



2020 Annual Report

Here to listen.



Here to help.

Since its founding in 1971, the **NATIONAL RUNAWAY SAFELINE (NRS)** has worked to keep America's runaway, homeless and at-risk youth safe and off the streets. We make approximately 125,000 connections each year with youth and families through our hotline, online and prevention services.

There is no other organization in the United States that offers the depth of 24/7 crisis services to runaway, homeless and at-risk youth that we do.

Our success is a direct result of the generosity from of our donor community, and we thank you for your support.

Our Focus.

CRISIS INTERVENTION SERVICES

NRS connects with young people and their families at their most vulnerable moments, and is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year through the 1-800-RUNAWAY hotline and online services at 1800RUNAWAY.org, including live chat, forum and e-mail.

PREVENTION AND EDUCATION

In 2020, 71% of youth who reached out to NRS did so while still at home. This highlights the importance of our organization's prevention and education efforts to support youth and families in need before they end up on the streets. NRS educates youth, families, service providers, teachers and community members nationwide about prevention strategies and resources. Also, through the *Let's Talk: Runaway Prevention Curriculum*, a free, evidence-based, interactive tool, we enable community leaders to educate young people about alternatives to running away and help youth develop problem-solving skills to address their needs before a crisis escalates. In 2020, nearly 700 individuals and organizations downloaded this curriculum from our website.

PUBLIC AWARENESS

Throughout the year, we strive to raise awareness of issues facing young people and encourage the public to take action in the efforts to end youth homelessness. We collaborate with organizations and individuals on awareness-building campaigns. In November, NRS leads National Runaway Prevention Month (NRPM), which shines a light on the issues impacting runaway, homeless and at-risk youth. Last year's NRPM campaign involved 132 partner organizations and individuals, including ten youth ambassadors, from 36 states across the country.

With Gratitude

Dear Friends,

As we reflect on 2020, we are reminded of the hardships, uncertainties, pain, and loss associated with the pandemic, but we also recognize the strength and perseverance that so many young people have shown as daily life has presented unprecedented challenges.

Last year, the need for the National Runaway Safeline increased dramatically. Youth in crisis contacted NRS with more serious concerns than previous years. Youth shared a greater sense of isolation, fewer available resources, and increased mental health challenges. As families experienced new financial pressures and kids felt a loss of access to regular connections and support systems, young people nationwide needed a trusted place to turn for help and hope.

Our crisis services team adapted to the ever-changing world. They worked tirelessly, providing youth and families with uninterrupted services at a time when many resources were limited or unavailable. Our team built upon our robust network of local, regional, and national partners to ensure we had the most updated information and were able to closely monitor a shifting landscape of available resources. Additionally, we acted as the strongest possible advocates for the youth we serve.

Much like with our crisis intervention services, 2020 challenged us to rethink and reimagine our outreach and education efforts. Throughout the month of November, in recognition of National Runaway Prevention Month, we hosted a virtual educational series of Lunch & Learn conversations, collaborated with partner organizations from across the country to “shine a light” on the issues facing the runaway and homeless youth community, and orchestrated one of the largest youth-focused, social media campaigns in NRS history.

We were fortunate to have been able to meet the added challenges – and that was possible only with the generous and unwavering support of our donors, volunteers, staff, board of directors, and partner organizations.

While 2020 presented new and unexpected challenges, in 2021 we are applying our learnings and embracing the work before us stronger, more prepared, and still wholeheartedly committed to ending youth homelessness.

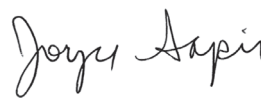
We are proud of our accomplishments over the past half century, but there is still much to do. We remain in the midst of a global health pandemic, a youth mental health crisis, and a continuing rise in youth homelessness. We have lofty goals as we celebrate our 50th anniversary – and we hope we can count on your support to reach and even surpass them.

Thank you for your past contributions, support, and collaboration, and we look forward to all that lies ahead.

Warmly,



Susan Frankel
Chief Executive Officer

Joyce Sapir
Chair, Board of Directors



Crisis Services

NRS continually evaluates the crisis connections made with our services to fully understand the challenges faced by America's youth and determine strategies for responding on a local, state and national level to those in need.



36,402
Calls



18,968
Chats



432,930
Forum Visits



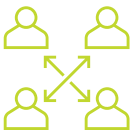
3,986
Forum Posts



2,660
E-mails



1,760
Texts



20,694
Referrals to
Local & National
Resources



9,602
Prevention
Resources & Materials
Distributed

71%
were still at home
when contacting
NRS.



