



# Safeguarding the Future for Those Most At Risk:

The Runaway and  
Homeless Youth Program



ADMINISTRATION FOR  
**CHILDREN & FAMILIES**



Family and Youth  
Services Bureau



**Every year, as many as 550,000 young people are homeless for more than a week,** according to estimates by the National Alliance to End Homelessness.

## **On the street, young people are exposed to all kinds of dangers:**

- More than 27 percent say they have traded sex for shelter, food or other basic needs.
- As many as 72 percent have witnessed violence and more than half have been victims themselves.
- As many as two-thirds have mental health problems, including depression and post-traumatic stress disorder, according to a study that combined a self-reported survey and clinical assessments.



# END Homelessness 2020

In 2010, the Family and Youth Services Bureau, as part of the 19 departments and agencies that make up the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness, made a commitment to **prevent and end youth homelessness by 2020.**

FYSB funds three programs that work toward that goal:

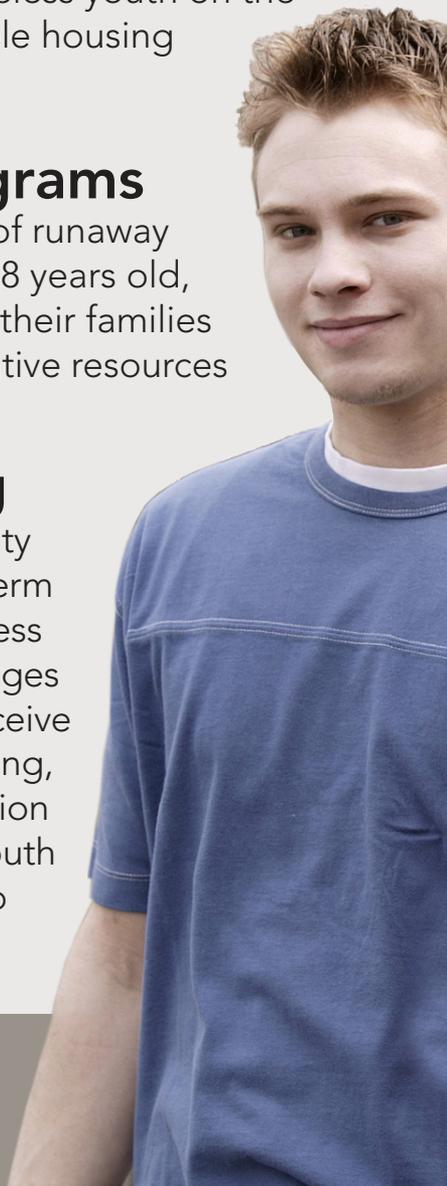
## **Street outreach programs**

work with runaway and homeless youth on the street to help them find stable housing and services.

## **Basic center programs**

meet the immediate needs of runaway and homeless youth under 18 years old, and try to reunite them with their families or locate appropriate alternative resources and services.

**Transitional living programs** and maternity group homes provide long-term residential services to homeless young people between the ages of 16 and under 22. Youth receive housing, healthcare, counseling, life skills training, and education and employment support. Youth can stay in the program up to 21 months.



