

# **Report to Congress**

**on the**  
**Runaway and Homeless Youth Programs**  
**of the**  
**Family and Youth Services Bureau**  
**for Fiscal Years 2006 and 2007**



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES  
Administration for Children and Families  
Administration on Children, Youth and Families  
Family and Youth Services Bureau



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## **NOTE REGARDING DATA USED IN THIS REPORT**

All data in this report pertaining to services provided by Runaway and Homeless Youth Program grantees were obtained from the Runaway and Homeless Youth Management Information System, or RHYMIS. Close to 99 percent of grantees reported on their services in FYs 2006 and 2007. Grantees submit data twice a year, in the spring and fall.

FY 2006 RHYMIS data included in this report reflect information collected in fall 2006 and spring 2007. FY 2007 RHYMIS data included in this report reflect information collected in fall 2007. Information collected in spring 2008 may alter the FY 2007 service provision numbers included in this report.

# Introduction

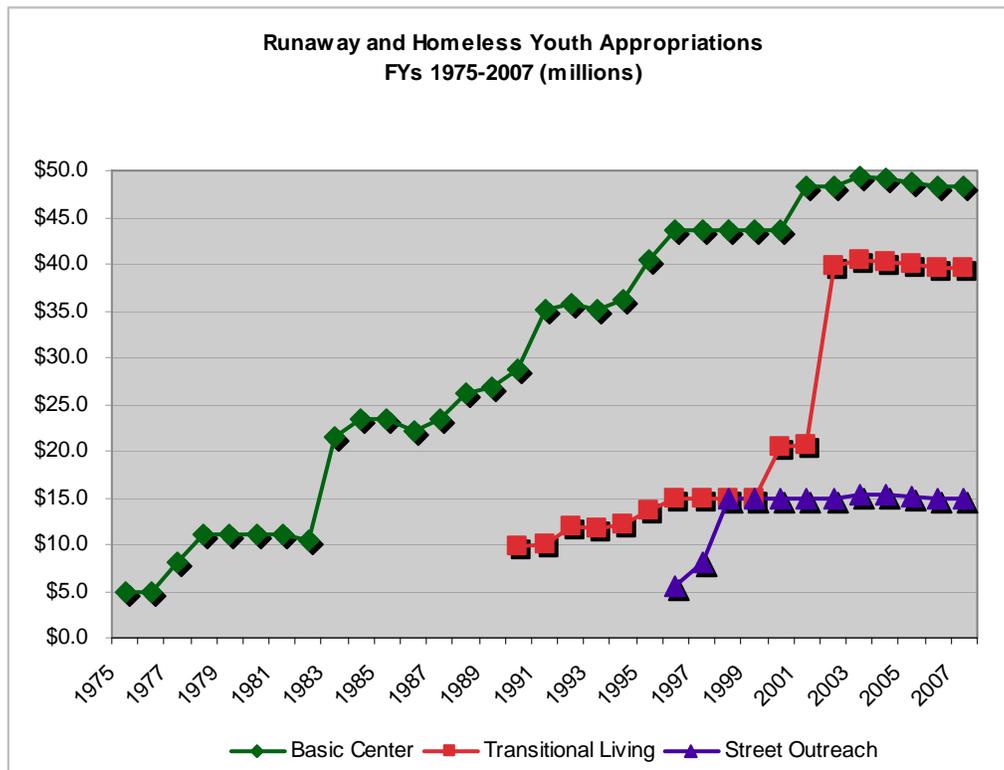
According to a 2002 report from the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, between 1.6 and 2.8 million young people run away from their homes, are asked to leave home, or become homeless in the United States each year.

A majority of youth cite family conflict as a major reason for their homelessness. Many have suffered neglect, abandonment, and physical, sexual, or emotional abuse. Often, these young people abuse drugs or alcohol or struggle with mental illness.

Once on the street, youth face many dangers, including the risk of sexual abuse or exploitation at the hands of adults or peers.

## A Coordinated Response to Youth Homelessness

The Federal government responds to the plight of runaway and homeless youth with a comprehensive set of programs administered by the Family and Youth Services Bureau (FYSB or “the Bureau”), Administration on Children, Youth and Families (ACYF), Administration for Children and Families (ACF), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS).



The Bureau promotes positive outcomes for children, youth, and families by supporting a wide range of services and collaborations at the local, Tribal, State, and national levels.

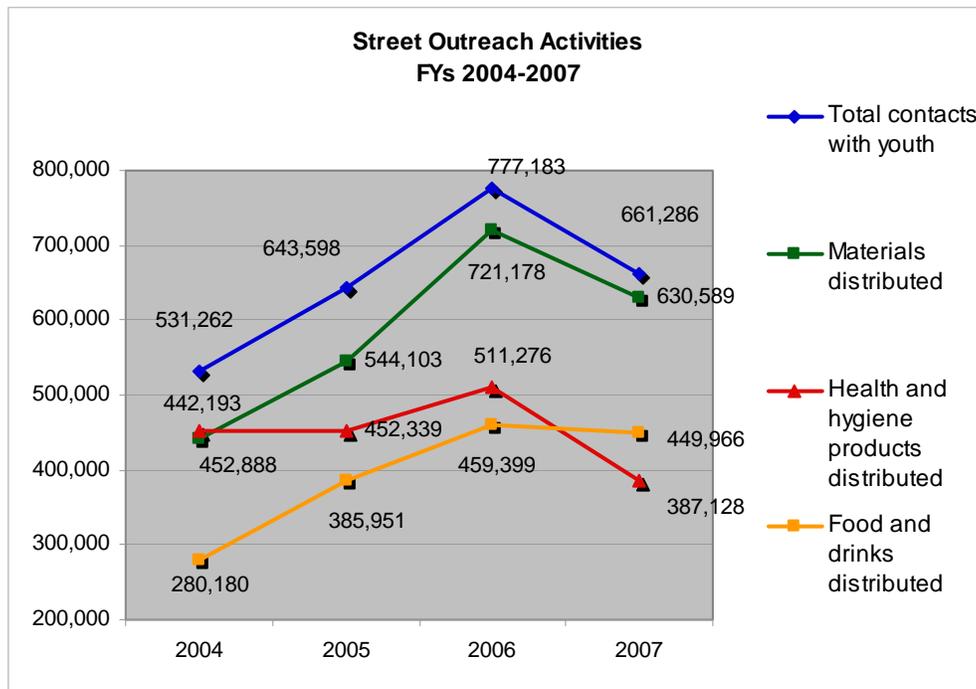
FYSB achieves this mission through its three **Runaway and Homeless Youth (RHY) Programs**:

1. The Education and Prevention Services to Reduce Sexual Abuse of the Runaway, Homeless, and Street Youth Program, known as the **Street Outreach Program**;
2. The **Basic Center Program**; and
3. The **Transitional Living Program** for Older Homeless Youth.

Authorized by Parts A, B, and E of the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act, as amended by the Runaway, Homeless, and Missing Children Protection Act of 2003 (Public Law 108-96), the programs empower local organizations and shelters in all 50 States and the U.S. Territories to serve and protect runaway, homeless, missing, and sexually exploited youth in the following ways:

### 1. On the Streets

**The Street Outreach Program:** Street outreach programs, sometimes called SOPs, make contact with runaway and homeless young people at risk of sexual abuse or exploitation. Outreach teams go to the places frequented by youth, educate them about services available to them, and provide them with basic necessities such as food, clothing, access to emergency shelter, and health care referrals, as well as referrals to other services, including mental health and substance abuse counseling. The graph below summarizes the street outreach services provided to runaway and homeless youth over each of the last four years.



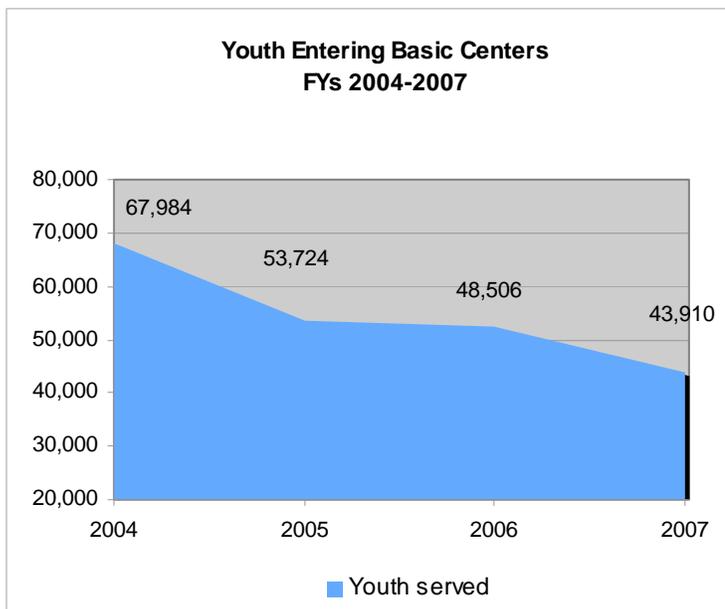
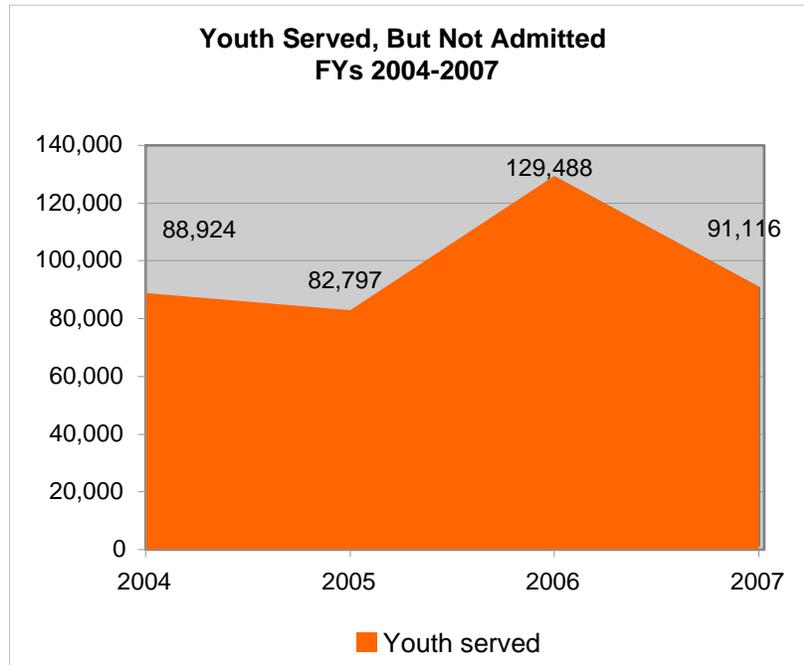
Many young people on the streets also access services through 1-800-RUNAWAY, a hotline run by the National Runaway Switchboard, FYSB's federally mandated national

communications system for runaway and homeless youth. The crisis line team handled 102,942 calls in FY 2006 and 183,892 calls in FY 2007.

## 2. In Crisis Shelters

**The Basic Center Program:** Federally funded basic centers, sometimes called BCPs, provide youth, through age 18, with emergency shelter, food, clothing, counseling, and health care referrals. Centers seek to reunite young people with their families, whenever possible, or to locate appropriate alternative placements.

*Basic centers made 220,604 "brief service contacts" with youth in FYs 2006 and 2007. During such a contact, youth drop in or call a youth center and receive help without necessarily being admitted to the shelter. Often, basic center staff can counsel youth while they still live at home and can thus prevent them from running away.*

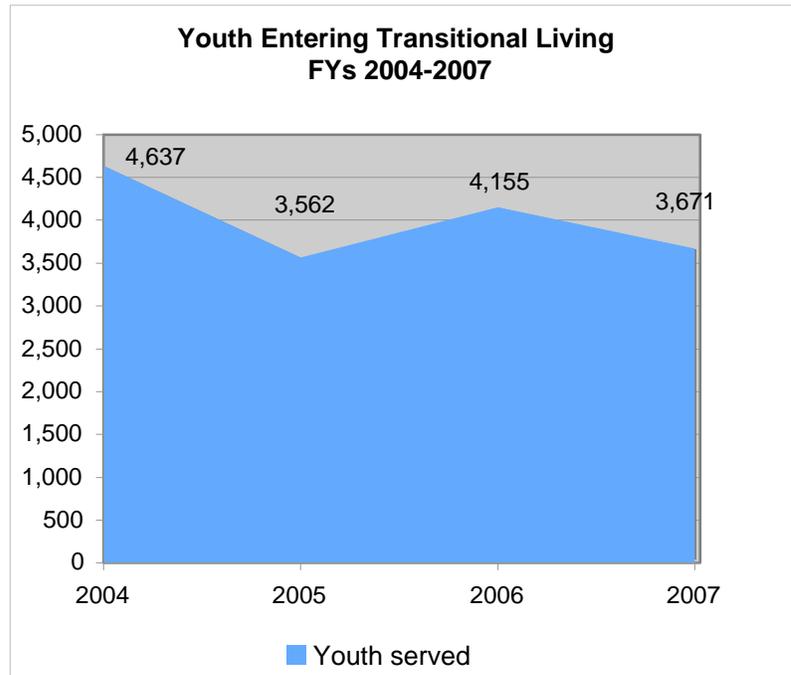


*FYSB's basic centers provided emergency shelter to 92,416 youth who entered in FYs 2006 and 2007.*

### 3. Through Long-Term Support

**The Transitional Living Program for Older Homeless Youth:** Federally funded transitional living programs, sometimes called TLPs, provide long-term, supportive assistance to older homeless youth, ages 16 to 21, who can't return to their families but are not yet equipped to live on their own. The programs ease the transition to adulthood for these young people, offering them housing, life skills training, counseling, and education and employment support.

Within the Transitional Living Program, the Maternity Group Homes Program allows young people vulnerable to abuse, neglect, and poverty to live with their children in community-based, adult-supervised environments. In addition to the services that youth receive in all transitional living programs, young people in maternity group homes receive child care assistance and parenting advice.



*FYSB's transitional living programs served 7,826 youth who entered in FYs 2006 and 2007.*

(See Chapters 1–3 for more information on each of the programs.)

FYSB complements its runaway and homeless youth grant programs with a network of support services:

- A **national communications system**, or hotline, that connects young people to programs, services, and transportation back home;
- A **national clearinghouse** that collects material on at-risk youth and disseminates information to the public;
- **Training and technical assistance providers** with expert knowledge of issues related to at-risk youth and families, nonprofit management, and best practices in community-based service delivery;
- A **peer monitoring system** that ensures the quality of basic centers and transitional living and street outreach programs;

- A **management information system** that collects data on services provided to runaway and homeless youth by Federal grantees and provides key information for Federal reviews of the Bureau’s Runaway and Homeless Youth Programs; and
- A **research and demonstration program** that explores ways to improve collaborations, services, and outcomes and to increase positive opportunities for young people.

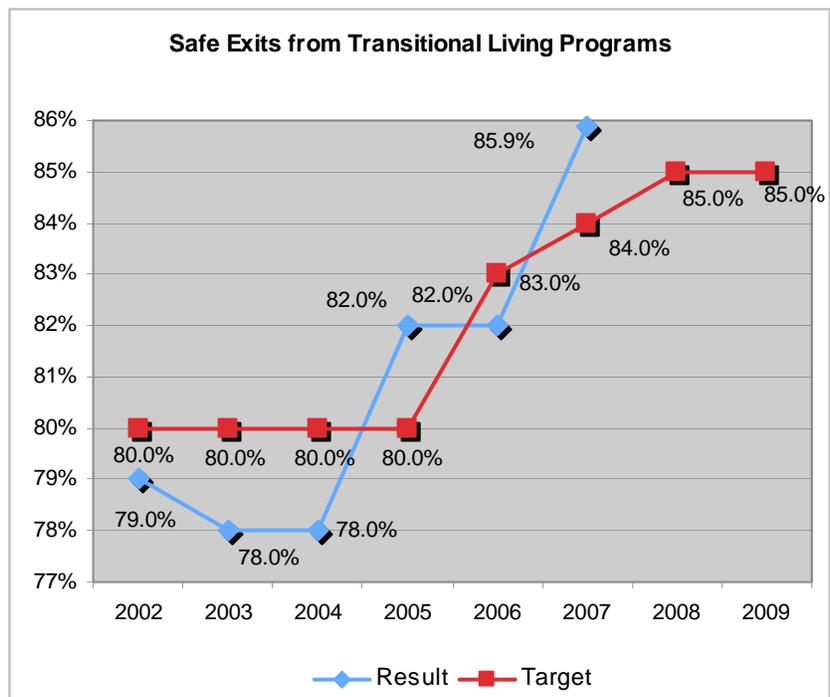
(See Chapters 4–9 for more information on each of the above services.)