Most Common Issues Raised by Young People

Family Dynamics

Conflict with family rules, divorce, custody, moving and teen pregnancy

Abuse & Neglect

Physical, sexual and emotional abuse and neglect

Mental Health

Issues such as depression and anxiety, suicidal ideation, eating disorders, self-harm and behavioral problems

Peer & Social Issues

Bullying, isolation, fights with friends, feeling rejected by friends and more

Economics

Underemployment, unemployment, housing insecurity, poverty and more

Youth Status at the Time of Contact

41% Youth in Crisis

37% Contemplating Running Away

12% Runaway

7% Homeless

3% Asked to Leave Home

<1% Suspected Missing

Home Free

In partnership with Greyhound Lines, Inc., we offer the Home Free program, which reunites young people with their family or guardian through a free bus ticket home or to another safe living arrangement. In 2020, 305 young people returned home or to an alternative location through Home Free.

After running away from Dad's house in Washington to stay with Mom in Kentucky, Matt soon realized Mom's promises of material goods and freedoms were not what they seemed. This led to disagreements and yelling. Matt apologized to his dad and expressed his desire to return; however Dad could not afford Matt's bus ticket home. Since Matt was only 15 and the trip crossed state lines, NRS provided Dad with a bus ticket to Kentucky to chaperone Matt home to Washington. On the way back, the two missed a transfer. NRS staff created an alternate route, but it required a long layover in Portland. Relying on our network of resources, NRS called three shelters to ensure the Matt and his dad had a safe place to spend the night. They made it home to Washington and during the follow up call, Dad said, "Thank you so much for the help and for this program. I wouldn't be able to this without your help."



National Runaway Prevention Month

Every November, in recognition of National Runaway Prevention Month (NRPM), we lead a public awareness campaign to shine a light on the issues facing runaway and homeless youth and empower people to take action. In 2020, we expanded our reach and strengthened our impact through a range of events.



Lunch & Learn Series: This three-part virtual series covered topics including our partnership with Greyhound Lines, Inc. and the Home Free program, the power of film to amplify youth voices through the documentary, *American Street Kid*, and how to effectively use the *Let's Talk: Runaway Prevention Curriculum* remotely.

Annual Thanksgiving Meal: Although the pandemic prevented us from enjoying an in-person meal together, we collaborated with Chicago Cubs Charities to distribute boxed dinners and hygiene kits containing hand sanitizers, lip balm, lotion, a face mask, and a personal note to shelters throughout Chicago. Nearly 350 homeless youth received both food and kits, and approximately 135 adults received a Thanksgiving meal.

Education Week: Through this social media series, we shared statistics and information on unique topics and highlighted the accomplishments of key partners. We also hosted a Twitter Chat, discussing issues such as runaway and homeless youth prevention, reaching over 346,000 people.

"Shine a Light" Events: We engaged partners in meaningful, awareness-building activities, including Wear Green Day, the Green Light Project, where local monuments and buildings were lit in green in support of NRPM, and other local market events, such as online resource fairs.