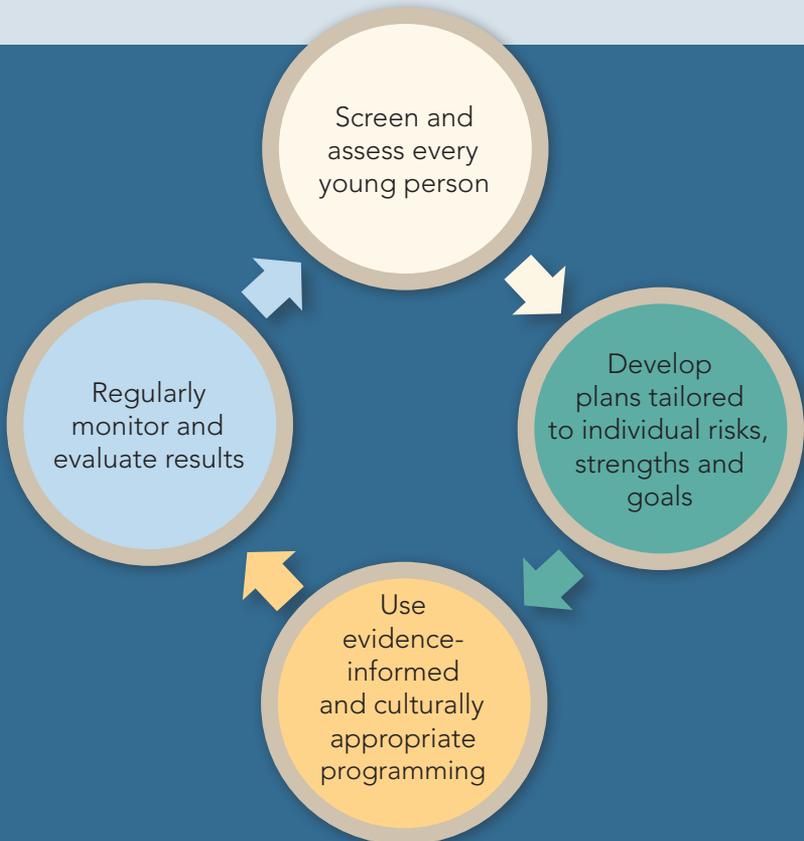


The more than 700 projects funded under the Runaway and Homeless Youth Program across the country work to

- Keep young people **safe**
- Improve their social and emotional **well-being**
- Help them develop **permanent connections** to supportive adults
- Build their **self-sufficiency**

# Assuring Positive Outcomes

Every young person facing homelessness has a unique set of strengths and needs as they strive for safety, well-being, permanent connections and self-sufficiency. Projects use individualized assessment and monitoring to ensure that they are making a long-term difference in those outcomes.



# 25,000 youth Safety find shelter

Getting young people off the streets is crucial to keeping them out of harm's way. FYSB grantee agencies work to prevent young people from running away in the first place, reach out to youth if they do end up on the street, and provide emergency shelter in every state.

More than **300 people** call the FYSB-supported National Runaway Safeline every day. Callers include youth looking for a safe place to stay and adults concerned about a young person in trouble.

More than **25,000 youth** find shelter each year with the support of Street Outreach Program staff.

More than **94 percent** of young people who stay in basic center emergency shelters exit into safe environments.

**94 percent...  
exit safely**

A young man with dark, curly hair and a white shirt is smiling and looking towards the camera. An older man with dark hair and a red shirt is smiling broadly, with his arm around the young man's shoulder. The background is a plain, light gray.

## Well-being

The hunger and isolation of homelessness take a physical and emotional toll on young people, many of whom have also gone through traumatic experiences at home and on the street. Projects focus on improving young people's well-being over the long term by

- Providing medical, dental, mental health and substance abuse services on site or at nearby clinics.
- Using therapies shown to reduce the effects of trauma, strengthen coping skills and enhance feelings of self-worth.
- Creating a trauma-informed atmosphere that builds on individual strengths and promotes emotional safety.

# Permanent connections

Behind every successful young adult is a network of family members, teachers, faith leaders and mentors that have supported and guided them through the challenges of adolescence. Runaway and homeless youth projects try to rebuild those often broken connections for homeless youth through:

- Eco-mapping/Family Finding techniques that help youth track down extended family or adults they may have once had a connection with.
- Evidence-informed family counseling that can provide youth and families with tools to better manage and resolve conflict.
- Family acceptance interventions that can help decrease family rejection and increase support for lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender youth.

