



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

November 30, 2018

Contact:

Eric Masten, National Network for Youth, eric.masten@nn4youth.org, 202-596-5935

Erin Famularo, National Runaway Safeline, efamularo@1800RUNAWAY.org, 773-289-1731

National Organizations Thank Senators Duckworth and Hatch for National Runaway Prevention Month Resolution

WASHINGTON, DC— This November, Americans joined together in recognizing the 16th annual National Runaway Prevention Month (NRPM). The National Network for Youth and National Runaway Safeline are grateful for Senator Hatch (R-UT) and Senator Duckworth (D-IL) for the introduction yesterday of a Congressional resolution to recognize this past month as National Runaway Prevention Month, and to help shine a light on the 4.2 million youth and young adults who experience homelessness every year. Senators Duckworth and Hatch were joined by Senators Murray (D-WA), Reed (D-RI) and Roberts (R-KS) in sponsoring the resolution.

Every November the [National Runaway Safeline](http://www.nrunawaysafeline.org) and the [National Network for Youth](http://www.nn4youth.org) promote and lead local, state and national partners in [NRPM](http://www.nrpm.org) activities. This annual national effort seeks to:

- Raise awareness about America's runaway, homeless and at-risk youth, and the issues that they face;
- Educate the public about solutions to prevent youth from running away from home.

This year's theme - "Shine A Light" - shows how NRPM can not only shine a light on the issues of runaway and homeless youth, but on the resources that are available for young people in crisis and experiencing homelessness.

According to the newly released National Trends on Youth in Crisis in the United States report, the National Runaway Safeline experienced a 57% increase in the last 5 years in connections from youth in crisis who were still at home. This finding demonstrates unique opportunity to support critical prevention efforts.

Last year's study on the incidence and prevalence of runaway and homeless youth and young adults, *Missed Connections: Youth Homelessness in America*, showed that over a 12 month period an estimated 4.2 million youth and young adults experienced some form of homelessness. That includes 3.5 million young adults aged 18-25, and 700,000 minors aged 13-17. Results of the study

showed that nearly half of those young people experienced homelessness for the first time, and that the prevalence of youth and young adult homelessness is the same in both rural and urban areas.

Among its recommendations, *Missed Opportunities* calls for strengthening the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act (such as through passage of the Runaway and Homeless Youth and Trafficking Prevention Act) and ensuring appropriate federal funding for comprehensive and appropriate supports for young people.

“In 2017, the National Runaway Safeline made nearly 90,000 connections to help and hope through hotline, online and offline services. We are there to help young people who are considering running away from home, those who have already left home and are in need of support and services, and also parents and guardians. National Runaway Prevention Month provides us with a opportunity to build the dialogue around issues facing at-risk youth, and ‘Shine a Light’ on the critical resources that are available to support them.” - **Susan Frankel, Executive Director, National Runaway Safeline**

“We are grateful to Senators Duckworth and Hatch for introducing this Congressional Resolution to recognize National Runaway Prevention Month. This month provides an opportunity to bring attention to the 4.2 million youth and young adults who run away or experience homelessness every year. As the nation’s oldest organization representing over 300 runaway and homeless youth providers and the young people they serve, we recognize the opportunity that NRPM provides to call attention to the critical need to support at-risk youth and young adults, and those who run away and/or experience homelessness. Passing the Runaway and Homeless Youth and Trafficking Prevention Act to reauthorize the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act (RHYA) and providing increased funding for RHYA grants are two key steps Congress can take to help address this critical issue.” - **Eric Masten, Director of Public Policy, National Network for Youth.**

###

NATIONAL RUNAWAY PREVENTION MONTH Since 2002, this campaign's goals, spearheaded by National Runaway Safeline (NRS) and the National Network for Youth (NN4Y), have been to increase public awareness of the issues facing runaways, and to educate the public about the solutions and the role they can play in preventing youth from running away. For more information, visit www.1800runaway.org/national-runaway-prevention-month.

NATIONAL NETWORK FOR YOUTH, founded in 1974, is the nation’s leading network of homeless and runaway youth programs. The Network champions the needs of runaway, homeless, and other disconnected youth through strengthening the capacity of community-based services, facilitating resource sharing, and educating the public and policy makers. NN4Y members work collaboratively to prevent youth homelessness and the inherent risks of living on the streets, including exploitation, human trafficking, criminal justice involvement, or death. For more information, visit www.nn4youth.org.

The National Runaway Safeline (NRS) helps keep America's runaway, homeless and at-risk youth safe and off the streets. Founded as Metrohelp in 1971, NRS became the federally designated national communication system for runaway and homeless youth in 1974. After 44 years, NRS continues to be uniquely equipped to respond to youth and families in crisis through our 1-800-RUNAWAY hotline and 1800RUNAWAY.org that provides a menu of digital services including: text-

based messaging, email, an on-line forum and 24-hour chat services. In 2017, NRS helped connect more than 90,000 runaway, homeless, at-risk youth and their family members to help and hope through hotline, online, and offline services and a nationwide database of nearly 8,000 resources. NRS operates 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year.