## Demonstrating Effective Results

In FYs 2006 and 2007, significant strides were made in the effectiveness of services to runaway and homeless youth. FYSB continued to develop and improve RHYMIS, its information collection system, analyzed trends and patterns in the data, and communicated widely with grantees about the meaning and significance of the measures being tracked.

In February 2007, the Runaway and Homeless Youth Programs received an **“Effective”** rating (the highest level awarded) from the President’s Office of Management and Budget. The new rating reflected an increase in the program’s score from 42 to 85. In FY 2007, FYSB also acquired direct leadership over nearly two dozen professional staff, a change that enabled the Bureau to provide technical assistance directly to grantees and continue its progress in demonstrating program effectiveness. FYSB is also designing an evaluation that will assess young people’s long-term outcomes after participating in transitional living programs.<sup>1</sup>

FYSB has three strategic goals for its Runaway and Homeless Youth Programs. (Progress is reported to Congress each year in the President’s budget.) The goals are based on three fundamentals: safety, success, and the development of character.

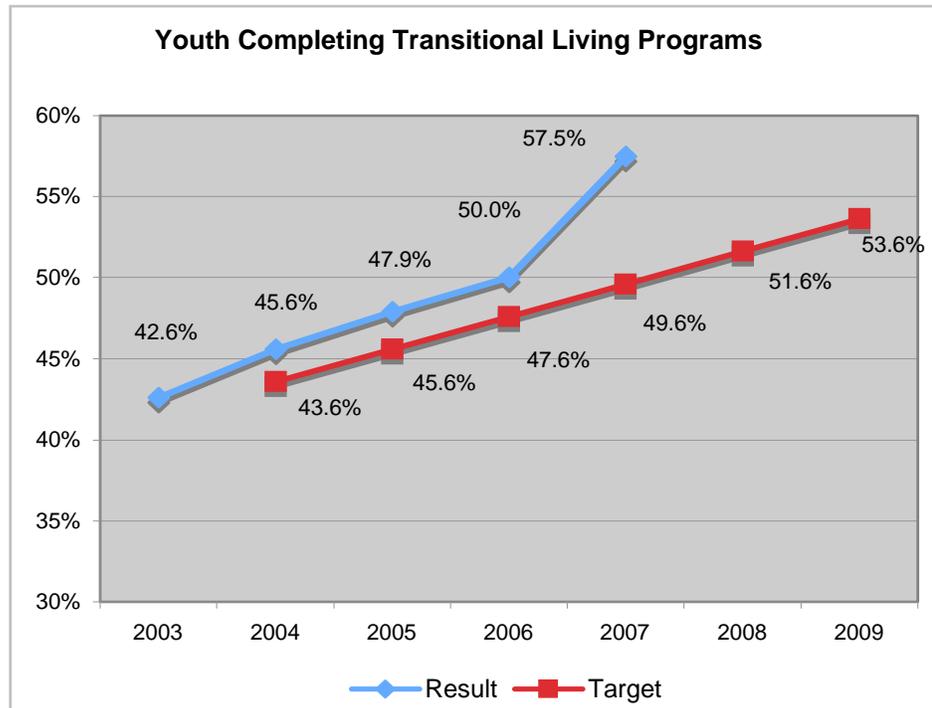


<sup>1</sup> While the recent focus has been on the Transitional Living Program, where there appeared to be a need for progress, FYSB is also planning to collect data to measure a Basic Center Program goal of preventing youth from running away.

- Safety.** The “Safe and Appropriate Exits” goal means that, upon discharge from a transitional living program, a youth has been helped to find a living situation suitable for his or her further development, security, and success. For too long, the Transitional Living Program’s “safe and successful exit” rate among youth finishing services was well below 80 percent. This meant that over 20 percent of youth were leaving for an unknown location, living on the street, or entering a homeless shelter. Through FYSB’s new organizational structure, the Youth Division provided the guidance and technical assistance needed to help grantees increase the level of safety, success, and security of young people as they moved out of the TLP program. The FY 2006 measurement of 82 percent increased to 86 percent in FY 2007. This is the highest safety level in the TLP since measurements began in 2002, when the level was 79 percent.

(The Basic Center Program rate has remained stable at around 90 percent during the same period. FYSB hopes that focusing on prevention in coming years will help further increase the percentage of BCP safe exits.)

- Success.** The “Program Completion” goal measures the degree to which programs enable youth to learn how to make commitments, plan for the future, stick to objectives, gain skills, and seek opportunities. From FY 2002 to FY 2005, a majority of transitional living program cases ended prematurely because youth participants dropped out with no plans or were expelled or involuntarily discharged. In FY 2006, the successful completion rate reached 50 percent, two points above the target. The completion rate rose even more dramatically in FY 2007, to 57.5 percent.



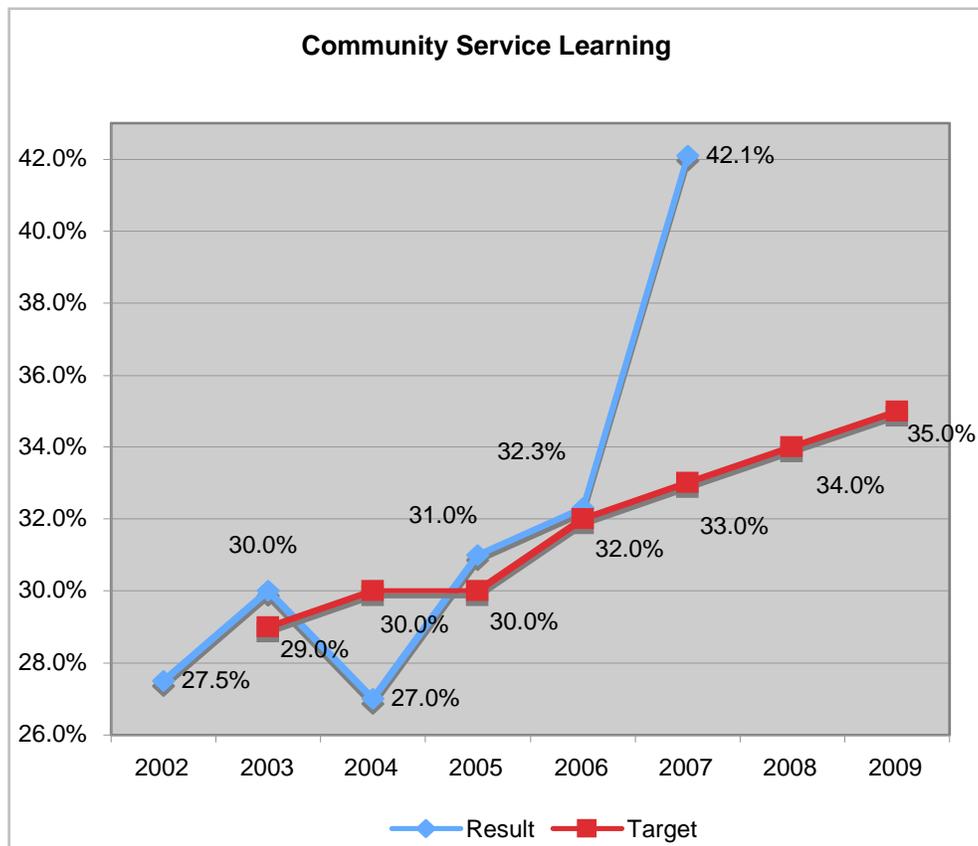
To reach this success rate, FYSB staff provided

training and technical assistance to grantees on how to stay connected to youth after they drop out or are expelled from a program. The National Clearinghouse on Families and Youth also developed a series of posters and brochures in English and Spanish encouraging young people to notify agency staff when they are leaving and keep in touch after they have gone.

training and technical assistance to grantees on how to stay connected to youth after they drop out or are expelled from a program. The National Clearinghouse on Families and Youth also developed a series of posters and brochures in English and Spanish encouraging young people to notify agency staff when they are leaving and keep in touch after they have gone.

The goal of this ongoing education campaign is to make sure that young people are counseled on their options before they leave and have an avenue to return and complete the program at a later date.

- **Development of character.** FYSB chose “Community Service Learning” as a goal because Positive Youth Development is not only about strengthening the self through progress in education, health, employment, and stable housing. Becoming an independent adult also involves recognizing one’s positive role in a larger community and making a meaningful contribution to society while learning that constructive and generous actions can have a significant impact. To measure whether young people in transitional living programs are exposed to these ideas and experiences, FYSB has been tracking the percentage of youth in its programs who are engaged in activities that benefit others as well as themselves. These activities, which can be more or less structured and need not be classroom based or academic, cover a broad range of opportunities. Youth not only participate in community service; they also plan activities and reflect on the meaning and value of their community work. After FYSB staff educated programs about the many varieties of community service learning experiences that are possible, the results rose from 32.3 percent in FY 2006 to 42.1 percent in FY 2007.



Each of the RHY program goals has seen significant progress over the past five years, with especially dramatic improvements in FY 2007. FYSB and its grantees work to ensure that young people receive the best services possible. Over the past five years, they have communicated

about cost-effective, promising practices that clearly benefit youth, and grantees have received technical assistance to help them implement these practices.

Near the beginning of FY 2007, FYSB gained more than 20 youth specialists as direct employees. Each youth specialist elected to focus on two or three of the strategic goals. FYSB staff shared practical information about how best to support grantees and engaged in a dialogue with transitional living program grantees about the value of the Bureau's strategic objectives within the continuum services offered to young people. FYSB also emphasized to grantees the importance of accurate data reporting.

With the goal of continuing to improve its programs, FYSB is designing an evaluation that will assess long-term outcomes for young people participating in transitional living programs.

## **Finding Ways To End Youth Homelessness**

Section 118 of the Runaway, Homeless, and Missing Children Protection Act added a requirement that the Secretary of Health and Human Services submit a Report to Congress on promising strategies to end youth homelessness. The report, issued in FY 2007, provides information on the characteristics and needs of the homeless youth population, describes theoretical perspectives on youth homelessness, and presents strategies and interventions shown to prevent and ameliorate youth homelessness.

The report recommends the following interventions to prevent youth homelessness:

- Preventing child abuse and neglect;
- Reducing violence and delinquency among youth; and
- Supporting successful transitions to independent living.

The report recommends the following interventions to ameliorate youth homelessness:

- Encouraging practitioners to use proven principles for effectively working with homeless youth;
- Implementing effective outreach and "gateway" services, such as street outreach and drop-in centers;
- Providing youth with adequate shelter and stabilizing them by reuniting them with their families or placing them in other appropriate long-term housing; and
- Providing targeted services to the most difficult-to-serve populations, including pregnant and parenting adolescents, youth with extreme substance abuse problems, youth with severe mental health problems, and youth with HIV/AIDS.

Further information about the above recommendations can be found in the report, titled *Promising Strategies To End Youth Homelessness* ([www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/fysb/content/docs/reporttocongress\\_youthhomelessness.pdf](http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/fysb/content/docs/reporttocongress_youthhomelessness.pdf)).

## Promoting Positive Youth Development

Meeting the basic needs of at-risk young people is FYSB's first priority. At the same time, the Bureau endorses a comprehensive approach to working with young people, especially those growing up in difficult circumstances, and helping them to become healthy, happy, contributing adults.

To that end, FYSB encourages Positive Youth Development, often referred to as PYD. This approach to working with young people suggests that helping them achieve their full potential is the best way to prevent them from engaging in risky behaviors.

Runaway and homeless youth programs that promote PYD give youth the chance to exercise leadership, build skills, get involved, and make a difference in their communities. Young people gain self-confidence, trust, and practical knowledge that helps them grow into healthy, happy, self-sufficient adults.

"Youth development is about providing meaningful opportunities for success," says the executive director of one RHY grantee organization. "The more successful an experience youth have, the more likely they'll be successful."

RHY grantees also have given youth opportunities to succeed by inviting them to join the organization's board of directors, giving them experience in self-governance, and employing them as peer advisors and educators.

FYSB also promotes PYD in the Federal government and in communities across the nation. In FYs 2006 and 2007, the Bureau's leadership and staff reached out to thousands of youth workers, policymakers, and others by speaking at conferences, holding special meetings, and distributing RHY materials. FYSB also continued to enhance its internal collaborations, working to ensure that other ACF agency initiatives and programs incorporated PYD.

Over the past two years, Runaway and Homeless Youth Programs have collaborated with the Bureau's other programs to promote PYD in the following ways:

- 1. Teaching youth to make healthy choices.** Abstinence Education, Mentoring Children of Prisoners, and Transitional Living Programs all focus on building character, teaching youth how to develop and maintain healthy relationships, and providing them with life skills and competencies that enable them to grow into healthy, happy, self-sufficient adults.
- 2. Working together to end abuse.** Dating violence is an all too common problem among today's adolescents but one seldom discussed. No one is more at risk than those young people already in the most precarious of life's situation—runaway and homeless youth. With the aim of developing services and solutions to better protect already at-risk youth, FYSB has combined the efforts of its Runaway and Homeless Youth Programs and its Family Violence Prevention and Services Program into a joint demonstration project. Thirteen domestic violence providers partnered with runaway and homeless youth providers to undertake 17-month long dating violence education and awareness projects running from October 2004

through early 2006. Beginning in 2005, FYSB awarded the demonstration grants for up to three years; nine grantees were funded in FY 2005 and eight were funded in FY 2007.

- 3. Supporting State and local collaboration on youth development.** FYSB's Positive Youth Development State and Local Collaboration Demonstration Projects explore how local communities can increase opportunities for young people to learn and grow, feel useful and connected, and make successful transitions to adulthood. In FYs 2006 and 2007, FYSB funded nine States in the third and fourth years of a five-year grant program. (See Chapter 9 for more information about the projects.)

In FYs 2006 and 2007, FYSB also collaborated with other Federal agencies and groups to promote PYD. Those efforts are listed below:

- 1. Collaborated with the Children's Bureau to support transitioning youth.** For more than a decade, FYSB and its sister agency within ACF, the Children's Bureau, have worked together to promote the PYD approach in services for homeless and foster youth. Much of the collaboration involves facilitating communication among grantees of FYSB's Transitional Living Program and of the Children's Bureau's Independent Living Program, a State grant program aimed at improving the transition to adulthood for youth aging out of foster care. Each year, the two Bureaus cohost the Pathways to Adulthood conference for independent living and transitional living providers. A range of Federal agencies and nonprofit organizations also support the conference, which typically includes site visits, keynote addresses, and workshops. The 12<sup>th</sup> annual conference took place May 17–19, 2006, in Portland, Oregon. The 684 attendees came from 49 States, the District of Columbia, British Columbia, Puerto Rico, Guam, and the Virgin Islands. The 13<sup>th</sup> annual conference took place May 9–11, 2007, in Minneapolis, Minnesota. The 545 attendees came from 46 States, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico.
- 2. Supported Helping America's Youth, a national initiative led by First Lady Laura Bush.** The initiative raises awareness about the challenges facing American youth, particularly at-risk boys, and works to motivate caring adults to connect with youth in three key areas: family, school, and community. In FY 2006, FYSB helped Helping America's Youth organizers plan a national conference at Howard University in Washington, DC (October 2005), and supported regional meetings in Indianapolis, Indiana (June 2006), and Denver, Colorado (August 2006). In FY 2007, FYSB supported additional regional meetings in Nashville, Tennessee (April 2007), and Saint Paul, Minnesota (August 2007).
- 3. Served on the Coordinating Council on Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention.** The Council is an independent organization in the executive branch that coordinates all Federal juvenile delinquency prevention programs, programs and activities that detain or care for unaccompanied juveniles, and programs relating to missing and exploited children. In 2007, FYSB assisted the Council with planning and strategizing efforts that resulted in two new focused areas of coordination:
  - The Federal Coordination Pilot Project, which will: (1) bring together resources from each agency to positively impact at-risk youth in one or two communities, and (2)

develop a model for effective Federal collaboration that can be replicated in other communities; and

- The Comprehensive Community Initiatives and Technical Assistance Inventory Project, which will conduct an inventory of Federal comprehensive community initiatives and the technical assistance dedicated to support them.

