



National Runaway Safeline Trend Report Comparison of January Contacts 2013-2015

Compiled February 2015

What is the National Runaway Safeline?

The National Runaway Safeline, or NRS, helps keep America's runaway, homeless and at-risk youth safe and off the streets by offering education and solution-focused interventions to at-risk youth and their families. NRS' 1-800-RUNAWAY crisis hotline is available 24 hours a day throughout the United States and its territories, including Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands and Guam. NRS also makes contact with youth and families through crisis emails, bulletin board postings and an online live chat service.

The organization serves as the federally designated national communication system for runaway and homeless youth. Services are provided through funding from the Family & Youth Services Bureau in the Administration for Children & Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, and private funding from individual donors, corporate partners, and foundations.

How many youth and families in crisis reach out to NRS, and how has the number changed from year to year?

In January 2015, 8,008 youth and family members reached out to NRS by calling, emailing, posting to NRS's bulletin boards, or making online chat requests. That number was a decrease from January 2014 (9,250 contacts) and an overall increase of 12 percent over January 2013 (7,130 contacts).

Over the past three Januaries, total call volume has decreased slightly as part of an overall trend toward online crisis services. Calls increased 26 percent in January 2014 over January 2013, and decreased 17 percent in January 2015 compared to January 2014. That means a total decrease of 4 percent comparing January 2013 and January 2015.

In contrast, **online crisis services had increased 180 percent** in January 2015 over January 2013. Crisis emails increased 96 percent in January 2014 over January 2013, and jumped by another 35 percent in January 2015 over January 2014. Bulletin board postings followed the same trajectory, increasing by 208 percent in January 2014 over January 2013 and increasing 29 percent in January 2015 over January 2014. Similarly, live chats increased 58 percent in January 2014 over January 2013 and grew 15 percent in January 2015 over January 2014. See the chart below for a breakdown of online contacts.

Online Services	Jan. 2013	Jan. 2014	Jan. 2015
Crisis emails received	127	249	336
Bulletin board messages posted	60	185	238
Live chat received	306	483	554

Who is NRS serving?

A diverse group of teens, young adults, and concerned family members reaches out to NRS every day. Girls and young women consistently represent the largest percentage of contacts with NRS. In the 2013 and 2014 calendar years, 72 percent of NRS contacts were girls and young women. The other 28 percent were boys and young men.

Youth and parents or family members made up the largest percentages of callers. The majority of callers identified as Caucasian, African American, and Hispanic/Latino. Family dynamics continued to be the top issue identified by callers, followed by peer/social issues.

What issues do callers report?

Many callers are thinking about running away or are facing difficult problems at home or at school and are in need of crisis intervention services. In January 2013 and January 2014 calls concerning youth in crisis made up 32 percent of the total. That share dropped to 27 percent in January 2015.

Looking at the past three Januaries, the most significant change in the issues callers report was the percentage of youth who were contemplating running away: 18 percent in January 2013, 22 percent in January 2014 and 28 percent in January 2015. In other words, an 84 percent increase in 2015 over 2013.

Meanwhile, the percentage of youth saying they are on the streets (homeless, runaway, and throwaway) at the time of their call has decreased over the past three Januaries: 50 percent in January 2013, 45 percent in January 2014 and 44 percent in January 2015.

How many youth are returning home using Home Free, a collaboration with Greyhound Lines, Inc.?

In January 2013, January 2014, and January 2015 combined, NRS received 350 inquiries from youth about NRS' Home Free program, offered in partnership with Greyhound Lines, Inc. In the same time period, NRS issued 105 bus tickets to reunite youth and families.