ask questions to learn more about resources.

## CREATE

a scenario in advance so your caller is prepared, or use one of the scenarios below, which are created by the National Runaway Switchboard.

### SCOTT ROLE PLAY 1:

Scott and his girlfriend, Kim, have been on and off for months. They fight about *everything* and never seem to trust each other. Kim gets jealous easily and often accuses Scott of flirting with other girls. Scott gets angry and depressed. You've seen Kim slap Scott and get rough with him during school. Some of the other kids saw this too, and they are telling Scott to "control his woman" and are calling him names. Scott confides in you that he doesn't want to be with Kim anymore but doesn't know how to handle it. He wishes he could just leave his responsibilities behind.

### JASMINE ROLE PLAY 2:

Jasmine is really worried about going home from school today. She and her mom live alone on County Road 64 and are rather isolated from other people. They usually don't talk to each other much. For some reason, Jasmine's mom just doesn't seem to trust her. And now her mom found out that Jasmine's a lesbian after she was snooping around on Jasmine's computer and read some of her journal. Jasmine's mom is really, really religious and thinks that gays and lesbians are the biggest sinners of all. Today, her mom told her to come straight home from school and be prepared to talk with their minister. Jasmine is afraid of what they have in store for her and would much rather take her chances on the streets.

## ENGAGE

one of your most creative student actors in role playing someone in distress. In a short, mock session with an NRS liner, this student actor will present her or his problem. NRS liner will respond to questions with relevant resources.

### COMMUNICATION

How do the National Runaway Switchboard "liners" help callers? They help through good communication skills and a structured conversation. Ask how NRS does it.



**STRESS MANAGEMENT / PROBLEM-SOLVING**

The National Runaway Switchboard doesn't solve people's problems for them—the "liners" help callers create an action plan to solve their own problems. Talk to the National Runaway Switchboard. You can help yourself or a friend.

NRS representative will call you at the scheduled time. When your call is finished, please **COMPLETE** and **SEND** in the Kids Call Evaluation form.

**ASK**

(time permitting) *Would any of you like to ask the NRS liner about the Runaway Quiz we completed earlier?*

**ALLOW**

time for Q & A.



## MODULE 6: RUNAWAY REALITY

### SUMMARY

#### STATE

- *Key points from our quiz include:*
  - *Youth ages 12 to 17 are at the highest risk for homelessness, even more so than adults.*
  - *Family issues account for approximately 29% of all calls to the National Runaway Switchboard.*
  - *Seventeen-year-olds call NRS most often.*
  - *NRS calls consist of almost equal numbers of youth and concerned adults, and females call about three times as often as males.*
  - *Nearly a third of all youth crisis callers have previously run away..*
  - *42% of runaway youth who call the National Runaway Switchboard do so within 0-3 days.*
  - *Nearly half of runaways who call NRS report they are receiving help from family and friends.*
  - *The NRS database lists 750 options for alternative housing in the United States for youth under 18.*
- *In Augusta, Gone, we gained the perspectives of a mother and daughter in a real runaway situation.*
- *In the "10 Questions to Ask" activity, we saw that youth need to have a plan before running away.*
- *We also brainstormed several options youth might explore instead of running away.*
- *Last, we had a demonstration of how a real call to the National Runaway Switchboard might work.*



## MODULE 6: RUNAWAY REALITY

### HANDOUTS AND WORKSHEETS

- A. Runaway Quiz
- B. *Augusta, Gone* Parent Perspective Excerpt
- C. *Augusta, Gone* Youth Perspective Excerpt
- D. 10 Questions To Ask Yourself Before You Run Away
- E. Kids Call Evaluation Form – (for instructors only)

### REFERENCES

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### RESOURCES

National Center for Missing and Exploited Children provides services nationwide for families and professionals in the prevention of abducted, endangered, and sexually exploited children (<http://www.ncmec.org>).

National Runaway Switchboard is the federally-designated national communication system (hotline and website) for runaway and homeless youth. Youth and family members call 1-800-RUNAWAY or access the website to work through problems and to find local help (<http://www.1800RUNAWAY.org>).