**4. Co-led the Federal Mentoring Council.** The Council is an interagency group led by FYSB and the Corporation for National and Community Service. Formed in May 2006, the Council has worked to better coordinate the Federal government's mentoring programs with the aim of engaging three million new mentors by 2010. In 2007, the Council focused on coordinating and standardizing training and technical assistance efforts for mentoring programs across the Federal government and completed the initial plans for a multi-year national campaign to make mentors available to all youth who age out of the foster care system.

### **Making Headway in 2006 and 2007**

This report provides information on FYSB's runaway and homeless youth programs in FYs 2006 and 2007. Part I describes the three runaway and homeless youth grant programs in greater detail and provides statistical information on the youth served by the programs in FYs 2006 and 2007, the services they received, and their outcomes. Part II details activities of the network of support created to help grantees provide the best service possible. Part III reports on research and evaluation efforts over the past two years.

## **Part I**

### **Runaway and Homeless Youth Programs**

The Federal government responds to the plight of runaway and homeless youth with a comprehensive set of programs. Three grant programs authorized by the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act, as amended by the Runaway, Homeless, and Missing Children Protection Act of 2003 (Public Law 108–96), empower local organizations and shelters in all 50 States and the U.S. Territories to serve and protect runaway, homeless, missing, and sexually exploited youth.

Chapters 1–3 describe the Education and Prevention Services to Reduce Sexual Abuse of Runaway, Homeless, and Street Youth Program (known as the Street Outreach Program), the Basic Center Program, and the Transitional Living Program for Older Homeless Youth (which includes the Maternity Group Home Program). Through the story of Crystal, a composite of several young people served by the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act programs, the chapters illustrate the variety of services offered to meet the diverse needs of runaway and homeless youth. Each chapter also provides information about FY 2006 and 2007 funding levels.

# Chapter 1

## The Street Outreach Program

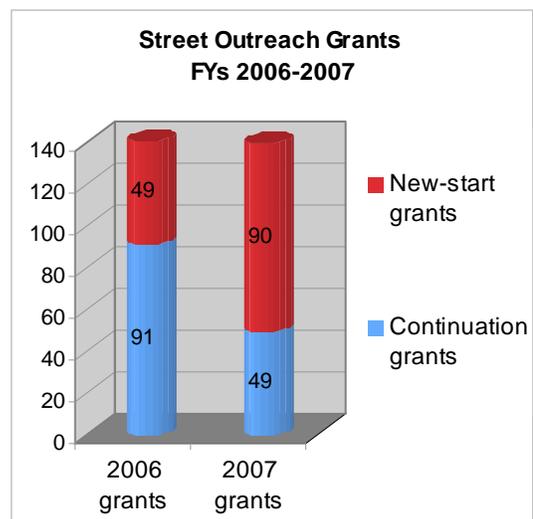
It took several months for the outreach workers to gain 16-year-old Crystal's\* trust. Adults were the enemy; they reminded her too much of home.

After the death of her mother the year before, the teenager had found it increasingly difficult to talk to her dad, who had to work more to make ends meet. He had also remarried, and Crystal felt her new stepmother did not understand her.

After a particularly nasty argument, Crystal left home to live with her boyfriend. Within months, the relationship ended, and, in the coldest part of winter, she found herself on the streets. Living day-to-day, Crystal struggled to find things she never thought she would have to do without: food, warm clothes, a place to sleep, a hot shower.

After a few weeks on the streets, two outreach workers—an adolescent and her adult teammate—began talking to Crystal regularly outside a downtown coffee shop, urging her to come in to their agency's emergency shelter for food, clothes, and other basic needs. She began to look forward to seeing them. Their weekly visits gave her the most consistency she'd had in her life in a long time.

They also supplied her with bandages and aspirin, warm socks, toothpaste and toothbrushes, and energy bars. They listened to her when she needed to talk and did not judge her. After a month of getting to know them, Crystal finally confessed that she thought she might have a drinking problem.



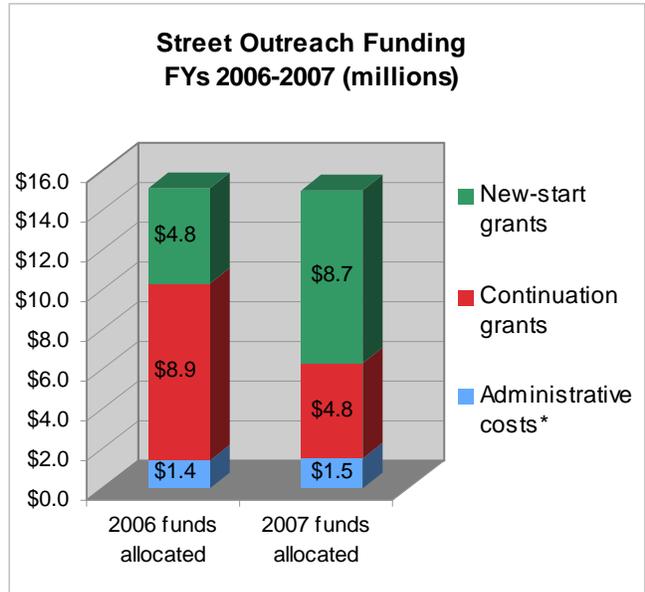
### Stemming the Exploitation of Runaway and Homeless Youth

Young people like Crystal, who live on the streets or in unstable living situations, such as their friends' homes or overcrowded apartments, do not have the security that many of their peers take for granted. Without the adult protection of parents, guardians, or relatives, youth risk being sexually exploited or abused by adults for pleasure or profit. According to the National Incidence Studies of Missing, Abducted, Runaway and Thrownaway Children, one out of every three adolescents on the street will be lured toward prostitution within 48 hours of leaving home. Youth also may engage in "survival sex" as a way to get money or food.

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\* Crystal is a composite of several young people served by FYSB's runaway and homeless youth programs. Her story illustrates the variety of services FYSB offers to meet the diverse needs of runaway and homeless youth.

**FYSB’s Street Outreach Program**—formally known as the **Education and Prevention Services to Reduce Sexual Abuse of Runaway, Homeless, and Street Youth Program**—aims to defend youth against such harm by building relationships between street youth and program outreach staff. Grantee programs attempt to reach runaway, homeless, and street youth who have been subjected to or are at risk of sexual exploitation or abuse. Each program’s staff members provide youth on the street with support, advice, and referrals to emergency shelter programs, health care, and other services. The goal: keep youth safe and help them leave the streets.



\*Administrative costs include logistics, support systems, and collaboration with other Federal agencies.

The program was created as part of the Violence Against Women Act of the Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994 (Public Law 103–322), and FYSB began implementing it in July 1996. In October 2003, Public Law 108-96 reauthorized the program through FY 2008 as Part E of the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act.

In FY 2006, 140 street outreach programs were funded: 91 continuations and 49 new starts. In FY 2007, 139 street outreach programs were funded: 49 continuations and 90 new starts. The average annual grant to street outreach programs was approximately \$97,143 in FY 2006 and \$99,600 in FY 2007. In FY 2007, four street outreach “minigrants” were funded at \$25,000 each. Minigrants fund the same kinds of activities undertaken by full-scale street outreach programs; they give agencies a means to reach more runaway and homeless youth in areas not currently served by street outreach programs.

### How Does FYSB Award Funding for Street Outreach?

FYSB solicits grant applications for the Street Outreach Program through announcements on [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov). Peer panels review the applications.

Agencies compete nationally for Street Outreach Program funding. Grantees must match 10 percent of their grant amount using non-Federal funds.

Successful new applicants receive funding for one year. After the first year, agencies may apply for continued funding for up to two more years. Agencies do not compete against one another for renewed funding; whether a project receives a continuation depends on its satisfactory progress, the availability of funds, and continuation being in the best interests of the Government.

FYSB awards a maximum of \$600,000 for a three-year project period, depending on the availability of funds. In FY 2007, in an effort to further address the homelessness of street youth, FYSB also awarded four minigrants for \$100,000 over a three-year project period. Minigrants were awarded in an effort to reach more at-risk runaway and homeless youth.

## Intense Connections

Street outreach programs were funded across the country, in urban and rural areas. Programs may send workers by foot or van or both.

Outreach workers in a particular city or area know the best places to find young people on the streets. They often find youth in social spaces, such as coffee shops or 24-hour restaurants, in the parts of town where services for homeless people cluster, at places that serve free meals, or in public parks and basketball courts.

Street outreach grantees are required to offer services on the street during the hours that young people tend to be out, including late afternoons, evenings, nights, and weekends. Some programs collaborate with local school districts, which allow them to stand or park outside schools at the end of the day and tell young people about their services.

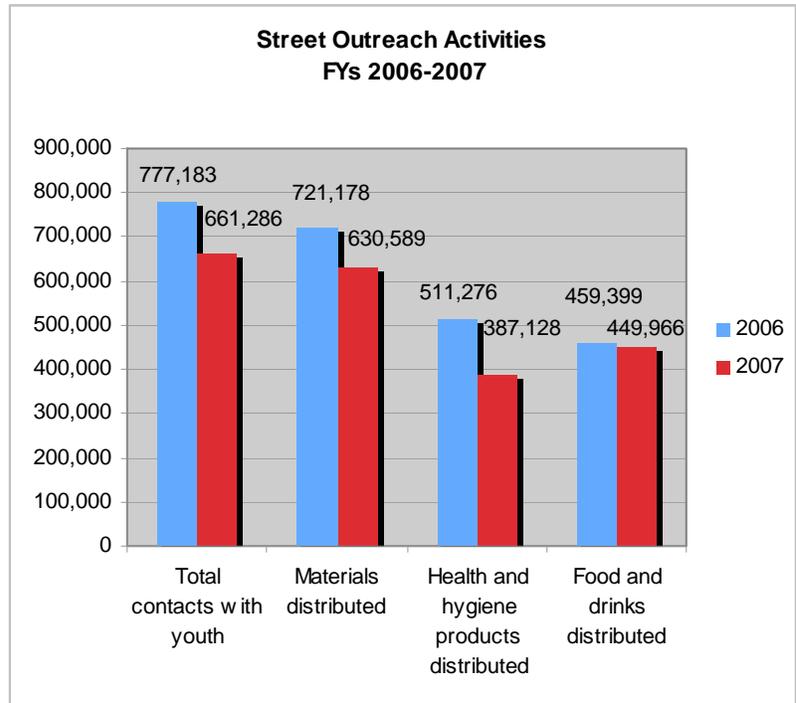
According to the Program Announcement, programs must employ staff whose gender, ethnicity, and life experiences are similar to those of the

young people being served. Many programs use paid or volunteer peer outreach workers who team up with adults on their shifts. Commonly, though not always, the adolescents who serve as peers have lived on the streets. Programs find that peers sometimes have an easier time than adults forming connections with street youth and giving them advice and hope.

Some agencies favor peer workers who have been homeless or on the brink of homelessness. By hiring young people, agencies can overcome one of the biggest obstacles to reaching homeless adolescents: the difficulty of forming trusting relationships with youth who, time and again, have been hurt and victimized by adults in their lives. Youth and adults agree that there is really no substitute for peer-to-peer interaction.

## Adequate Training, Coordinated Services

For both youth and adult outreach workers, the pressures of the job can become intense. Often, outreach workers walk streets where fights, gunfire, prostitution, and drug exchanges form a regular backdrop and where many inhabitants view them as outsiders.



Every day, outreach workers try to intervene in the life of a young person who is hungry, cold, lonely, afraid, abused, or sick. Each youth has many needs: housing, food, clothing, and health care, as well as assistance applying for food stamps, finding mental health or substance abuse counseling, getting an education, locating work, and accessing other services.

Given the intensity of street work, FYSB requires grantees to train staff on issues relevant to street life, such as on-the-job safety and health problems prevalent among homeless youth. Programs also must supervise staff on the street, for instance by guiding staff as they navigate the boundaries of their job responsibilities and by providing them with practical strategies for helping youth who are survivors of sexual abuse.

Each program is required to have 24-hour access to local emergency shelter space. The space must be an appropriate place for young people to stay, and once outreach staff have placed a youth there, they must be able to stay in contact with the young person.

Because FYSB believes in empowering youth to take responsibility and make decisions, staff must take a Positive Youth Development, or PYD, perspective, involving youth in designing, operating, and evaluating the program. Peer outreach is one way that programs accomplish this.

Finally, grantees must develop a plan for coordinating services funded under the program with their State or local sexual assault coalitions or other agencies providing services to youth who have been, or who are at risk of being, sexually abused or exploited.

(See Appendix A, pages 61-62, for a full description of SOP performance standards.)

Though it took some time, street outreach worked for Crystal. After several months, the outreach workers were able to learn the details of what her family life had been like and what her life was like on the streets. They learned that her boyfriend had introduced her to alcohol and that she was eager to seek treatment and to get off of the streets.

She agreed to go to a basic center shelter. Crystal's story continues in Chapter 2.

## Chapter 2

### The Basic Center Program

When she arrived at the emergency shelter, Crystal realized how tired, hungry, lonely, and worn down she really was.

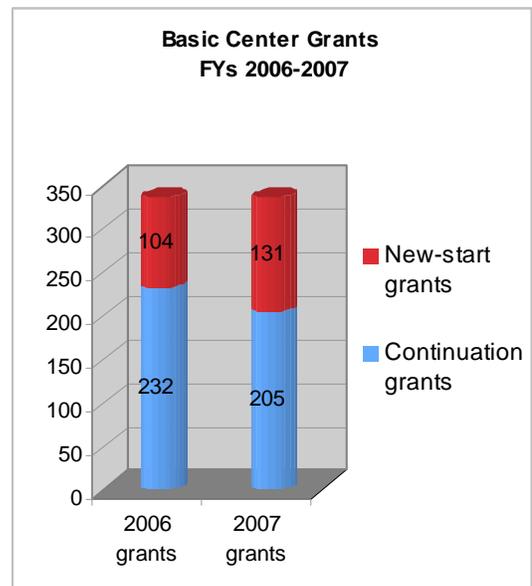
The intake counselor immediately addressed her most pressing needs, getting her something to eat, a shower, and fresh clothes. When Crystal was fed and clothed, the counselor began building a rapport with her and assessing what her long-term needs would be. She asked Crystal about her family and how she landed on the streets. Crystal liked the way the counselor listened to her and did not push her when she did not want to answer a question.

After talking with Crystal for a while, the intake counselor called her parents to let them know that their daughter was safe and to see if they might be able to begin the reconciliation process. Crystal's father and stepmother said that they did not want anything to do with Crystal until she learned to live by their rules, and they hung up the phone.

Crystal stayed at the basic center, receiving three meals a day, counseling, and advice about what to do after her stay at the center ended. During a routine medical checkup at a local free clinic, she found out that she was pregnant.

#### 24-Hour-a-Day Aid

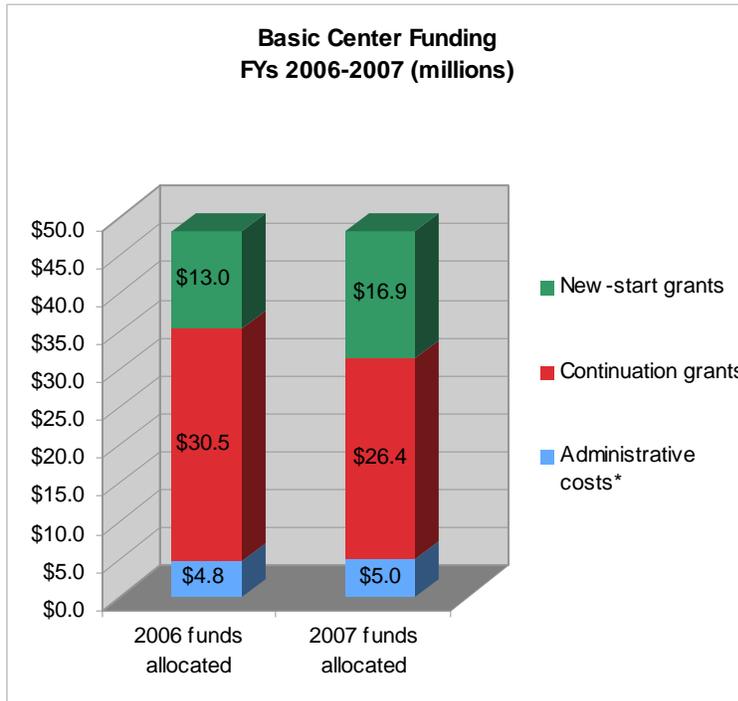
When young people run away, are asked to leave home, or find themselves alone and without stable housing, they face a crisis. They do not know where to turn or how to receive help. Like Crystal, they need a temporary place to stay where they can eat, shower, sleep, and receive counseling and medical services or referrals. In many cases, youth need an adult who can step in and bridge the gap between them and their parents.



