



PIECING IT ALL TOGETHER

2014 ANNUAL REPORT

National
Runaway
SafeLine

National Runaway Safeline

‘PIECING IT ALL TOGETHER’

is the National Runaway Safeline’s (NRS) theme for the FY2014 Annual Report. The symbol of a house represents not being on the street. The ‘home’ could be... home with family, home with friends, home with a shelter. For each youth that contacts NRS, it is about helping him or her piece together a solution-focused plan. A plan to get home, however ‘home’ is defined.

NRS’ mission is to help keep America’s runaway, homeless and at-risk youth safe and off the streets. As the federally-designated national communication system for runaway and homeless youth, NRS provides crisis hotline and online services, 24/7/365. Through innovative partnerships and collaborations, NRS canvasses the country to ensure every youth knows to call 1-800-RUNAWAY, click 1800RUNAWAY.org or text 66008 to connect to help.

When life seems to be falling to pieces for a youth, NRS remains a trusted, confidential and viable resource. We’ve been offering help and hope to youth since 1971. Along with our funding partners and donors, NRS has been able to grow to meet the ever-changing needs of over four decades of youth generations. It’s not just about answering the phones anymore. It’s about being visible and accessible in the online community. It’s about building life skills through our runaway prevention curriculum. It’s about giving youth a national voice as a member of our Youth Activist League.

Thank you for your ongoing commitment to the National Runaway Safeline!
With your support, NRS is here to listen. Here to help.



Maureen Blaha | Executive Director



Anne Schankin | Board Chair



PARTNERSHIPS

- 2013 National Runaway Prevention Month (NRPM) had a record-breaking 19 national partners, including **Boys & Girls Clubs, True Colors Fund, and Pacer’s National Bullying Prevention Center.**
- NRS’ longtime corporate partner, **Greyhound Lines, Inc.** instituted ‘GreenHound’ Day during NRPM 2013. GreenHound Day had employees wearing green socks and promoting NRPM on social media.
- NRS performed 20 fee-based trainings to other organizations on topics, such as; **commercial sexual exploitation, crisis intervention, and youth running from care.**
- NRS’ Executive Director, Maureen Blaha, presented with **Tracy M. Thompson**, Assistant Attorney General of New Jersey and Program Director for the statewide **Human Trafficking Initiative** to draw attention to commercial sexual exploitation during Super Bowl weekend.
- NRS served as an expert on many national councils and also on the **Child Helpline International’s (CHI) New Technology Advisory Committee.** CHI has sponsored NRS’ participation in trainings for hotline service providers in Columbia, Albania, Spain, Mexico, Namibia, South Africa, Saudi Arabia, and the Netherlands.
- **International child helpline providers** from Zambia and Japan visited the call center.



SERVICES

- NRS makes more than 250,000 connections to help and hope through hotline (**1-800-RUNAWAY**), online (**1800RUNAWAY.org**) and **offline resources.**
- With support from the Ream Foundation, United Airlines Foundation and other donors from the Major Gift Initiative, **the crisis hotline and online center** received a new, upgraded telephone system and dual monitor computer stations.
- Our **Home Free Service**, which is a reunification program run in collaboration with **Greyhound Lines, Inc.**, has issued 420 tickets during fiscal year 2014 and reunited youth back with family members or guardians or to an approved alternative living arrangement.
- In an effort to continue to provide new ways for youth to connect to services, NRS launched a **text service.** When youth text the short code: **66008**, they will receive an automatic response featuring links to the hotline or the live chat. During the hours that the **live chat** isn’t available, the link will direct youth to the hotline. The texting service platform is being provided by VIBES.
 - The **Let’s Talk: Runaway Prevention Curriculum (RPC)** is a free evidence-based, interactive, 14 module curriculum intended to build life skills and increase knowledge about runaway resources and prevention. In fiscal year 2014, the RPC was utilized by almost 8,000 youth. Twenty-two sites were new this fiscal year which included middle and high schools, after school programs, youth shelters, social service agencies and juvenile justice programs.



PIECING IT ALL TOGETHER

GROWTH

- NRS' newly established Associate Board procured auction items, sold raffle tickets and volunteered for **Spirit of Youth 2013**. In addition, they organized their first fundraiser, a dinner and drinks event, in July, which raised over \$900.00.
- FY14 was the inaugural year of **NRS' Youth Activist League**. The Youth Activist League is a group of over 30 young people, ages 14-24, who answer monthly prompts on social media. Their continued commitment to NRS has increased our social media presence and visibility among youth.
- NRS has been contracted to run **Parent Power Chicago's helpline**. With this contract, NRS has hired two additional full-time call center supervisors and two part-time call center supervisors.
- Spirit of Youth 2013 **raised over \$120,000**, honored Award Winning Author **Nami Mun** and kicked off **National Runaway Prevention Month**.



