

RUNAWAY AND HOMELESS YOUTH RESOURCES

HOW TO HELP CHILDREN WHO MIGHT **RUNAWAY** OR BECOME **HOMELESS**

*START A DIALOGUE,
ADULTS MIGHT WANT
TO CONSIDER ASKING
QUESTIONS*



HOTLINES TO CALL

NATIONAL RUNAWAY SAFELINE

1-8-800-RUNAWAY

BOYS TOWN

1-800-448-3000 OR TEXT VOICE TO 20121

NATIONAL DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

1-800-799-SAFE(7233)

SAFE PLACE - FIND A SAFE PLACE

TEXT "SAFE" TO 4HELP (44357)

COVENANT HOUSE

1-800-388-3888

NATIONAL SUICIDE PREVENTION

800-273-8255

CONNECT WITH CRISIS COUNSELOR

TEXT 741741

NATIONAL ALLIANCE OF MENTAL ILLNESS

800-950-6264

SUBSTANCE ABUSE AND MENTAL HEALTH SERVICE

ADMINISTRATION

800-662-4357

Disclaimer:

Sunshine Behavioral Health strives to help people who are facing substance abuse, addiction, mental health disorders, or a combination of these conditions. It does this by providing compassionate care and evidence-based content that addresses health, treatment, and recovery.

Licensed medical professionals review material we publish on our site. The material is not a substitute for qualified medical diagnoses, treatment, or advice. It should not be used to replace the suggestions of your personal physician or other health care professionals.

QUESTIONS TO ASK CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

The right questioning approach can make a difference. Some questions adults can ask include:



QUESTIONS ABOUT THE PAST

- How are things different now compared to the past?
- What other things have made your life worse?
- What other things have made your life better?

QUESTIONS ABOUT THE CURRENT CIRCUMSTANCES

- What kinds of emotions are you feeling – do you feel worried, sad, angry, or another feeling?
- On a scale of 1 to 10, where 1 is not worried at all and 10 is extremely worried, how worried, scared, angry, or upset are you feeling about this? What other emotions are you feeling about this?
- What else is happening in your life that isn't helping these circumstances? What's helping?
- How does your situation affect you?
What are the hardest parts about what's happening?
What are the best parts?
- What's worse – this part of the situation or another part of the situation?
- What makes your circumstances better – [this suggestion] or [this suggestion]?
- What helps you deal with things?

QUESTIONS ABOUT THE FUTURE

- Which parts of the situation do you wish were different?
- What would you do to change things?
- If I did [this], would that be helpful? Why or why not?
- What could we do to make things a little better?
- How can we help you make things better?
- Is there someone else you would like to talk with about things?
- Is there someone else I should talk with for you?



HELPING TROUBLED YOUNG PEOPLE

Talking with young people and asking them questions can help you understand their lives better. Following such conversations, you can:

- Let children know that they can keep talking with you.
- Contact the children's parents or guardians, if it's safe for the children.
- Provide tangible forms of assistance like food, clothes, transportation, school supplies, etc.
- Teach problem-solving skills to improve their ability to navigate difficulties.
- Talk with school counselors or mental health providers about children who seemed troubled.
- Ask for help yourself from an organization that has experience with runaway youth.

CONCERNED ADULTS CAN HELP CHILDREN AT RISK OF RUNNING AWAY OR BECOMING HOMELESS. TAKING THE TIME TO TALK WITH CHILDREN AND UNDERSTAND THEIR SITUATIONS CAN HELP THEM, ONE CONVERSATION AT A TIME