Young people find that emergency shelter and assistance at **basic centers**. These programs, run by community- and faith-based public and private agencies, meet the immediate needs of runaway and homeless youth up to age 18 while staff attempt to reunite them with their families or, if that is not an option, find other appropriate places for them to live.

Located in areas that youth can get to easily, shelters extend their services 24 hours a day. Youth may stay in basic centers for up to 15 days. In addition to temporary shelter and family reunification services, basic centers provide in-home and prevention programs, outreach, crisis

intervention, counseling, and follow-up (aftercare) services, such as continued counseling and health care referrals.



\*Administrative costs include logistics, support systems, and collaboration with other Federal agencies.

The **Basic Center Program** was created by the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act, Title III of the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act of 1974 (Public Law 93-415). In October 2003, the program was reauthorized through FY 2008 by the Runaway, Homeless, and Missing Children Protection Act (Public Law 108-96).

In FY 2006, 336 basic centers were funded: 232 continuations and 104 new starts. In FY 2007, 336 basic centers were funded: 205 continuations and 131 new starts. The average annual grant to basic centers was approximately \$129,464 in FY 2006 and \$128,869 in FY 2007.

### How Does FYSB Award Funding for Basic Centers?

FYSB solicits grant applications for the Basic Center Program through announcements on [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov). Peer panels review the applications.

Agencies compete within their State for Basic Center Program grants. Each State receives Basic Center Program funds according to a formula based on the State's population of youth under age 18 as a proportion of the national population. Since FY 1995, each State receives a minimum of \$100,000 in Basic Center funding and each Territory receives a minimum of \$45,000.

Grantees must match 10 percent of their grant amount using non-Federal funds.

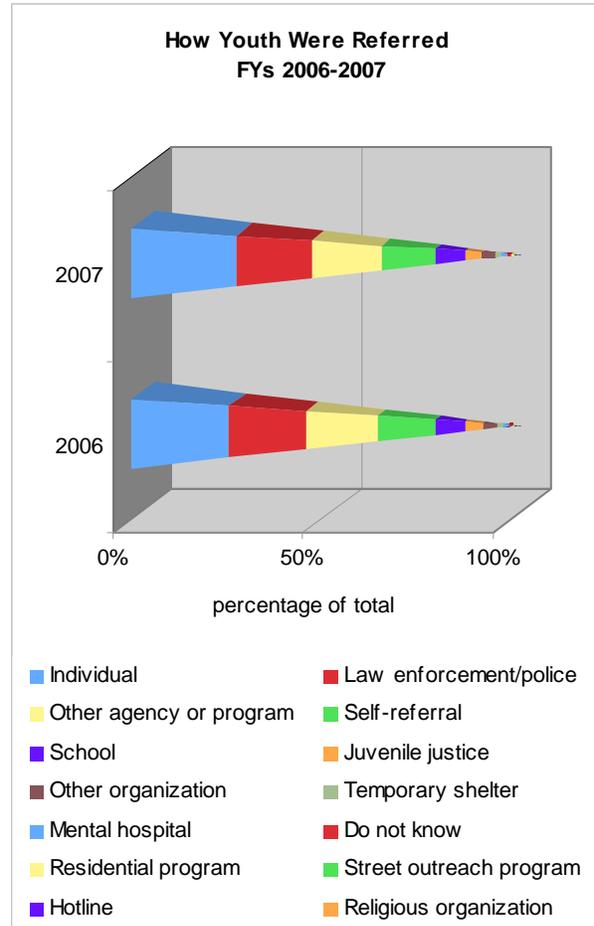
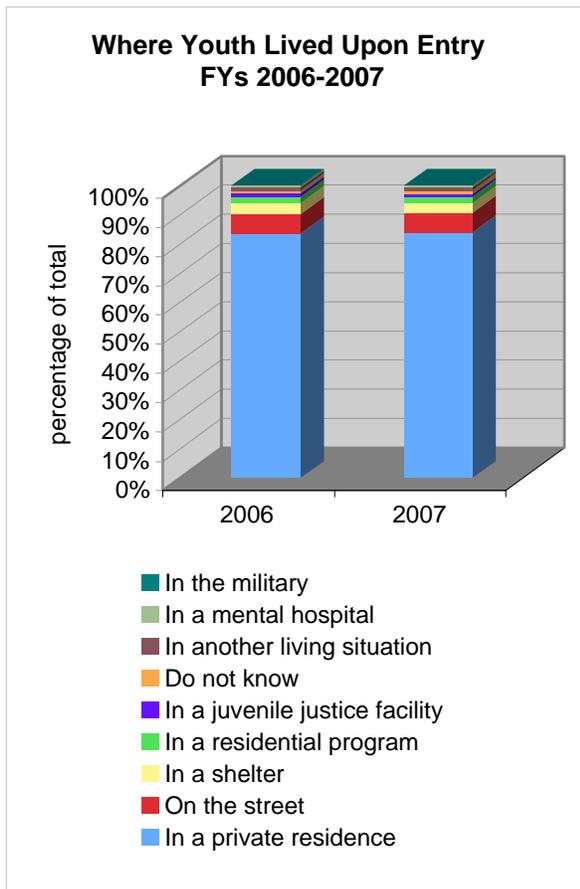
Successful new applicants receive funding for one year. After the first year, agencies may apply for continued funding for up to two more years. Agencies do not compete against one another for renewed funding; whether a project receives a continuation depends on its satisfactory progress.

FYSB awards a maximum of \$600,000 for a three-year project period, depending on the availability of funds.

## Meeting Youths' Basic Needs

Basic centers must offer youth adequate support in a home-like atmosphere. Centers must have an adequate ratio of staff to youth, with at least one adult on the premises at all times when youth are present.

Shelters meet basic and immediate needs. They provide temporary housing, at least two meals per day, clothing, medical assistance, and individual and group counseling. When young people need psychological or psychiatric care, shelters provide it, either directly or by referral to another community- or faith-based agency or individual.



After assessing a youth's needs, staff explain shelter services, ask for the young person's voluntary agreement to participate, and record basic background information. Managers assign a staff member to oversee the young person's treatment plan.

In keeping with the Bureau's focus on Positive Youth Development, or PYD, Basic Center Program performance standards require shelters to actively involve youth in the ongoing planning and delivery of services. Shelters can, for example, invite young people to serve on their boards of directors or provide opportunities for them to work as peer counselors. Shelters also

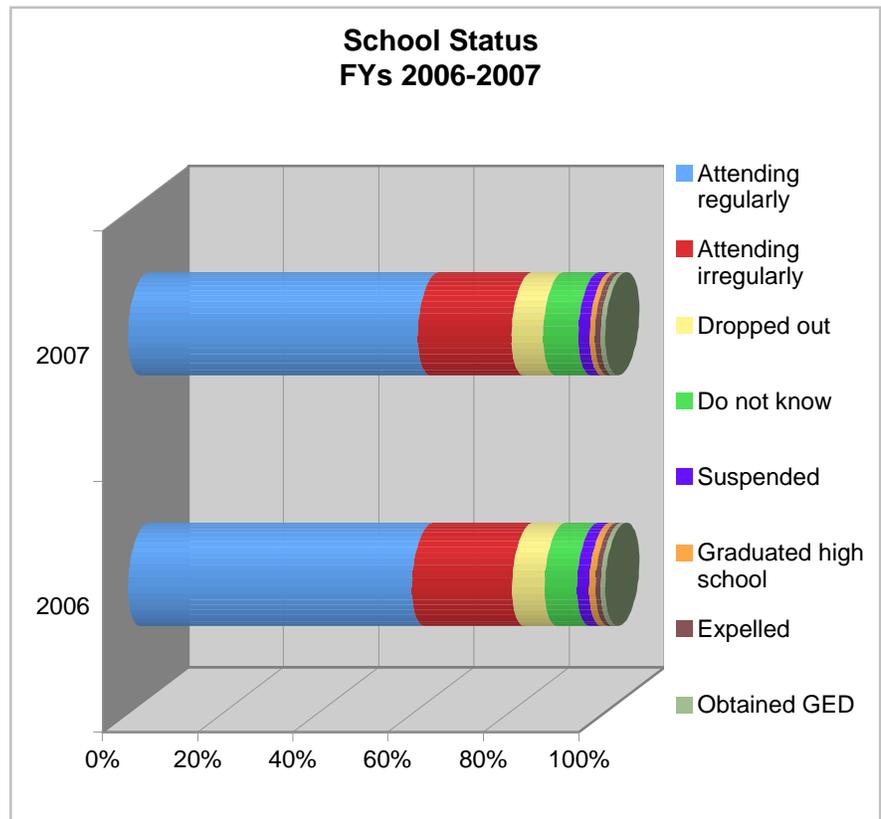
can establish mechanisms for obtaining feedback from young people about the quality of services in the shelter. Do youth have opportunities for personal, organizational, and community leadership? Youths' answers to this question could help determine how well shelters encourage PYD.

Top Ten Critical Issues Identified And Services Rendered, FYs 2006-2007					
Critical Issues	2006	2007	Services Rendered	2006	2007
Family dynamics	44,385	38,206	Counseling/therapy	44,589	37,636
School/educational	25,142	21,663	Basic support	43,942	38,507
Mental health	16,110	14,548	Planned aftercare	35,334	33,628
Alcohol/drugs	14,215	11,940	Life skills training	27,243	24,328
Housing	14,085	11,842	Recreational activities	24,612	23,334
Abuse/neglect	13,529	11,681	Education (assessment, tutoring, school enrollment, GED preparation, vocational education, etc.)	15,935	14,385
Unemployment	7,196	6,297	Substance abuse prevention	12,377	10,339
Health	5,071	4,329	Peer counseling	8,756	8,228
Insufficient income	3,104	2,607	Physical health care	6,929	6,554
Sexual orientation/gender identity	2,060	1,883	Parenting education	6,821	5,806

## Reaching Out to At-Risk Youth

Aiming to reach a broad range of youth, programs market their services in a variety of ways. These include announcements and publications, partnerships with local school systems and other public or private agencies that work with youth, media campaigns, presentations to community groups, and street outreach.

FYSB asks shelters to network with law enforcement agencies, the juvenile justice system, school systems, and other community agencies.



These links ensure that:

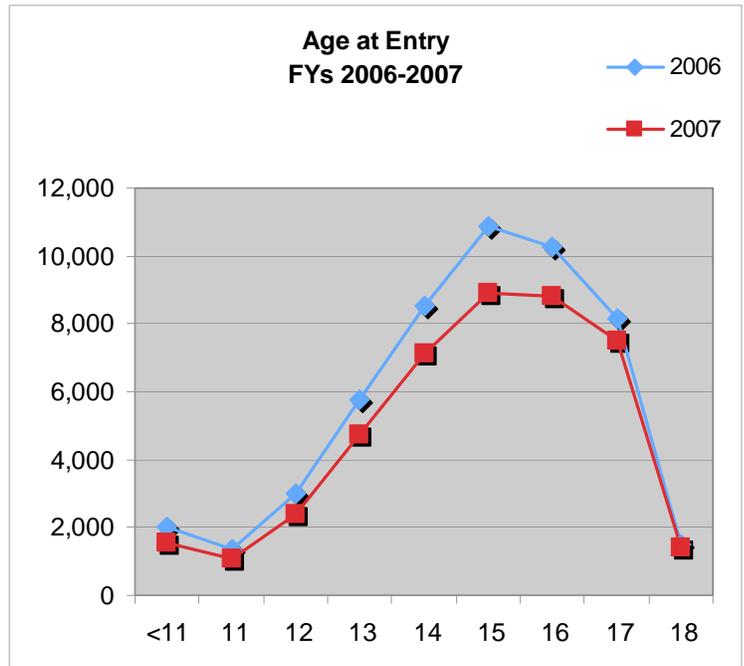
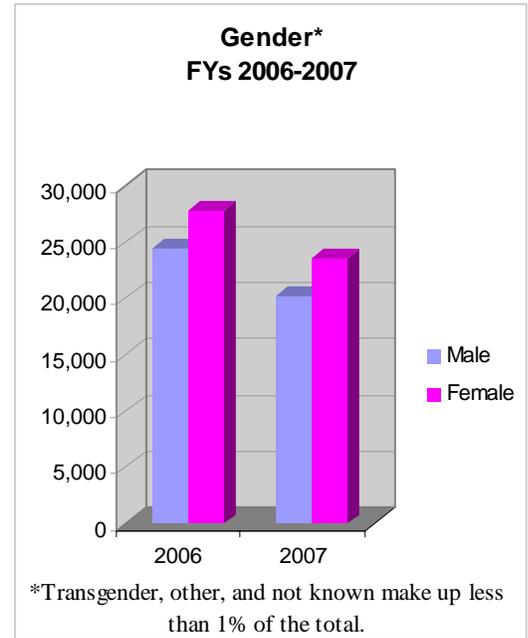
- Staff from juvenile justice and law enforcement agencies are aware of and will use shelter services when assisting runaway and homeless youth who cannot immediately be reunited with their parents;
- School systems allow shelters to coordinate with schools to which runaway and homeless youth return and help young people stay current with their studies; and
- Community agencies give youth access to services not provided directly by the shelter.

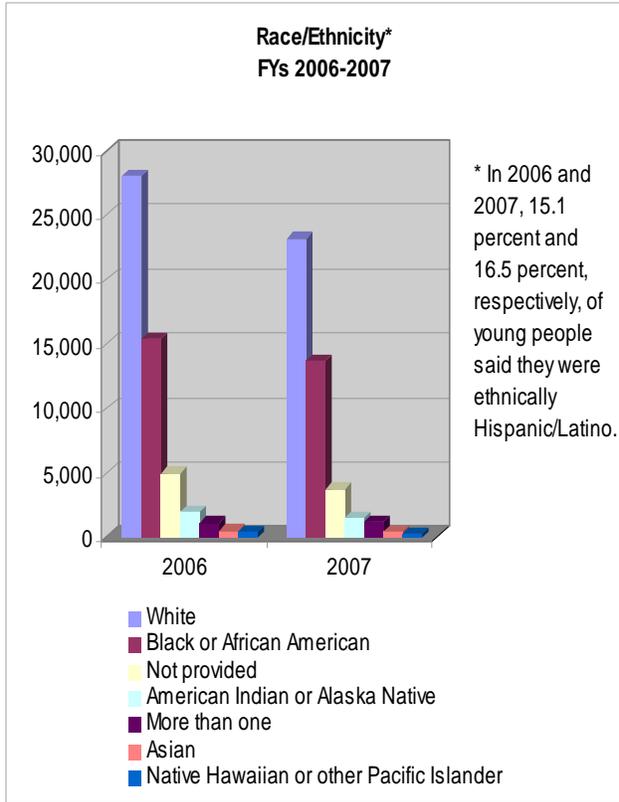
In particular, the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act requires basic centers to coordinate with school district liaisons responsible for advocating on behalf of homeless youth. The appointment of a liaison by school districts is a requirement of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, which mandates immediate access to public schools for homeless young people.

### Reuniting Families, When Possible and Appropriate

Reuniting youth with their families, when appropriate, is the central goal of the Basic Center Program. Shelter staff must contact young people’s parents within the time frame established by State law; if no State requirement exists, shelter staff must contact the youth’s parents within 72 hours (and preferably 24 hours) of the youth’s arrival.

During their stay at a basic center, youth receive services that help reunite them with their families, including family counseling when appropriate or requested. Shelter staff help the young person and, as appropriate, the parents or legal guardians, to either return home or find placement in an appropriate alternative living situation, such as a transitional living program or a relative’s care.