Safe Place provides access to immediate help and supportive resources for all young people in crisis through a network of sites sustained by qualified agencies, trained volunteers, and businesses (<http://nationalsafeplace.org>).



# RUNAWAY QUIZ

**Directions:** Circle the correct answer.

- Youth aged \_\_\_\_\_ are at highest risk for homelessness.
  - 15 to 18
  - 12 to 15
  - 16 to 17
  - 12 to 17
  - 13 to 16
- The number one reason youth call NRS is:
  - Pregnancy
  - School problems
  - Peer pressure
  - Family issues
- Youth of what age call NRS most often?
  - 13
  - 14
  - 15
  - 16
  - 17
- Who calls NRS for help?
  - Any youth
  - Runaways
  - Parents of runaways
  - Police officers
  - All of the above
- Who calls NRS more often?
  - Males
  - Females
- How do most callers find NRS's number?
  - Friends
  - School
  - Phonebook
  - Ads
  - Internet
- Approximately, what percentage of runaway callers has run away before?
  - 10%
  - 26%
  - 32%
  - 54%
  - 80%
- What is the average length of time that a youth is on the run before calling NRS?
  - 0-3 days
  - 4-7 days
  - 1-4 weeks
  - 1-6 months
  - Over 6 months
- According to NRS statistics, what's the most-cited way in which youth report supporting themselves once on the streets?
  - Stay with family/friends
  - Prostitution
  - Steal
  - Sell drugs
  - Shelters
- How many housing options are in NRS's database for youth 18 and under?
  - 600
  - 750
  - 430
  - 1000
  - 2500

**Need to talk? Call us.**  
1-800-RUNAWAY  
**National Runaway Switchboard**  
[www.1800RUNAWAY.org](http://www.1800RUNAWAY.org)



## AUGUSTA, GONE PARENT PERSPECTIVE EXCERPT

"This is how it was and it was nothing like this. There were things that started to happen. But then you don't know. When your daughter is eleven, when your daughter starts to act differently, you don't know if it's because her parents are divorced. You don't know if it's because her mother works too much, or because your daughter's too smart for her classes, or because she has maybe a learning disability you never caught, or because her teacher has a learning disability or isn't smart enough to teach your daughter. Or maybe it doesn't have anything to do with school at all. Maybe she is becoming a teenager and this is how they act. Maybe they are supposed to be quiet like this and stay up in their rooms.

And then something happens and you think: I think there's something wrong. I think maybe she's smoking pot. But you don't really believe it because she told you *No Mommy I don't do that, that was somebody else*. And these are the things you think: *Well I smoked pot. But I wasn't only thirteen. I was seventeen when I smoked pot. And it was different then, wasn't it? Wasn't the pot different then? Wasn't it lighter colored? Wasn't it less somehow?* But then you think: *Don't kids do things earlier now? And anyway she said she didn't.* And you're not sure and you don't want to not trust her.

I want to trust you, you tell her, looking into her face. I want to trust you when you tell me.

And they say to talk with your children, but she no longer talked to you, and it seems as if it just happened. One day it was just like that. True, she had stopped coming down for breakfast. Stayed up in her room, ran out the door late for school, missed the bus and had to have a ride. But you think, well, that's how they are, aren't they, teenagers? And you try to remember how you were, but you were different and the times were different and it was so long ago. And she's suddenly so angry at you, but then, another time, she's just the same. She's just your little girl. You sit with her and you talk about something, or you go shopping for school clothes and everything seems all right. And you forget how you stood in her room and how the center of your stomach felt so cold. When you found the cigarette. When you found the blue pipe. When you found the little bag she said was aspirin.

And there was that time after eighth-grade graduation when she and her best friend, Alexis, were going to sneak out, but they said they weren't even after you found the cellar door open. But they said they weren't and so you decided to believe them, like that other time when Julie's mother called and told you that Julie and your daughter had stolen some things out of the store downtown and you grounded her and she cried and promised *Never never*. And the time she was supposed to be spending the night at Daisy's but then you found out that her parents didn't know; the girls weren't there. And then there was something and then something else and then you were on a crazy train ride rumbling through a night landscape that you didn't recognize and everything was different and everything normal was gone.