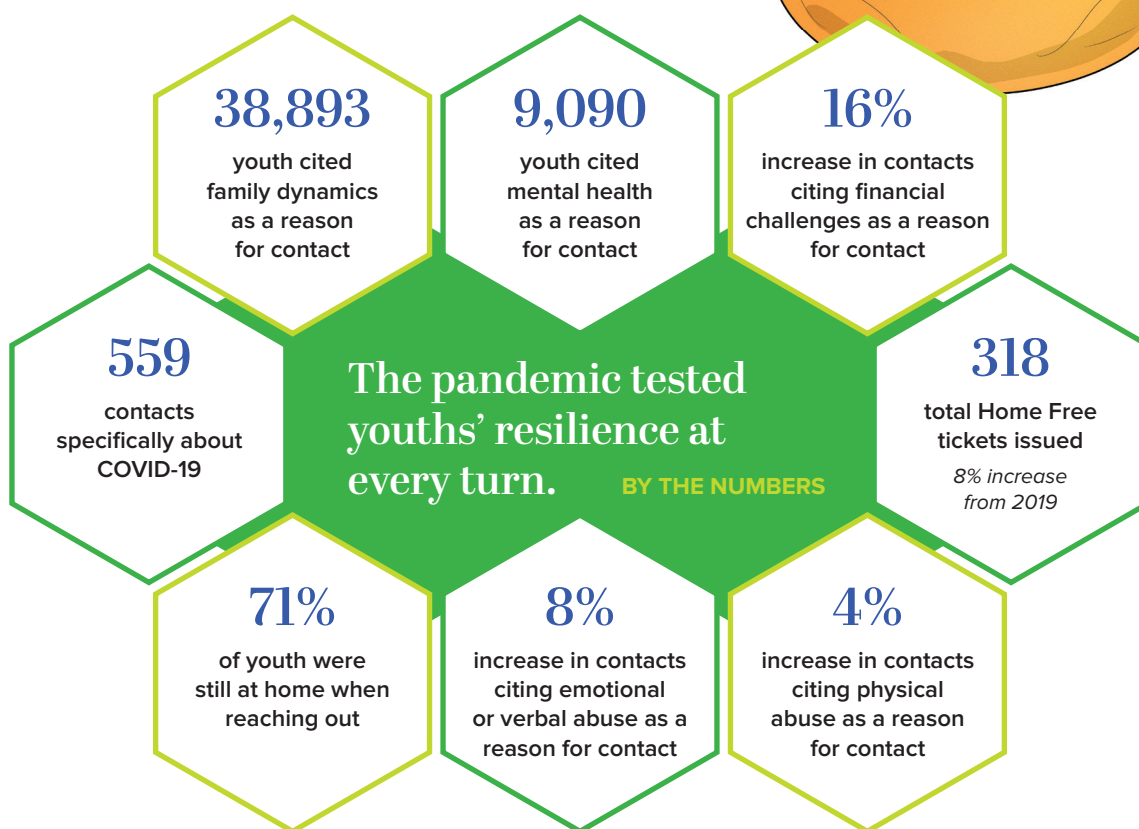
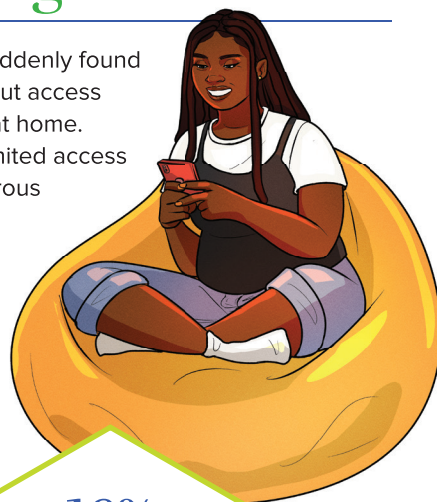


NIAGARA FALLS LIT IN GREEN IN HONOR OF NRPM

Serving Youth in Crisis During a Pandemic

The COVID-19 pandemic presented new challenges for youth who suddenly found themselves attending school remotely, being forced to manage without access to regular connections and supports, and facing escalating tensions at home. Additionally, homeless youth encountered full and closed shelters, limited access to transportation to safe housing and shelter, and increasingly dangerous conditions on the streets.

Youth shared with us stories about their increased levels of anxiety, depression, fear, and suicidal thoughts. They were stressed about increased financial difficulties and afraid of frequent physical and emotional abuse at home.



At the National Runaway Safeline, responding to the challenges brought on by the pandemic required innovation, adaptability, and investments in both technology and human capital.

- By integrating and upgrading our technology, the NRS crisis services team was able to operate remotely without any interruptions in 24/7 services and enhance our reporting and data analytics capacity
- We expanded and updated an already extensive national database of agencies and services that support youth and families in need
- We created new wellness initiatives and policies designed to care for the emotional and physical health of our crisis services team members

Celebrating 50 Years of Progress & Hope



This year, as we recognize the 50-year anniversary of the National Runaway Safeline (NRS), we proudly recall the organization's accomplishments and remain fully committed to our vision for the future.

In 1971, a group of Chicago agencies founded Metro Help, a hotline established to fill a need for comprehensive crisis intervention for young people in the Chicago metropolitan area. In 1974, as part of the landmark Runaway and Homeless Youth Act, the federal government provided Metro Help with a grant to establish a national communication system to connect runaway and homeless youth to services and support. During the initial eight-month period of the grant, we received 11,000 calls.

Since then, the number of runaway and homeless youth has increased significantly, Metro Help became the National Runaway Switchboard, and eventually Nationally Runaway Safeline, and our organization's capabilities and services have expanded considerably. Today, NRS makes more than 125,000 connections to help and hope through hotline, online and offline services annually.