The Runaway and Homeless Youth Act specifies that shelters also must provide youth and their families or legal guardians with aftercare services and counseling after departure from the shelter. Programs can offer these services either directly or by referral to other agencies and individuals.

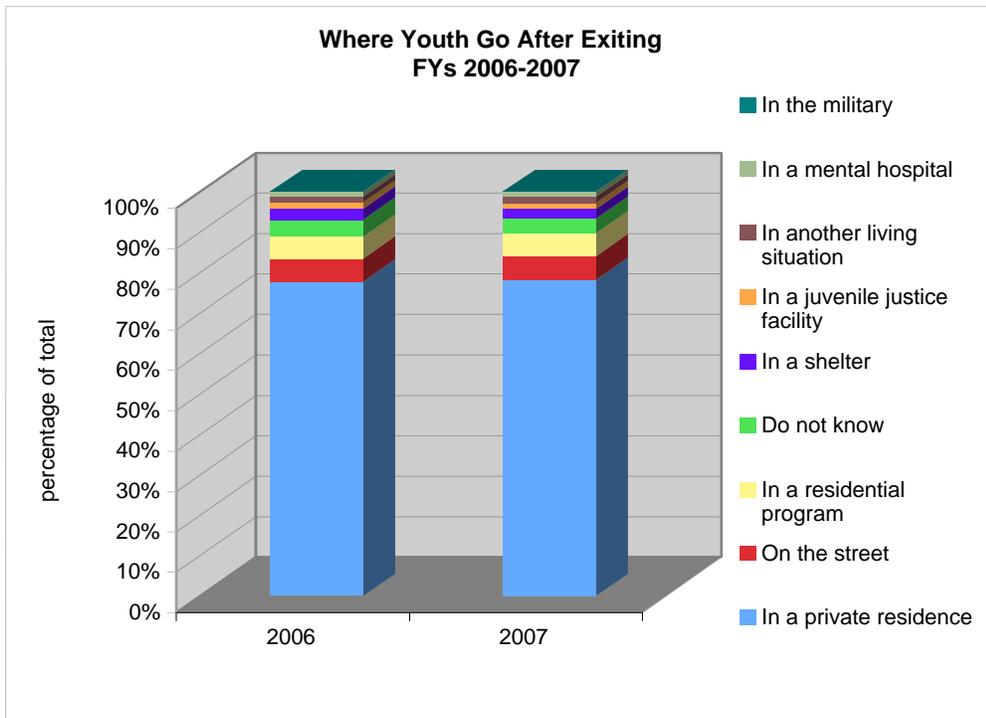
(See Appendix B, pages 63-64, for a full description of performance standards.)

Though most youth return home to their families, in some cases, like Crystal's, this is not possible. Basic centers help them figure out what to do next.

With prospects for reconciling with her parents dim, especially because of her pregnancy, Crystal spent many hours discussing her options with her case manager. After two weeks in the basic center shelter, she decided to enter a transitional living program for older

homeless youth.

The program was a maternity group home designed for pregnant and parenting youth, her case manager told her. She would receive intensive drug counseling, life skills training, a place to stay for 18 months, a mentor, and parenting classes. Crystal's story continues in Chapter 3.



## Chapter 3

### **The Transitional Living Program for Older Homeless Youth**

Crystal did not expect so many questions. Staff at the transitional living program asked about her health, the jobs she had held, how far along she had gotten in school, and whether she knew how to do things like buy groceries on a budget, plan nutritious meals, take the bus to work, and open a bank account.

They also screened her for drugs and alcohol and told her that to stay in the program, and to ensure a healthy pregnancy, she had to stay clean. They helped her get prenatal care at a local clinic, signed her up for GED classes, and referred her for a job at a grocery store.

At first, Crystal resisted such a structured environment. She did not want to have to abide by the program's rules. After living for so long on the streets, she had become used to surviving by her wits and living by her own rules. It took several months for her to get into a rhythm with her daily routine and to begin to trust that the staff had her best interest at heart.

After getting the job at the grocery store, Crystal began saving \$1 for every hour she worked—a requirement of the transitional living program—and paid only 40 percent of her monthly rent in an apartment she shared with two other young women. A staff member visited regularly to make sure she was okay, and Crystal attended life skills, financial management, and parenting classes at the program's office several times a week. She also had regular appointments with an obstetrician at a free clinic recommended by the program.

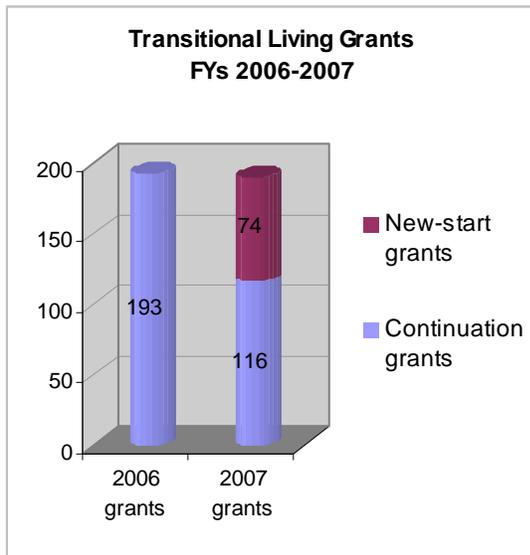
After the birth of her daughter, Alana, program staff showed Crystal how to budget for and find child care. They also helped her child-proof her apartment. When she passed her GED tests, the agency's career center staff guided her as she wrote her resume, searched employment listings, and prepared for interviews. In the end, she secured a better job as an office assistant.

After 18 months in the transitional living program, Crystal had completed a 12-step alcohol and drug treatment program and, with the aid of counselors, had begun to actively make amends with her parents and other family members. She continued to live with one of her roommates from the program, another young woman with a small child, but with her savings growing each month, she hoped to soon have enough money to move out on her own.

### **Moving Homeless Youth Closer to Independence**

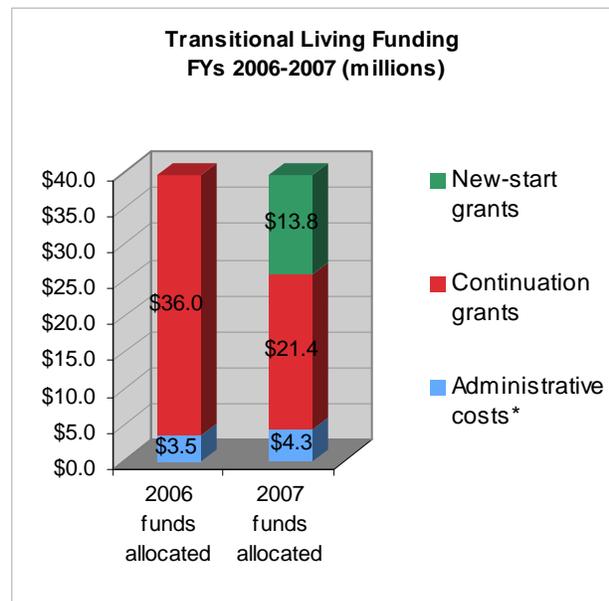
Many homeless and runaway youth are the victims of neglect, abandonment, or severe family conflict. They cannot return to their families, but they are not yet equipped to live on their own. They have to work to support themselves, often without having even a high school diploma. If they want to go to college, they have no one to help them pay for it or to fill out financial aid forms for them. They have to learn to cook for themselves instead of eating at home or in the

university cafeteria. They have to seek their own role models, rather than leaning on their parents.



Through the **Transitional Living Program**, these youth find someone to guide them on their path to self-sufficient adulthood. Created by a 1988 amendment to the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act, the program supports agencies that provide longer term residential services to older, homeless youth ages 16 to 21 for up to 18 months. (An additional 180 days is allowed if a youth has not reached age 18.) In October 2003, the Transitional Living Program was reauthorized through FY 2008 by Public Law 108-96.

In FY 2006, 193 transitional living programs were funded, all of them continuations. In FY 2007, 190 transitional living programs were funded: 116 continuations and 74 new starts. The average annual grant to transitional living programs was approximately \$186,528 in FY 2006 and \$185,263 in FY 2007.



The 2003 reauthorization of the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act expanded Transitional Living Program eligibility to include maternity group homes. In FY 2006, Transitional Living Program grants were awarded to 19 programs that also served as maternity group homes. Starting in FY 2007, priority was given to programs specializing in serving pregnant and parenting youth by setting aside \$3 million out of the total Transitional Living Program funding for 16 grants to maternity group homes.

\*Administrative costs include logistics, support systems, and collaboration with other Federal agencies.

In addition to the agencies funded through the Maternity Group Homes Program, many other programs served pregnant or parenting youth over the past two years. According to intake data, in FYs 2006 and 2007, nearly half of the youth entering all transitional living programs, including maternity group homes, were specifically identified as pregnant or parenting.

### How Does FYSB Award Funding for Transitional Living Programs?

FYSB solicits grant applications for the Transitional Living Program through announcements on [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov). Peer panels review the applications.

Agencies compete nationally for Transitional Living Program funding (rather than within their State, as is the case with Basic Center Program grants). Grantees must match 10 percent of their grant amount using non-Federal funds.

Successful new applicants receive funding for one year. After the first year, agencies may apply for continued funding for up to four more years. Agencies do not compete against one another for renewed funding; whether a project receives a continuation depends on its satisfactory progress.

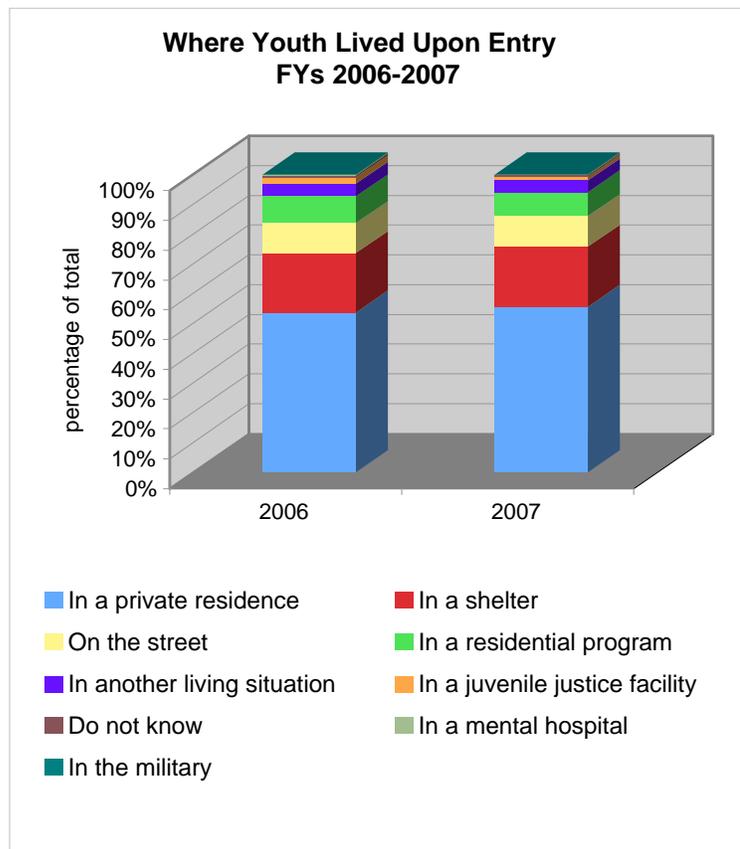
FYSB awards a maximum of \$1,000,000 for a five-year project period, depending on the availability of funds.

### A Place of Their Own

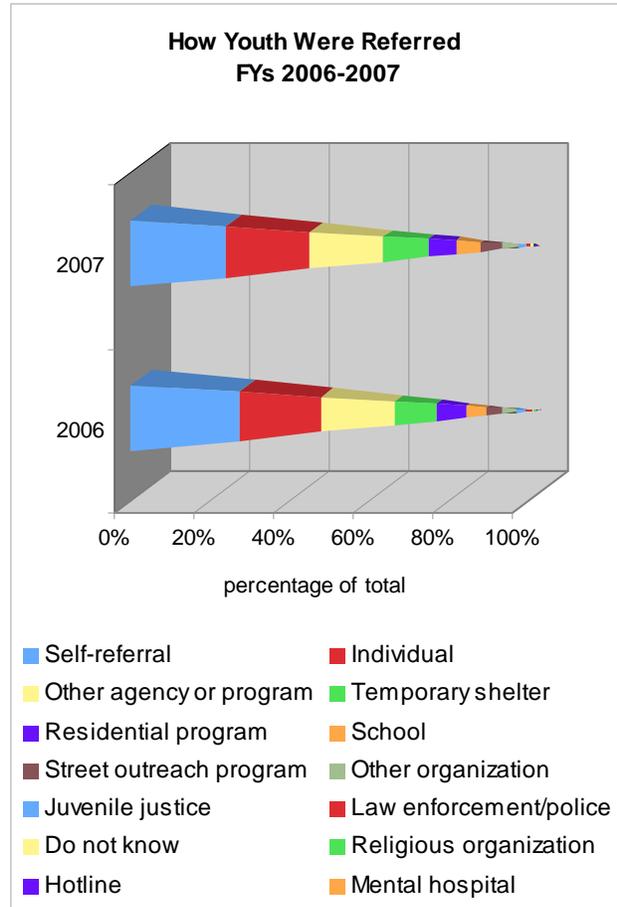
Transitional Living Program grantees are required to provide youth with stable, safe living accommodations and services that help them develop the skills necessary to move to independence.

In providing youth with a place to live, programs use one or more of the following three models:

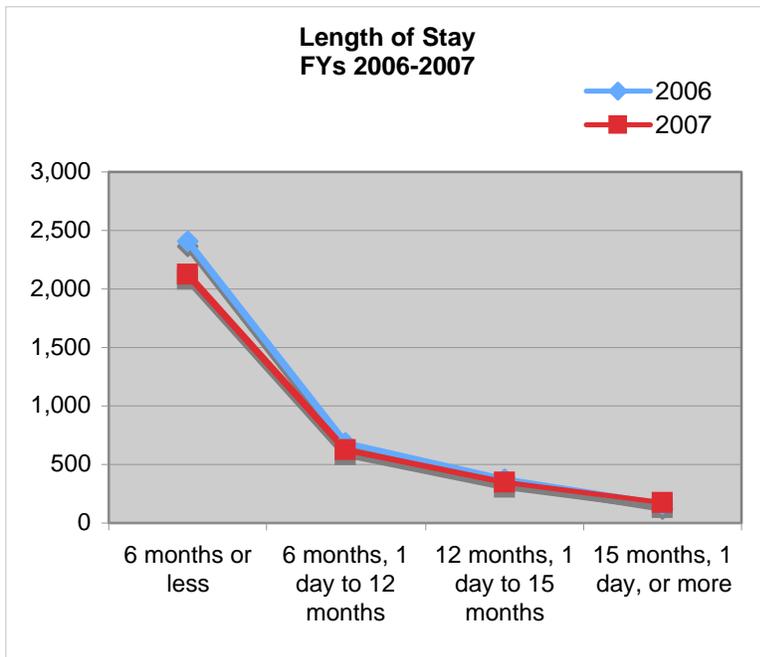
1. In the **host-home approach**, youth live in the community with families who have volunteered to house them, make sure that their basic needs are met, and provide support and supervision with assistance from program staff.
2. **Group homes** give youth the opportunity to move toward independence in a structured environment while living with other young people. The group is responsible for planning menus, preparing food, doing housekeeping tasks, and resolving issues that naturally arise in a shared-housing arrangement. Staff continuously supervise youth in the home and regularly check up on each young person's progress in the program.



3. Programs also house young people in **supervised apartments**, which can take several forms. A grantee, for example, may own an apartment building and house youth in individual units. A staff person stays on the premises to assist youth as needed. Other programs use “scattered-site” apartments: single-occupancy apartments rented directly by young people, with the sponsorship of a transitional living program. Youth rent an apartment in a neighborhood and location that they choose and, depending on program policies, are responsible for all or part of the rent. Staff visit these young people periodically, generally more often when they first move in to the apartment and less often as they move toward independence. Some programs allow youth to keep the apartments upon completing program services.



In all three program models, transitional living facilities must provide support and structure and may not house more than 20 youth at one time. Program staff do not have to live on site, but they must stay in regular contact with youth, for instance by calling them daily or making weekly visits to the home or apartment.