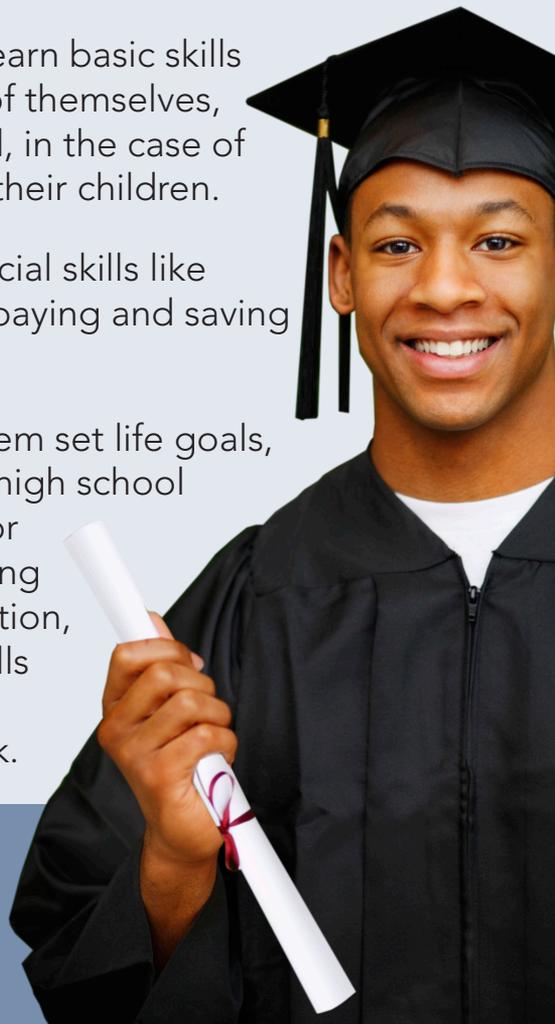


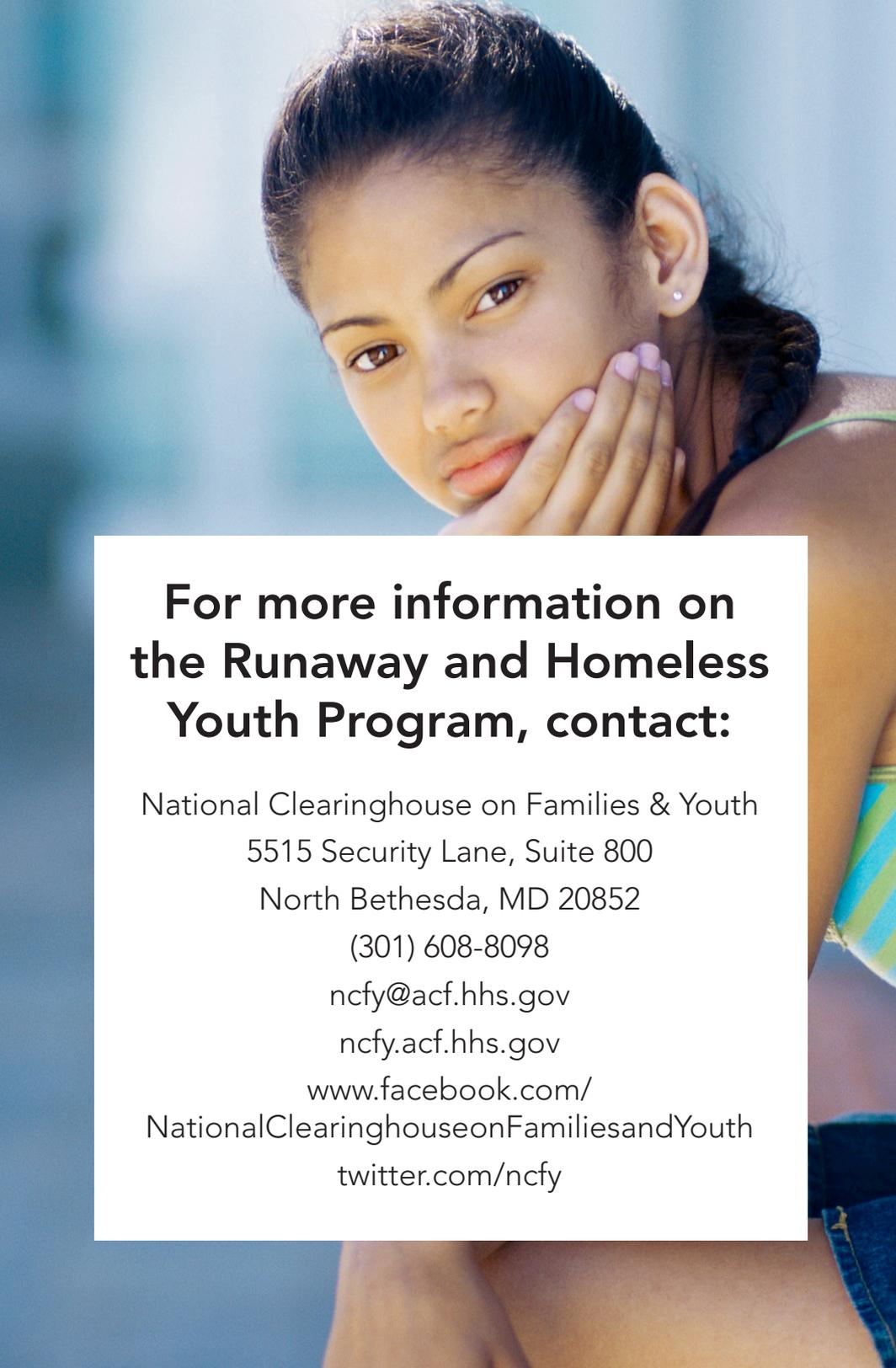
# Self-sufficiency

Homeless youth who can't permanently return to their families often need to develop a whole host of life skills to be able to make it on their own.

Projects prepare youth to take on the challenges of adulthood.

- Young people learn basic skills for taking care of themselves, their homes and, in the case of young parents, their children.
- They learn financial skills like budgeting, bill paying and saving for the future.
- Projects help them set life goals, work towards a high school diploma, plan for vocational training or higher education, and gain the skills they need for meaningful work.





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