MAJOR GIFT INITIATIVE | 2013-2015

Objective: \$250,000
To Date: \$193,076

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*denotes Board Member
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FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Fiscal Year 2014, August 1, 2013 through July 31, 2014

Revenue	\$2,085,320
Expense	\$2,008,214
Net income	\$77,106
Program services	\$1,580,805
Management and general	\$306,833
Fundraising	\$120,576

*The complete audit and 990 for fiscal year 2014 are available at 1800RUNAWAY.org/about/financials

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Family & Youth Services Bureau
The Administration for Children,
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NRS wishes to acknowledge the following foundations, corporations, and individuals for their generosity. The donors listed below provided gifts between August 1, 2013 and July 31, 2014.

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NRS gratefully acknowledges the hundreds of gifts under \$50 and in-kind donations from individuals and businesses in support of our annual benefit and our daily operations – thank you!

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THANK YOU!

It is possible that we have inadvertently omitted someone or printed the name of a donor who wished to remain anonymous. If an error has occurred, please inform Katy Walsh, Director of Development and Communications, at 773-289-1727.

*Denotes Board Member
**Sustaining Board Alumni

ANYA'S STORY

Sometimes youth call the National Runaway Safeline (NRS) just to talk, sometimes they need advice, sometimes they need resources, and sometimes they need a strong advocate to work on their behalf. Occasionally, a youth contacts NRS because they need all of these services, and more...

Anya was in hysterics when she called the National Runaway Safeline (NRS).

The 14 year old runaway was barely intelligible, overwhelmed with emotion, and completely terrified. She was in the back of a van with tinted windows just outside Tucson, AZ. An expanse of darkness spread across the pancake flat desert in all directions; there were no discernable landmarks. She'd hitched a ride with a couple to get to a nearby shelter, but they had driven past the exit. They refused to tell her where they were going. The battery on her phone was almost completely drained, the reception spotty.

She was frantic.

Pam, an NRS frontline team member answered the call that night. Anya had run from her foster care home in Colvis, NM. She had been using drugs and selling herself to survive. Now, she had been abducted. She was in the back of a van with complete strangers. The doors locked. She had no idea where she was heading.

Pam was able to talk her down slightly, get her calm and focused.

“Okay Anya, I know this is scary, but I want you to listen to me. I will not hang up until you are safe.” Pam said softly, slowing the tempo of her voice, so as not to be lost in Anya's panic. “Now, look out the window and describe anything that you can make out. Can you see anything out there?”

“There's a sign.”

“Do you know what road you are on? What direction you're heading?”

“East,” Anya replied. “There are flashing lights in the distance.”

While Pam worked with Anya to try to get a sense of her location, the call center went into action. It was a team approach. One frontline team member, Frank, phoned the Tucson Police Department, after getting Anya's consent; a third looked at maps on line to see if she could find what road they might be on.

“It looks like a casino.” Anya said of the lights.

“That's good, Anya. We can work with that. You are doing great.” Pam assured.

The battery on Anya's cell was draining. Time was running out.

Frank got the 911 dispatcher in Tucson on the line. He was informed that she had warrants for prostitution.

Nationally, the average age of entry into commercial sexual exploitation is 11-14 years old, and many of these survivors are lured by traffickers with false promises of economic security and emotional support. Some don't enter through a trafficker, but simply because they need to meet their basic needs of food and shelter. However, the legal paradox is that while these youth are under the age of consent, in some places they can still face charges for their circumstance.

While the situation Anya was facing was dire, he did not want to get her out of one problem and into another. He was concerned about undermining the trust she had placed in NRS.

“She is a minor,” Frank replied to the dispatcher, “and she is the victim of trafficking.”

The dispatcher seemed surprised by the protest. She admitted that she had never thought of it that way and would note it for the responding officer. They refocused on the primary situation, finding Anya. The dispatcher speculated that they were heading for the reservation. The dispatcher issued a high alert that had every unit in the area looking for her.

Meanwhile, Anya said that the van had turned into a trailer park and stopped. The phone line chirped with a warning that the battery was about to die; Pam felt a tension in her throat. Anya said that she was being taken out of the van and walking down a dark dirt road, the rustling of movement and crunch of gravel affirmed the fact.

Then, another chirp sounded and the line went dead.

The additional information was relayed to the Tucson dispatch. Pam, Frank and the NRS team rallied together to process the events and consider if there was anything more that could be done or done differently.

The call center team had come together to work a complicated situation and resolved it to the best of their abilities.

A short while later, Tucson PD called to say that they had found Anya and connected her with social service advocates to connect her with resources.

*The locations and names have been changed to protect anonymity.