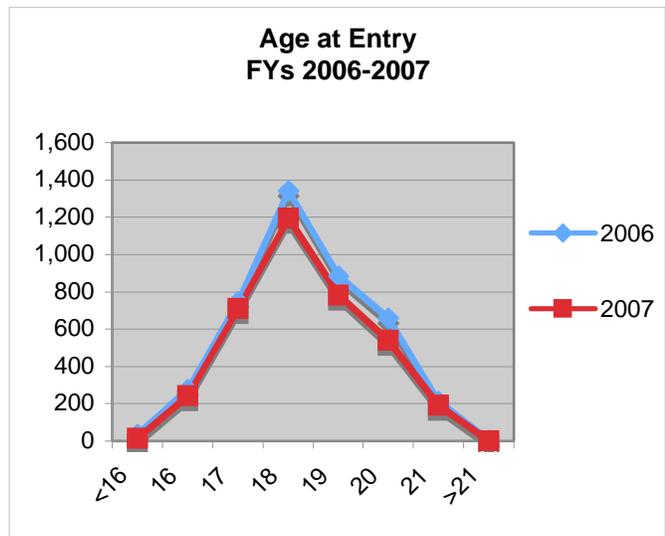
Many programs combine the three models, using a phase system that moves youth from more supervised to less supervised surroundings as they learn to live on their own. Upon entering a transitional living program, participants might, for example, live in group homes with other youth and a staff person. As they hone their decision making skills, take on more responsibility, and learn to set goals for themselves, young people move into apartment buildings on grantee property before finally moving into individual scattered-site apartments.

Top Ten Critical Issues Identified and Services Rendered, FYs 2006-2007					
Critical Issues	2006	2007	Services Rendered	2006	2007
Housing	2,854	2,602	Basic support	3,429	3,103
Family dynamics	2,669	2,327	Life skills training	3,206	2,926
Unemployment	2,313	2,118	Planned after care	3,180	2,988
School/educational	2,100	1,973	Counseling/therapy	2,983	2,647
Mental health	1,414	1,265	Employment services	2,689	2,565
Alcohol/drugs	1,284	1,212	Education (assessment, tutoring, school enrollment, GED preparation, vocational education, etc.)	2,229	2,039
Abuse/neglect	1,181	1,075	Recreational activities	2,095	1,979
Insufficient income	928	909	Program connection services	2,036	2,033
Health	864	712	Physical health care	1,631	1,475
Pregnant teen or teen parent	805	724	Substance abuse prevention	1,452	1,284

## Skills for Life

Youth work or go to school while participating in transitional living programs. As youth progress through their program, staff will help them develop the skills they need to move to full independence. In their daily lives, youth learn by doing; with guidance from staff, they gain practice in budgeting and saving money, maintaining a house or apartment, paying the rent on time, planning menus, cooking, and building constructive relationships.

To complement these hands-on experiences, grantees also offer, directly or by referral, programs and workshops providing more formal, structured opportunities for learning, as well as services that meet the basic needs of young people, including pregnant and parenting homeless youth.



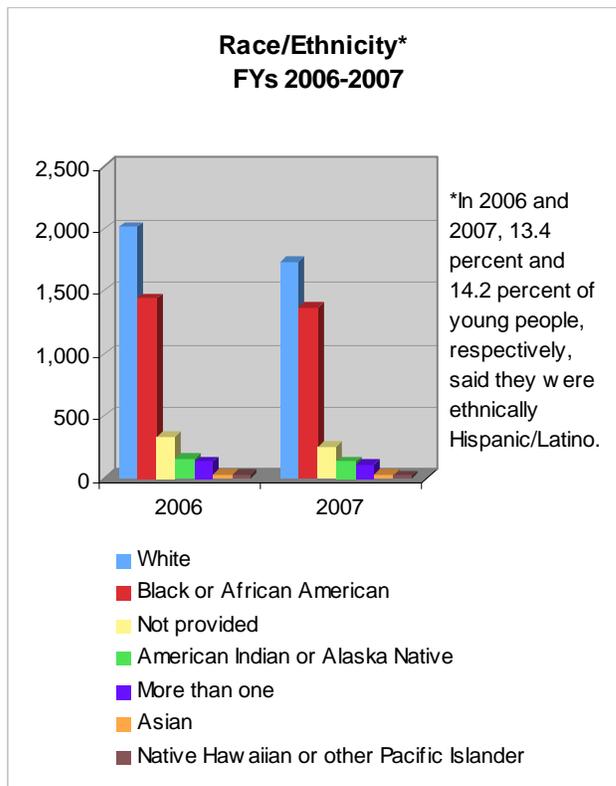
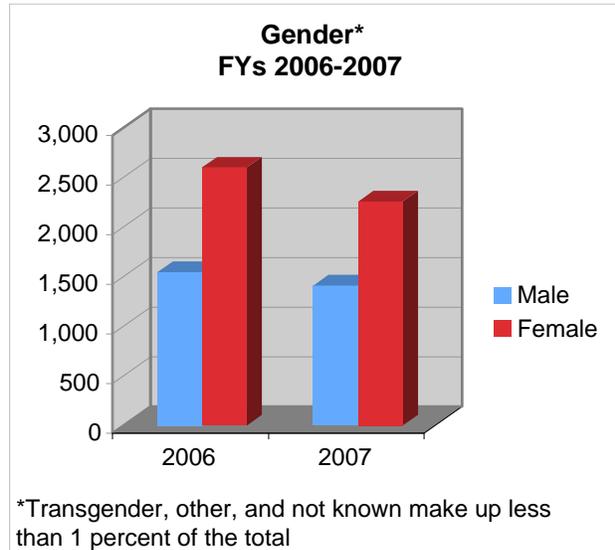
For instance, transitional living programs provide formal or informal instruction in the following:

- **Basic life skills**, such as budgeting, using credit, housekeeping, menu planning, cooking, and becoming an educated consumer;

- **Interpersonal skills**, such as establishing positive relationships with peers and adults, making decisions, and managing stress; and
- **Parenting skills**, including education in child rearing and child development for the young parent.

Programs also offer an array of other services, such as:

**Individualized planning:** Programs work with each youth to develop an individual transitional living plan and decide what services the young person needs.



**Educational advancement:** Youth have opportunities to attain a General Educational Development, or GED, credential, postsecondary training, or vocational education. In addition, the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act requires transitional living programs to coordinate with school district liaisons responsible for advocating on behalf of homeless youth according to the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, which mandates immediate access to public schools for homeless youth.

**Job preparation and attainment:** Programs work to increase youth's employability, offering them opportunities to build workplace skills, as well as providing career counseling, guidance on dress and grooming, and information about workplace etiquette. Programs also help match youth with jobs that fit their skills, financial needs, and career aspirations.

**Mental health care:** Programs offer, either onsite or by referral, individual and group counseling as well as drug abuse education and prevention.

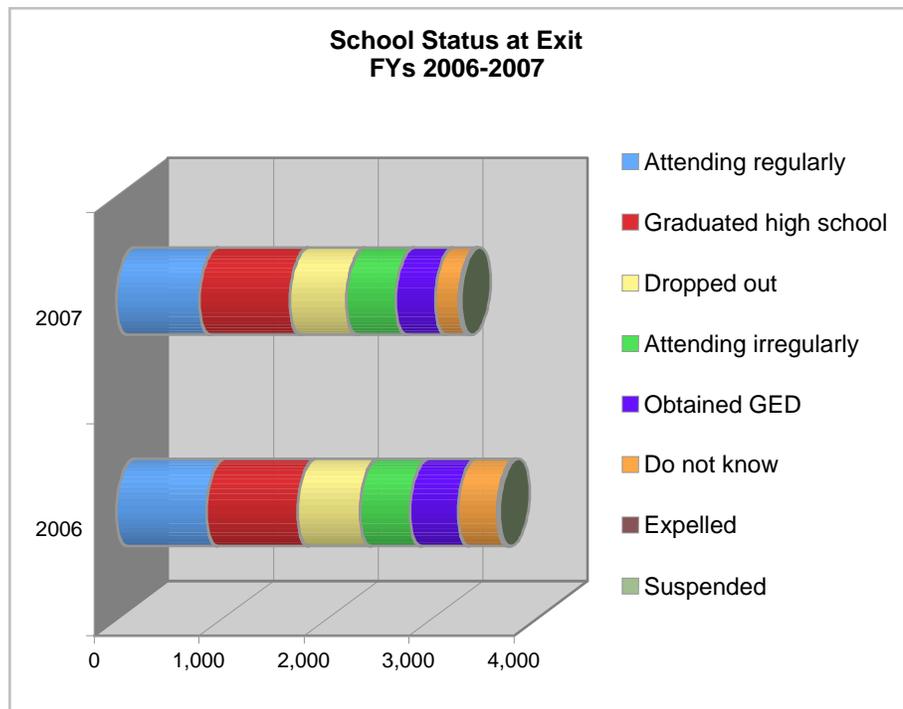
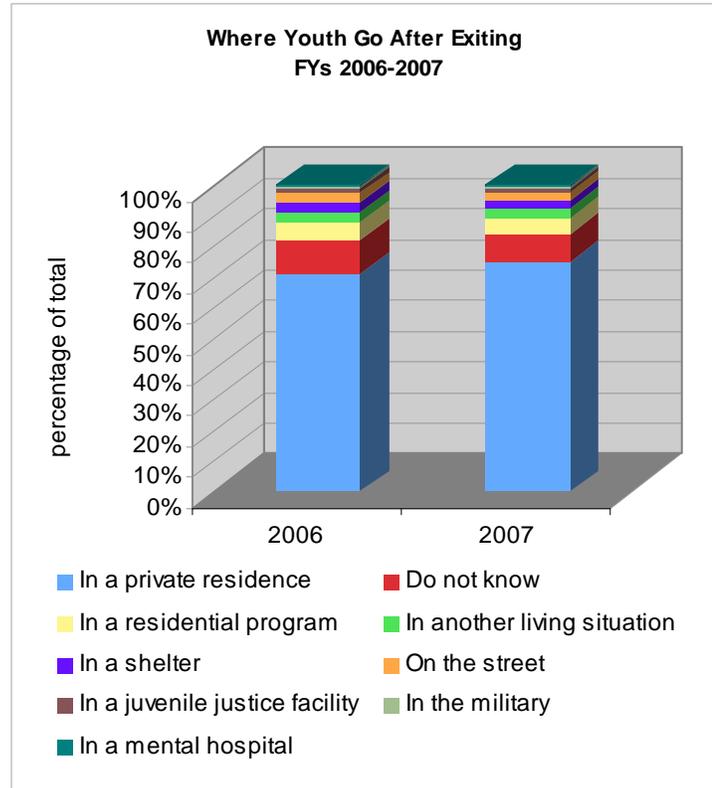
**Physical health care:** Youth are able to receive routine physicals, health assessments, and emergency treatment. Pregnant youth receive prenatal care and abstinence education.

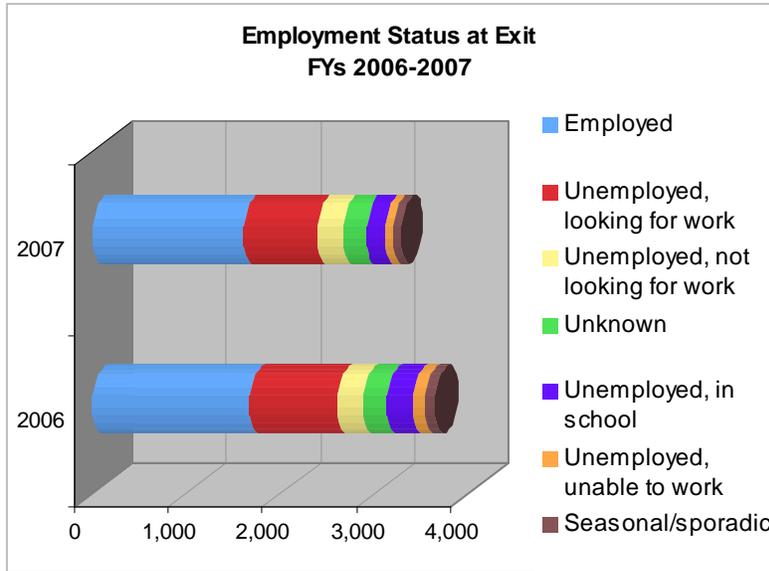
**Child care:** Programs help parenting youth access reliable child care, early childhood education services, and pediatric medical services if necessary.

(See Appendix C, pages 65-66, for a full description of performance standards.)

### Graduating to Independence

All of the services transitional living programs provide have one goal: To prepare youth to live on their own and support themselves. Even after leaving a transitional living program, many youth will struggle with finding appropriate housing, paying rent, affording college or technical education, or holding a job. But transitional living programs give them the life skills and problem-solving ability to deal with such obstacles.





In addition, transitional living staff say their job does not end when a youth successfully completes his or her program. Grantees are required to provide youth with “aftercare” services once they have left a transitional living program. Program staff help young people prepare a plan for transitioning to life on their own. Then, after youth exit the program, staff members check in with them at regular intervals to see how they are doing and provide them with any services they may need. Staff members report that many graduates turn

to them for advice, temporary financial help—say, to pay a month’s rent in a pinch—and continuing services such as mental health counseling.

Two years after graduating from her transitional living program, Crystal is doing well in her own apartment. When Alana is old enough for nursery school, Crystal plans to apply to community college. She reconciled with her parents, who are proud of her many achievements.

Every few months or so, Crystal calls the counselors at her transitional living program and lets them know how she is doing. She also has stayed in touch with the volunteer who mentored her during her time in the program; they often talk about Crystal’s day-to-day problems.

She has been clean and sober for nearly four years.

## **Part II**

### **Family and Youth Services Bureau Support System**

FYSB complements its youth grant programs with a national support system that connects runaway youth and their families to emergency services and information and helps youth-serving agencies give clients the best possible care.

Chapters 4–6 describe the congressionally authorized National Communications System, a hotline run by the National Runaway Switchboard in Chicago, which gives runaway and homeless youth across the country somewhere to turn for help; the National Clearinghouse on Families & Youth, which collects and shares information about at-risk young people and families; and FYSB’s Training and Technical Assistance Providers, which supply Runaway and Homeless Youth Program grantees with the tools they need to serve youth effectively.

## Chapter 4

### National Communications System

“National Runaway Switchboard.”

“Um, I’m wondering if you can help me. What do you guys do?”

“We’re a free and confidential 24-hour help line. If you’re having a problem, we’re here to listen.”

“Do I have to say my name?”

“You can be totally anonymous. Want to tell me what’s going on with you?”

“The other night, I left my mom’s house. Now I don’t have anyplace to go ...”

Like most callers to the **National Runaway Switchboard (NRS)**, the girl sounded tentative, but her need was dire. She wanted to get off the street, but she did not want to return home.

After asking the girl to tell him where she was, the switchboard volunteer arranged for a local shelter to pick her up.

NRS responds to calls like this one every day. According to the U.S. Department of Justice’s Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention and the Research Triangle Institute, between 1.6 and 2.8 million youth run away or are asked to leave their homes each year. NRS’ mission is to keep America’s runaway and at-risk youth safe and off the streets.

#### A National Hotline and More

In 1980, Congress authorized funding to establish a “**national communications system** to assist runaway and homeless youth in making contact with their families and service providers.” The system was originally authorized in Part C, Section 331 of the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act. In 2003, the system was reauthorized by the Runaway, Homeless, and Missing Children Protection Act (Public Law 108–96).

NRS has served as that communication system since the beginning, working closely with FYSB to ensure that young people in crisis have a central place to which to turn for assistance and information on where to get help. NRS links runaway youth and their families to crisis counseling, programs and resources, and each other, when appropriate. It does so using a multi-pronged approach that combines a 24-hour hotline, a Web site, public service announcements, outreach activities, and collaborative relationships with local and national partners.

## **1-800-RUNAWAY**

The central element of the communications system, the NRS toll-free hotline (1-800-RUNAWAY or 1-800-786-2929) operates 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. A frontline team of NRS staff and more than 189 volunteers, each with a minimum of 40 hours of crisis intervention training, answer the calls. Volunteers provided 12,091 hours of service at NRS in FY 2006 and 10,144 hours in FY 2007.

