



PORTRAIT OF A RUNAWAY

Youth who run away are not “bad” kids. They are typically dealing with situations that feel overwhelming, be it stressful family dynamics, bullying, or abuse/neglect.

It is important to understand that a youth’s reason for leaving is unique to that individual. There is no such thing as a “typical” runaway. Runaway youth come from every kind of neighborhood, rich or poor, rural or urban.

NRS MISSION

The mission of the National Runaway Safeline (NRS) is to keep America’s runaway, homeless and at-risk youth safe and off the streets.

NATIONAL DISTINCTION

The National Runaway Safeline is the federally designated national communication system for runaway and homeless youth, the only organization to ever hold that distinction.

NRS SERVICES

Crisis Intervention: NRS operates a confidential 1-800-RUNAWAY hotline and online services (live chat, emails, forum) at 1800RUNAWAY.org 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. Staff and volunteers receive 40 hours of training to provide non-judgmental, non-sectarian and non-directive support and empower youth and families to develop a plan of action to improve their situation.

Information & Referrals: NRS’ database of over 6,500 resources provides countless options for youth and families to access a myriad of services, such as counseling, shelter, alcohol/drug treatment and child protective services.

Conference Calls: When youth request assistance contacting their family or an agency that can help, NRS facilitates a conference call. The crisis services team member remains on the line with the youth, advocating on their behalf as needed.

Message Service: NRS maintains a message service for youth who want to relay a message but are not ready to communicate directly with their parent. NRS’ message service is a less intimidating means for youth to reestablish contact with their parent/guardian and often serves as the first step toward reunification. In addition, a parent may access the service to leave a message for their child.

Home Free Program: In partnership with Greyhound Lines, Inc., NRS helps reunite youth with their families, or get to an alternate living arrangement through a free bus ticket. More than 17,000 youth have been reunited with families through the Home Free Program since 1995. This process is initiated by calling our hotline at 1-800-786-2929.

Let’s Talk: Runaway Prevention Curriculum: NRS has a free 14-module, interactive prevention curriculum that is available in English and Spanish. This evidence-based tool builds life skills; increases knowledge about available resources; educates about alternatives to running away; and empowers youth to access and seek help from trusted community members.

Prevention and Educational Materials: NRS provides prevention and educational materials free of charge to individuals, schools and organizations to distribute within their community. All prevention and education materials are available to order or download at 1800RUNAWAY.org.

Fee-Based Training: NRS staff provide training on a myriad of topics, including sex trafficking, the *Let’s Talk: Runaway Prevention Curriculum*, NRS’ crisis intervention model and other topics listed at 1800RUNAWAY.org.

For more information about the National Runaway Safeline’s services visit 1800RUNAWAY.org

ADMIN CONTACT

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PHONE: 773.880.9860 FAX: 773.929.5150

CRISIS CONTACT

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CHAT AT 1800RUNAWAY.org



NRS HISTORY

Founded by a group of Chicago agencies and originally named Metro Help, the hotline was established in 1971 to fill a need for comprehensive crisis intervention for young people in Chicago. It was conceived as a centralized organization with 24-hour services, expertise in all youth-related issues and as an information clearinghouse of youth services.

In 1974, the National Runaway Safeline received an eight-month federal demonstration grant to establish a national hotline. During this time, 11,000 calls were received demonstrating the need for this type of service. Since then, NRS' capabilities and services have grown considerably. Annually, NRS makes more than 100,000 connections to help and hope through hotline, online and offline services.

NRS' services are provided through funding from and in partnership with the Family and Youth Services Bureau in the Administration for Children, Youth and Families, US Department of Health and Human Services. In addition, private funding is raised from foundations, corporations and individuals.

NRS VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers are the heart of the National Runaway Safeline. Crisis services volunteers operate the hotline and online services to provide crisis intervention 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Each volunteer completes more than 40 hours of specialized training to provide support to youth and families in crisis across the United States and its territories.

**Learn how you can volunteer at
1800RUNAWAY.org/volunteer**

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STATEMENT OF NEED

About 4.2 million young people ages 13 to 25 experience homelessness every year according to Chapin Hall's Missed Opportunities reports.

As millions of youth face homelessness this year, the National Runaway Safeline's services are needed more than ever to keep our nation's runaway, homeless and at-risk youth safe and off the streets.

More findings from these reports show that:

- 1 in 10 young people ages 18-25 and 1 in 30 youth ages 13-17 will experience homelessness in a given year.
- Youth experience homelessness in rural and urban areas at the same rate yet youth in rural areas have less access to services.
- 52% of the youth who experienced homelessness reported feeling unsafe.
- 73% of youth ages 13-25 who experienced homelessness had an episode lasting longer than a month.

2018 NRS Statistics & Trends

- 56% of the youth who connected with NRS in 2018 were still at home.
- In 2018, 46% of youth in crisis who contacted NRS survived through the support of friends and relatives.
- In the last 5 years, NRS experienced a 65% increase in connections with youth who experienced abuse or neglect.
- NRS saw a 68% increase in connections with youth identifying as gender non-conforming and a 46% increase in connections with youth identifying as transgender over the last two years.

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