All of a sudden it just happened.

It seems like all of a sudden it just happened.



So now, when I try to remember how it went, it's hard to remember. Augusta was a little girl. Jack was a little boy. I was working too much. There was always too much to do. We were sitting at a table. I was worried about something at work. I got mad about something. I brought my hands down hard on the kitchen table. Augusta cried. Maybe that was it. What made her change.

Whenever it got to be too much for me I would go out. I'd yank my coat off the hook and my mittens off the radiator and head out the door. Just get out and start walking. Up the road big firm steps as if I had somewhere to go. My kids were driving me nuts. This happened all the time now, ever since they started edging into adolescence. They were angry at me. They were scornful. My daughter was furious. My son was bored. I couldn't even remember how it had been anymore; our sweet little household. The candlelit dinners. The fires. The books. The stories and the special treats and the rituals of family I had tended. It had been so long since someone hadn't been mad or exhausted or sad.

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## **AUGUSTA, GONE**

### **YOUTH PERSPECTIVE EXCERPT**

After lunch we meet with Rose in her office, another cabin, full of a jumble of pictures, paintings, photographs, and flowers in vases, and beads hanging down. There's a shawl flung over a chair and a big white dog in the corner.

"I want you to sit like this," she tells us.

We four sit face-to-face; Rose by Augusta, Ben by me, facing one another. Our knees touching.

"Okay," she tells us. "Augusta's going to come clean. She's going to tell you about all the stuff she's done. Do you have your list?"

Augusta gets a folded-up square of lined paper out of her pocket of her jacket.

"Now?" She looks at Rose.

"Yeah."

Rose takes a big breath. "I want you to just listen. Don't say anything. You'll have a chance to speak later. Just listen to what Augusta has to tell you. This is hard for her. But this is what she needs to do."

It feels a little like secret code stuff. There are so many special rituals to remember: certain phrases, certain ways you have to sit. We're filled up with this sort of thing from the last two days. I've already broken out in a rash. Something itchy all up and down my arms. Starting on my legs.

Augusta reads from her paper.

This is what she has to tell us:

She's been smoking since she was twelve. She was up to two and a half packs a day when she left home.

She was smoking a lot of pot. She was stoned before school, between classes, after school.

She took mushrooms and acid.

She was sneaking out a lot, going to all-night parties.

She had adult friends she was getting stoned with, including the twenty-eight-year-old son of an old friend. The father of one of Jack's friends. A wealthy summer guy from Philadelphia.

She got her friend Alexis started with eating disorders.

She got Rain started smoking.

She was doing some drinking early on, but not much.

She was dealing pot.

She was dealing acid.

She snorted cocaine, smoked laced weed.

She stole money from me.

She was shoplifting.

She stole cars.

She got Jack stoned.

She made several suicide attempts—with pulls, by cutting her wrists.

She fooled around with lots of guys, but she is still a virgin.

There's more.



She says all this stuff in a certain way without crying. She has her mouth fixed in that ironic expression she used to wear when she was berating me for being a terrible mother. I feel as if I've crept inside myself, deep inside of my shell of a body like a mouse in a teapot, deep inside, crawling up only to look out through the spout.

She's finished.

Rose, who has been watching Augusta the whole time, turns to us.

"Now how do you respond to this?" she asks us.

Ben tells her he's proud of her for telling us, but that he feels bad that she lied to us.

I know I'm supposed to say something. I thank her for being so honest. I say it was my job to keep her safe, and that I failed her.

"You didn't do this," she says fiercely. "It was my choice."

I tell her I love her. I tell her she's a powerful person.

"Hug your parents," says Rose, and finally, for the first time in months and months, my daughter hugs her father. And then she hugs me. I want to hold her forever. It feels so familiar. It feels like a dream. I can smell the way she smells. I put my face up against her and feel her little strong stubborn body just like a little pony, the way she's always felt.