The crisis line team handled 102,942 calls in FY 2006 and 183,892 calls in FY 2007 (an 81 percent increase). The daily average was 282 calls with youth, parents, and concerned adults in FY 2006 and 503 calls in FY 2007. Some days, hotline staff and volunteers deal with many more calls. Call volume typically peaks on Monday, and decreases slowly throughout the week.

The jump in the number of callers in FY 2007 came as a result of strategic efforts on the part of FYSB and NRS to enhance the switchboard's outreach to young people. A major part of those efforts was communicating with youth through e-mail, interactive Web sites, message boards, and other online media as well as through television and radio public service announcements. In addition, high profile celebrities popular with youth promoted NRS' hotline in FYs 2006 and 2007. (See pages 35-37 for information about the improvements NRS made to its Web site during the two fiscal years and pages 37-38 for information about NRS' marketing efforts.)

In FY 2006, 40 percent of crisis calls were from youth and 37 percent were from parents about a youth, with the remainder from young people's relatives and friends, youth professionals, or another adult. More than three-quarters of youth crisis callers were female (77 percent) and the same portion were ages 12 to 17 (77 percent). Youth between the ages of 18 and 21 made up 23 percent of crisis callers.

Of the youth in crisis who called the switchboard in FY 2006, 49 percent were runaway youth and 7 percent were throwaway and homeless youth. Of youth callers who had run away, 41 percent had been away from home for one to three days before calling NRS.

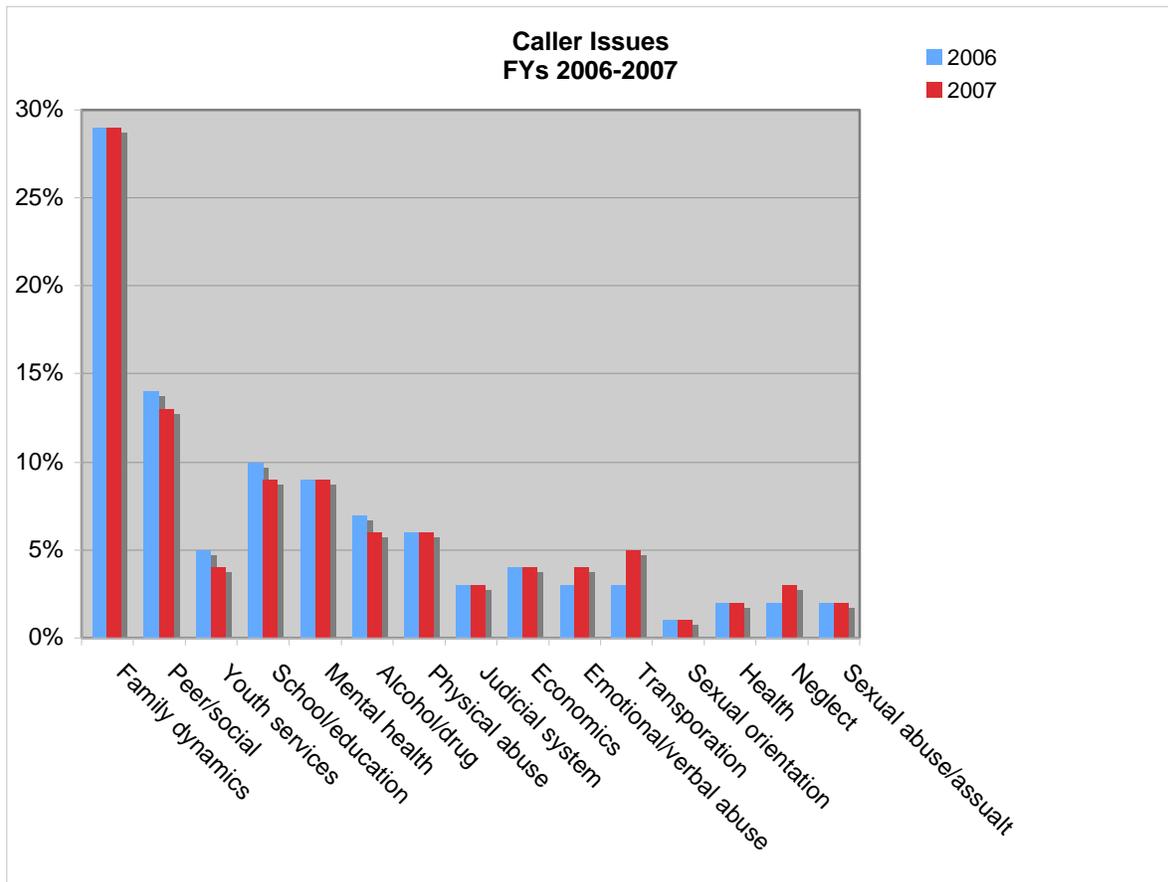
In FY 2007, 48 percent of crisis calls were from youth, and 30 percent were from parents about a youth, with the remainder from young people's relatives and friends, youth professionals, or another adult. More than three-quarters of youth crisis callers were female (76 percent) and about the same proportion were ages 12 to 17 (74 percent). Youth between the ages of 18 and 21 made up 26 percent of crisis callers.

Of the youth in crisis who called the switchboard in FY 2007, 43 percent identified as runaway youth and 8 percent identified as throwaway and homeless youth. Of youth callers who had run away, 40 percent had been away from home for one to three days before calling the hotline.

NRS aims to make its services available to all young people. It offers a dedicated phone line for hearing-impaired youth. To reach non-native English speakers, NRS uses Spanish-speaking staff and volunteers as well as the Tele-Interpreters language line translation service, which can handle calls in 144 different languages. Staff and volunteers used the language line service to

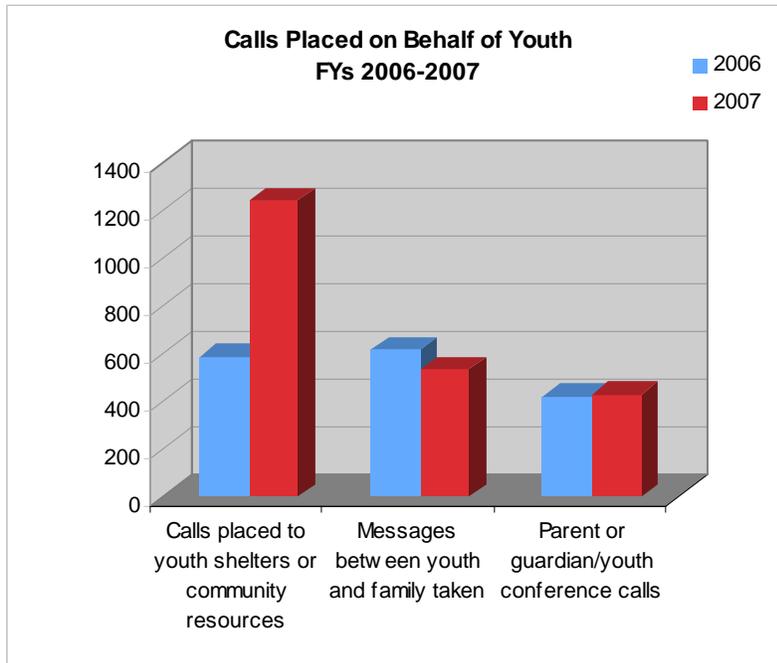
handle 447 calls (logging a total of 117 hours) in FY 2006 and 522 calls (logging a total of 125 hours) in FY 2007.

Youth call the switchboard for many reasons. The most frequently reported issues in FY 2006 were family dynamics, followed by peer and social issues; school-related issues; physical, sexual, or emotional abuse or neglect; and youth services issues. In FY 2007, the most frequently reported issues were family dynamics, followed by peer and social issues; school-related issues; mental health issues; substance abuse; physical, sexual, or emotional abuse or neglect; and transportation issues. This data may underreport the incidence rate of highly sensitive issues such as physical, sexual, or emotional abuse because youth may be reluctant to share such information with someone they do not know.



Hotline staff and volunteers do more than just listen—though that is an important part of what they do. Using a crisis intervention model that focuses on finding appropriate solutions, they also connect callers to services they need, referring them to community and faith-based programs and services. NRS keeps an up-to-date database with information on more than 16,322 youth-related agencies nationwide. Crisis line staff and volunteers also have access to information about more than 100,000 organizations through hard-copy and Web-based resource directories.

In addition, NRS has over 2,813 affiliation agreements with local youth organizations. The affiliated agencies commit to communicating with NRS on an ongoing basis and to providing services to youth and families referred to them by NRS.



To connect youth who are away from their communities with appropriate services, the frontline team members mediate conference calls between young people and community agencies that can assist them. They also mediate calls between runaway youth and their parents to initiate the process of family reunification.

**[www.1800RUNAWAY.org](http://www.1800RUNAWAY.org)**

With FYSB's guidance and support, in FYs 2006 and 2007 NRS designed a strategy to enhance and increase its Internet communication with young

people and the adults concerned about them. The switchboard completely redesigned its Web site ([www.1800RUNAWAY.org](http://www.1800RUNAWAY.org)), re-launching it in March 2006. With sections tailored to young people, parents, educators, and community members, the new site better meets the needs of young people and the adults concerned about them.

On the NRS Web site, youth and adults can anonymously seek information about a range of issues, including family conflict, peer relationships, problems with school, personal and family mental health, and abuse and neglect. The site was visited by 67,264 people in FY 2006 and 93,735 people in FY 2007.

In the youth section, young people can share thoughts on an NRS bulletin board or read tips for dealing with difficult situations. All sections of the site reinforce the idea that young people in need, and those who care about them, can call 1-800-RUNAWAY for support.

Staff members respond to many e-mail messages generated by the site, a total of 405 crisis-related e-mail messages in FY 2006 (a 9.5 percent increase over the previous year) and 377 crisis-related messages in FY 2007. They also monitor the site's anonymous bulletin boards, where youth submit questions for staff response.

Message boards address family issues, legal issues, parenting, peer pressure, and relationships. On one board, young people who have been helped by NRS can check in and let staff and others know how they are doing.

**From the National Runaway Switchboard's  
Online Message Boards**

**Subject:** you saved my life

two years ago i ran away from mississippi and went to las vegas. i was only 15 years old and didn't know anyone there. i started prostituting and smoking crack. i ended up doing that for 9 months and then one day someone gave me the 1-800 number and i called and y'all placed me in a shelter and contacted my family. the shelter made sure i got home safe and now i am sober and in college. thank you so much. this switchboard truly did save my life.

NRS responded to 445 bulletin postings in FY 2006 (a 270 percent increase over the previous year) and 633 bulletin postings in FY 2007 (a 42 percent increase over the previous year).

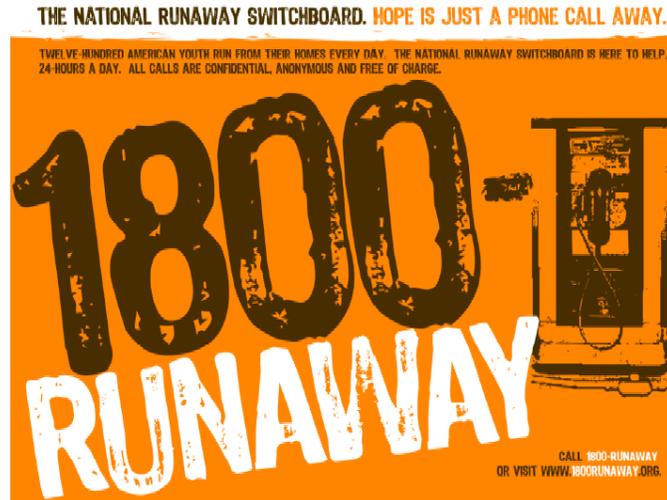
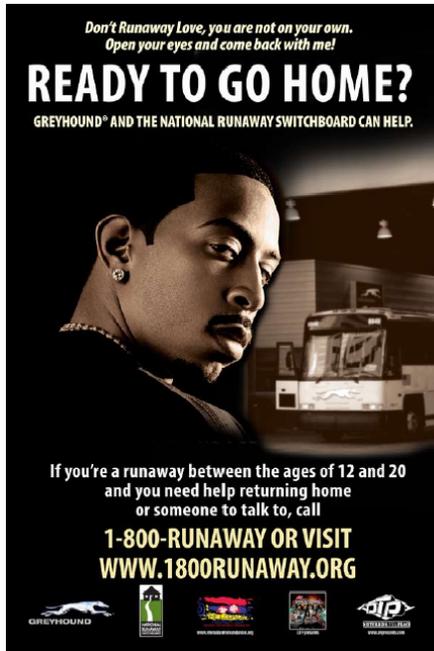
Staff members respond to information requests, whether via e-mail or the bulletin boards, within four hours.

The NRS Web site is an important source of information for members of the general public looking for runaway and homeless youth statistics. In addition, visitors to the site can request or download NRS materials. The following portions of the Web site were the most popular destinations in FY 2006:

- *1-800-RUNAWAY*, a runaway prevention film
- The 2006 NRS public service announcement (see below for more information about this resource)
- The NRS media kit for reporters covering runaway issues
- NRS' "You Have a Right" posters, declaring every youth has the right to be listened to, be themselves, be safe, and be home
- The NRS community action kit, which contains ideas for planning and implementing runaway prevention activities during National Runaway Prevention Month in November
- NRS' runaway prevention curriculum

And in FY 2007, the following portions of the Web site were the most popular:

- The 2007 public service announcement, featuring hip-hop entertainer Ludacris (see below for more information about this resource)
- A United States map listing the number of crisis-related calls to 1-800-RUNAWAY originating in each State
- NRS' new *Let's Talk* runaway prevention curriculum
- "Green Light Project" resources (see below for more information about this project promoting National Runaway Prevention Month)
- A research section featuring statistics on runaway, homeless, and at-risk youth
- The redesigned message board, or bulletin board, where youth and staff post messages
- The catalogue of NRS promotional and educational materials



*NRS makes its promotional posters and other materials available on its Web site.*

To better publicize the 1-800-RUNAWAY hotline to young people via the Web, NRS in FY 2006 launched a youth-oriented weekly magazine, [www.switchedonmag.com](http://www.switchedonmag.com). Installments have focused on issues such as sex and virginity, gangs, alcohol and drugs, and art and music. NRS promotes [switchedonmag.com](http://switchedonmag.com) on Web sites frequently visited by youth, such as [myspace.com](http://myspace.com) and [friendster.com](http://friendster.com). From April to October 2006, the site featured 18 different issues and received 11,621 unique visitors, contributing to 37,785 total visits. In FY 2007, due to technical difficulties, the site was stagnant. The same year, NRS came up with a new concept for the magazine: to have issues be produced for youth by youth. The switchboard began recruiting youth groups to participate beginning in August 2007.

## Getting the Word Out

In addition to making information, publications, and materials available on the Web, NRS gets the word out in more traditional ways. The switchboard distributed 411,188 copies of brochures and other information and prevention materials through the mail and at conferences in FY 2006. In FY 2007, 420,519 copies of materials were distributed.

NRS also spreads its message by collaborating with media outlets and entertainment professionals. In FYs 2006 and 2007, NRS worked with popular recording artists to increase public awareness of the plight of runaway youth. Country musician Cowboy Troy featured the NRS logo and toll-free hotline in his music video “If You Don’t Wanna Love Me,” a story about a runaway youth. And award-winning hip-hop entertainer Ludacris, with vocalist Mary J. Blige, promoted runaway prevention through his hit single and video “Runaway Love.”

In FY 2006, NRS created a public service announcement to publicize the toll-free hotline and distributed it to 800 television stations nationwide. Of those, 188 stations in 112 markets

broadcast the announcement a total of 5,326 times. In FY 2007, NRS launched a new public service announcement to promote 1-800-RUNAWAY, this time featuring Ludacris. Since May 2007, the announcement has aired 4,294 times at 99 stations in 52 markets.

NRS also worked with Lifetime Television to publicize the movie *Augusta Gone*, a true story about a runaway who reunited with her family after using NRS services. Lifetime Television premiered the movie in March 2006 and promoted NRS as a resource through a public service announcement on its Web site.

In 2005, the National Runaway Switchboard launched the “Green Light Project” as a way to encourage community involvement in National Runaway Prevention Month. Through the project, local nonprofits distribute green light bulbs, asking community members to use the bulbs on their porches and in their front windows during the month of November. In FYs 2006 and 2007, NRS expanded its support of the Green Light Project by providing free downloadable, customizable bulb labels and posters on its Web site. The tools are meant to help local organizations promote the Green Light Project in their communities.