With approximately 4.2 million young people living on the streets, in shelters or couch surfing each year, we recognize the importance of providing vital resources and support to these individuals. Today, in addition to our crisis intervention services, we offer prevention, educational, and training programs to the network of runaway and homeless youth service providers nationwide.

Youth homelessness is not a natural, innate problem, but rather a crisis that can and must be solved. We envision an end to youth homelessness, and in order to reach that day, we continue broadening our programs and services, strengthening our collaborations, and touching the lives of more youth and families.

To reach our goals and increase our impact, we must raise more funds.

Donate to End Youth Homelessness

We are asking you to donate in honor of our 50th anniversary. As we celebrate our progress, we hope we can count on you to help us reach a future where every child feels loved, valued, and welcomed at home, where the idea of running away or the fear of being kicked out does not enter a child's mind.

Please donate using the enclosed envelope or by going online using either the QR code or web site below.



NationalRunawaySafeline.org/50-years



Our Financials

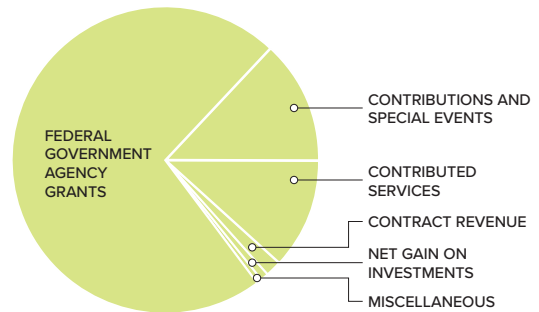
The National Runaway Safeline is truly grateful to our individual donors and corporate sponsors.

The financial information highlighted below reflects donations made directly to NRS between October 1, 2019 and September 30, 2020, and does not represent the complete set of audited financial statements for the National Runaway Safeline. Please visit NRS's website, www.nationalrunawaysafeline.org/financials for more financial information, or email jstern@1800runaway.org for our Fiscal Year 2020 Audit.



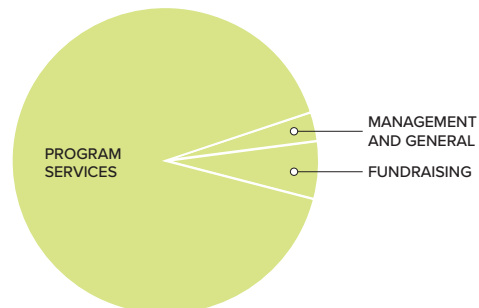
Revenue

Federal government agency grants	\$1,943,414
Contributions and special events	\$351,472
Contributed services	\$318,183
Contract revenue	\$47,740
Net gain on investments	\$10,041
Miscellaneous	\$1,591
Total	\$2,672,441



Expenses

Program services	\$2,456,019
Management and general	\$80,807
Fundraising	\$163,690
Total Expenses	\$2,700,516
Net Income	(\$28,075)
End Net Assets	\$235,306



Thank You to Our Donors

We are so grateful for the generosity of our donor community, who supported our organization's "End Youth Homelessness Today" campaign, aimed at doubling the number of youth we serve annually to 200,000 by the end of 2021. Please note that the following list includes only those gifts made directly to the National Runaway Safeline between October 1, 2019 and September 30, 2020. If we have inadvertently omitted or misspelled your name, please help us correct our records by calling the Development Department at 773-880-9860.

GOVERNMENT

Administration on Children,
Youth & Families
Family & Youth Services Bureau
U.S. Department of Health &
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Allstate Foundation
Atwater Kent Foundation
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Brokerage Charitable
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Sulzer Family Foundation
United Way California Capital
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Philadelphia and Southern
New Jersey
William Blair & Company, LLC
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Wolfort Family Foundation

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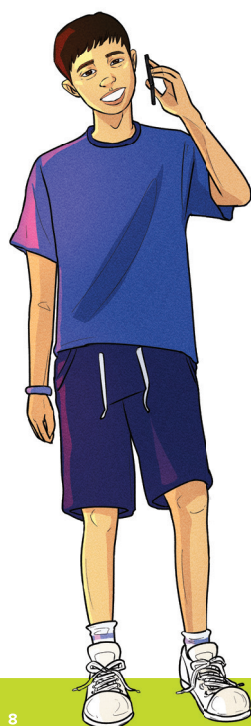
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