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# 10 QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF BEFORE YOU RUN AWAY

**Directions:** Review the questions below. Can you think of any other questions to ask yourself before running away?

- What else can I do to improve my home situation before I leave?
- What would make me stay at home?
- How will I survive on my own?
- What makes running away unsafe?
- Who can I count on to help me?
- Am I being realistic?
- Do I have a plan that is well thought out?
- What are my other options?
- If I end up in trouble, whom will I call?
- If I return home, what may happen?

**Need to talk? Call us.**  
1-800-RUNAWAY  
**National Runaway Switchboard**  
[www.1800RUNAWAY.org](http://www.1800RUNAWAY.org)



# KIDS CALL EVALUATION FORM

**Directions:** The instructor should fill out this form and return it to the National Runaway Switchboard. See contact information at the bottom of the page.

Name and Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Street: \_\_\_\_\_ City, State, Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Date and Time of Kids Call: \_\_\_\_\_ Duration of Call: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of the NRS representative: \_\_\_\_\_

*Please use the following scale to evaluate the Kids Call program:*

<b>1. The Kids Call program effectively answered our questions about runaways.</b>				
5 Strongly Agree	4 Liked	3 Neutral	2 Disliked	1 Strongly Disagree
<b>2. The NRS representative who answered our questions was knowledgeable.</b>				
5 Strongly Agree	4 Liked	3 Neutral	2 Disliked	1 Strongly Disagree
<b>3. Our audience felt the presentation increased their understanding about runaway issues.</b>				
5 Strongly Agree	4 Liked	3 Neutral	2 Disliked	1 Strongly Disagree
<b>4. Our audience is likely to call the National Runaway Switchboard in times of crisis.</b>				
5 Strongly Agree	4 Liked	3 Neutral	2 Disliked	1 Strongly Disagree

Was this your first Kids Call? How did it go? \_\_\_\_\_

Any recommendations for next time? \_\_\_\_\_

Audience Demographics (Numbers Please)

Number of Youth \_\_\_\_\_ Age Range \_\_\_\_\_ Number of Adults \_\_\_\_\_

Number of Males v. Females: \_\_\_\_\_ Males \_\_\_\_\_ Females \_\_\_\_\_

*Thank you for your time and participation. Please return this form to:*

Kids Call, c/o Prevention Specialist  
National Runaway Switchboard  
3080 N. Lincoln Ave.  
Chicago, IL 60657

TEL: 773.289.1723  
FAX: 773.929.5150  
[www.1800RUNAWAY.org](http://www.1800RUNAWAY.org)



## Module 6: Runaway Reality Pre and Post-Activity Worksheet

Initials:

Directions: Please put your initials at the top of the page and circle "pre" if you are taking the test before class or "post" if you are taking the test after class. Answer the following questions to the best of your ability!

What is your **gender:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Race/ethnicity:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Age:** \_\_\_\_\_

- Youth ages \_\_\_\_\_ are at the highest risk for homelessness.
  - 15 - 18
  - 12 - 17
  - 16 - 17
  - 18 - 20
- Approximately what percentage of youth in crisis who call the National Runaway Switchboard (NRS) have run away before?
  - 10%
  - 26%
  - 32%
  - 54%
- What is the number one reason youth call NRS?
  - Abuse
  - Family issues
  - Pregnancy
  - Peer pressure
- What is the average age of a youth caller to NRS?
  - 14
  - 15
  - 16
  - 17
- " \_\_\_\_\_ " is a good question to ask before running away.
  - Where is the bus schedule?
  - Did I remember my favorite sweater?
  - What are my other options?
  - Where did I leave my baseball?
- Who calls NRS for help?
  - Any youth
  - Runaways
  - Parents of runaways
  - All of the above
- What is the average length of time a youth is on the run before calling NRS?
  - 0-3 days
  - 4-7 days
  - 1-6 weeks
  - 1-6 months
- Who calls the NRS more often?
  - Females
  - Males
- What is the NRS hotline number?
  - 1-800-RUNAWAY
  - 1-800-RUNAWAY
  - 1-800-RUNAWAY
  - All of the above
- Many youth on the streets report that they support themselves by \_\_\_\_\_.
  - staying with friends/family
  - stealing
  - shelters
  - both b and c