### **Family Reunification Through Home Free**

Since 1995, NRS has worked with transportation company Greyhound Lines, Inc., to administer the “Home Free” program. Counting 10,903 rides home since its inception, the program reunites runaway youth ages 12 to 20 with their families by giving them free bus tickets to return home. When returning home is not an option, runaway youth ages 18 to 20 may receive free tickets to an alternative placement near their homes, such as a transitional living facility.

NRS offered family reunification services to 879 young people in FY 2006; of these, 467 received free bus tickets to return home or to go to an independent living program. In FY 2007, NRS offered family reunification services to 1,317 young people. Of these, 436 received free bus tickets to return home or to go to an independent living program.

To ensure all bus station managers were aware of the program, Greyhound spotlighted “Home Free” in its staff newsletter in FY 2007. The company also printed 5,000 posters, which NRS distributed to youth-serving organizations. NRS sent an electronic version of the poster to an additional 20,000 recipients.

### **Reaching Out Across the Country and the World**

FYSB and NRS share an important mission: serving runaway and homeless youth and helping them to get off the streets. NRS advances that mission through strategic partnerships with national, international, and community-based organizations. Partners in FY 2006 and 2007 included:

**National Safe Place.** By collaborating with this project of the YMCA of Greater Louisville, Kentucky, NRS can easily find a “safe place” that young people in crisis can go to. Safe Place coordinates with businesses and schools around the country to provide safe locations where youth can get help or referrals to a service agency. The NRS training and education

coordinator serves on the National Safe Place advisory board and participates in its partnership committee.

**California Coalition for Youth.** NRS handles overflow calls for the coalition's California Youth Crisis Line.

**National Teen Dating Abuse Helpline.** Launched in February 2007, the helpline (1-866-331-9474 or [www.loveisrespect.org](http://www.loveisrespect.org)) is a project of the National Domestic Violence Hotline. NRS is an inaugural member of the helpline's national advisory board and provides technical assistance on volunteer recruitment and management.

**Child Helpline International.** NRS is a member of this United Nations-affiliated international organization, which is working to develop youth hotlines in all countries worldwide. The switchboard provides technical assistance on volunteer recruitment and management and crisis line evaluation. Each year, NRS contributes its annual crisis contact data for inclusion in an international report.

**Uhlich Children's Advantage Network (UCAN) and the Child Welfare League of America (CWLA).** NRS played an instrumental role in the promotion and distribution of the results of the 2006 and 2007 Teen Report Card, an annual survey of U.S. adolescents conducted by the Chicago-based UCAN and promoted nationally by CWLA. As a result of NRS' involvement, the 2006 and 2007 surveys asked how good a job adults do of understanding why adolescents leave home and stopping young people from running away.

**National Runaway Prevention Month.** In Novembers 2005 and 2006, NRS collaborated with other national organizations to promote runaway prevention education. Partners included the National Network for Youth, the National Assembly on School-Based Health Care, the National Association of School Psychologists, the School Social Work Association of America, and National Safe Place. The groups posted Web spotlights and links to each others' Web sites. NRS mailed information packets to over 5,000 (2005) and 7,000 (2006) organization members, many in schools, and in 2006 e-mailed the packets to over 20,000 organization members. In 2007, the information was mailed and e-mailed to 47,334 recipients.

**Yellow Pages Integrated Marketing Association.** NRS worked with the association to publicize the 1-800-RUNAWAY hotline to its members across the country. The association's Web site, [www.ypima.com](http://www.ypima.com), offers a free hotline advertisement that members can post on their sites.

**The Children's Society, United Kingdom.** A delegation from the United Kingdom, including a member of Parliament, visited NRS in March 2006. The fact-finding mission was part of the Children's Society's national Safe and Sound campaign. The Children's Society hopes to replicate the U.S. model of serving runaway youth in the United Kingdom. During the visit, NRS facilitated meetings with Federal officials, a local runaway and homeless youth provider, and law enforcement officials, including representatives from the Federal Bureau of Investigations. Back in the United Kingdom, NRS, along with local youth shelters throughout the United States, were showcased on British television.

## **Documenting the Switchboard's Work**

NRS uses its management information system, known as the NRS MIS, to collect data about the young people and families it serves. In FY 2006, NRS began using a Web-based management information system, migrating call-log data from 1997 to present into the system.

Crisis line volunteers and staff document each hotline crisis call in the NRS MIS. They record the caller's age and gender, his or her issues, the focus of the call, referrals offered during the call, and follow up that may be needed.

By better understanding who calls the hotline and why, NRS can continue to respond effectively to the unique and changing needs of the young people and families it serves.

# Chapter 5

## The National Clearinghouse on Families & Youth

A working mother wants to know how to start a mentoring program for her teenage son and his friends.

A new program director at a basic center wants to know what other shelters do to bring families back together.

Staff at an afterschool program recently learned a little bit about Positive Youth Development and are interested in developing ways to get young people more involved.

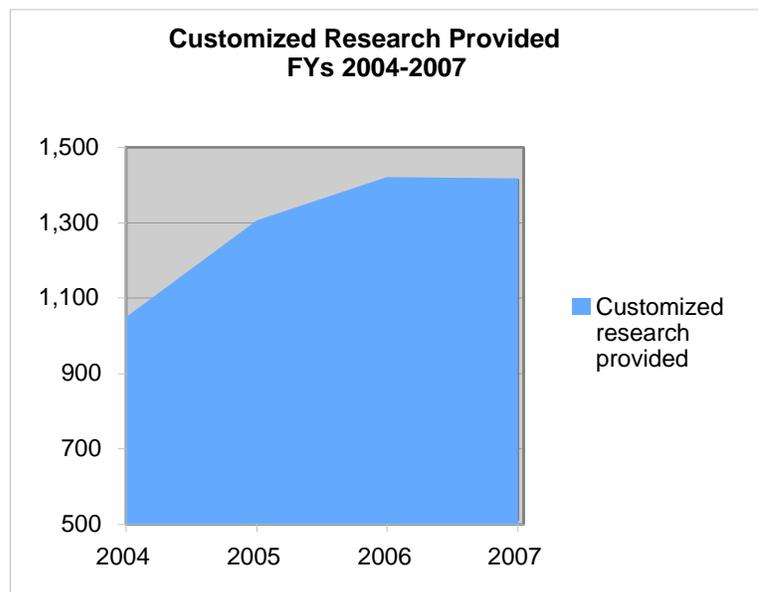
All three turn to the National Clearinghouse on Families & Youth (NCFY), which helps people like them every day.

NCFY conducts research, shares information, develops publications, and reaches out to others in the youth services field at meetings and conferences. Through these activities, the clearinghouse links youth service professionals, policymakers, and the general public with the resources they need to develop new and effective strategies for supporting young people, families, and communities.

### Free Information Source

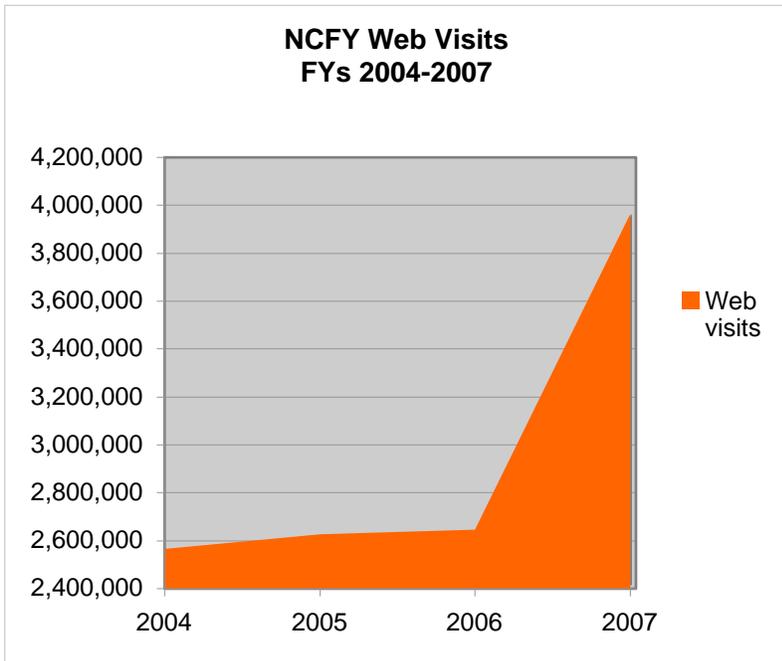
FYSB established the clearinghouse in 1992 as a free information source for those interested in youth issues and as a tool in the Bureau's efforts to improve services for families and youth.

People such as teachers, counselors, and employees of shelters, residential youth programs, street outreach programs, and afterschool programs ask NCFY for facts and resources on a variety of youth-related topics. NCFY staff help them find answers to their questions, guiding them toward government and nonprofit organizations, both local and national, that specialize in their particular areas of interest—from afterschool programming to mentoring to the education rights of homeless children and youth.



NCFY receives requests for information by phone, e-mail, and the Web. Staff responded to 1,420 requests for customized research in FY 2006 and 1,417 requests in FY 2007.

A major way that NCFY gets information out is through its Web site (ncfy.acf.hhs.gov). At FYSB's request, NCFY completely redesigned its site in FY 2006, adding separate portals for each of FYSB's primary target audiences, with sections on youth development, mentoring children of prisoners, family violence prevention, and abstinence education. In addition, the clearinghouse worked with FYSB to improve its Web marketing, expand its electronic mailing list, and release award-winning new publications. These improvements resulted in a jump in visits to NCFY Web pages, from 2,646,436 visits in FY 2006 to 3,965,139 visits in FY 2007.



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In FY 2007, NCFY also took advantage of audio technology on the Web and began offering a series of "podcasts," online audio programs available individually or by free subscription. Subscribers can sign up to automatically download podcasts each time a new episode is released. NCFY produced two podcasts in FY 2007.

To keep FYSB and its grantees up to date on the youth services field, NCFY creates and sends out a monthly electronic newsletter called *Youth Initiatives Update*. The e-newsletter goes to FYSB grantees and staff, ACF Regional Office staff, FYSB Regional Training and Technical Assistance Providers, and others in the youth services field. It includes the latest information on new youth-related initiatives, grants and funding sources, and online resources for youth workers.

Since its inception, NCFY has helped FYSB build a comprehensive collection of publications on youth-related issues. In FYs 2006 and 2007, NCFY gathered 2,000 items, bringing the collection to more than 15,000 publications on youth and family issues. NCFY makes these resources accessible to a wide audience via the NCFY Web site, which includes a literature database

**Toothbrushes That Prevent More Than Cavities**

In FYs 2006 and 2007, FYSB, NCFY, and the National Runaway Switchboard collaborated to promote the switchboard's toll-free hotline. NCFY created toothbrushes imprinted with "1-800-RUNAWAY" and sent a batch of them to each of FYSB's Runaway and Homeless Youth Program grantees in honor of National Runaway Prevention Month in November 2006. NCFY also gave the toothbrushes out at conferences on behalf of FYSB and NRS.

containing the abstracts of every publication in the NCFY library. In addition, NCFY opens its reading room to members of the public interested in reviewing materials in the clearinghouse collection.

On FYSB's behalf, NCFY exhibits at conferences and forums to inform youth service providers, policymakers, and young people about FYSB and its programs as well as about the information services the clearinghouse provides. NCFY exhibited at seven national conferences in FY 2006 and six in FY 2007, and distributed NCFY materials to an additional 53 events in FY 2006 and 56 in FY 2007.

## Free Publications

Through NCFY, FYSB offers a range of free publications for youth, parents, youth workers, and the general public. The most popular of these include *Express Yourself* and *Take the Lead*, booklets on how adolescents can build their self-esteem and leadership skills, *Supporting Your Adolescent: Tips for Parents*, and *Celebrating America's Youth*, a look at positive statistics about American young people.

NCFY produces two FYSB periodicals aimed directly at Runaway and Homeless Youth Program grantees and other youth workers. The first, *The Exchange*, spotlights news from the youth services field. The five theme-based issues published in FYs 2006 and 2007

addressed starting and managing a transitional living program; working with Native American youth; providing education and job training to runaway and homeless youth; working effectively with youth after they leave FYSB-grantee programs; and street outreach to runaway and homeless youth.

### New Publications Offered by FYSB and NCFY in FYs 2006 and 2007

***Guide to Starting a Youth Program***, an online toolkit for program managers at youth-serving agencies

***Keep in Touch*** (in English and Spanish), a brochure reminding youth to stay connected to their programs after they leave

***Lend a Hand! A Guide to Volunteering for Youth***, a brochure for adults and youth

**"Meet With Staff Before You Leave"** (in English and Spanish), posters for runaway and homeless youth programs

***Promoting Positive Youth Development: An Investment in Youth & Communities*** (Spanish version), a booklet for youth workers and community members

***Putting Positive Youth Development Into Practice***, a primer on PYD

***Take the Lead: Inspirational Young People Tell Their Stories***, a pamphlet aimed at young people

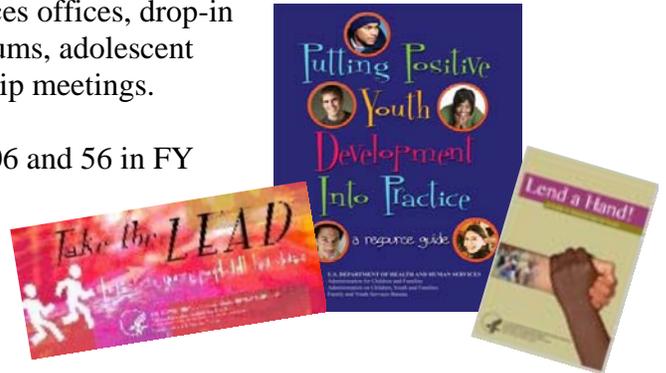
***YES! Youth Empowerment Strategies for All***, a series of fact sheets aimed at people who work or interact with pregnant and parenting youth, mentally ill youth, developmentally disabled or handicapped youth, children of prisoners, and youth involved with gangs or at risk of gang involvement

***The Family and Youth Services Bureau***, a brochure describing FYSB's programs and activities

The second periodical, *The FYSB Update*, focuses on FYSB-funded research and development within the Bureau. Issues published in FYs 2006 and 2007 looked at FYSB's Positive Youth Development State and Local Collaboration Demonstration Projects and FYSB's expanded mission with the addition of new grant programs over the past few years.

In FYs 2006 and 2007, NCFY sent 379,957 copies of FYSB-sponsored publications to people around the country who used them in human services offices, drop-in centers, and health classes, and at conferences, forums, adolescent health fairs, community events, and youth leadership meetings.

NCFY sent 45 special outreach mailings in FY 2006 and 56 in FY 2007; these included mailings through which NCFY sent FYSB's newest publications to FYSB grantees and national organizations working on youth and family issues.



### **Behind the Scenes**

NCFY gives FYSB behind-the-scenes support in its efforts to provide national leadership on youth and family issues. For instance, the clearinghouse provides FYSB staff with background information and briefing materials on topics of particular relevance to their work. In FYs 2006 and 2007, NCFY briefed FYSB on human trafficking of youth in the United States, issues affecting pregnant and parenting teens, positive statistics about America's young people, and transportation for runaway and homeless youth.

In FYs 2006 and 2007, NCFY also helped FYSB prepare for grantee meetings, provided general administrative support to FYSB's Positive Youth Development State and Local Collaboration Demonstration Projects, and maintained and updated the FYSB Web site.

## Chapter 6

### Training and Technical Assistance Providers

Leaders at several runaway and homeless youth programs in New York and New Jersey were at a loss.

They knew they needed to more fully involve youth in designing new policies and revising old ones. They knew creating a youth advisory board to counsel them on programming decisions would make a big difference. But they did not know how to get started.

Enter the Regional Training and Technical Assistance Provider serving the two States. The provider decided to go to the source: young people themselves. It brought together six focus groups made up of runaway and homeless youth, asking them, “What do you think it means to be on an advisory board?”

Under the guidance of adult facilitators, the young people discussed that and other questions, talking about their past leadership experiences, what they would need to know before joining an advisory board, and what would make participation a good experience. Now, the training and technical assistance provider uses the youths’ suggestions to help agencies in its region more meaningfully engage their young clients in decision-making.

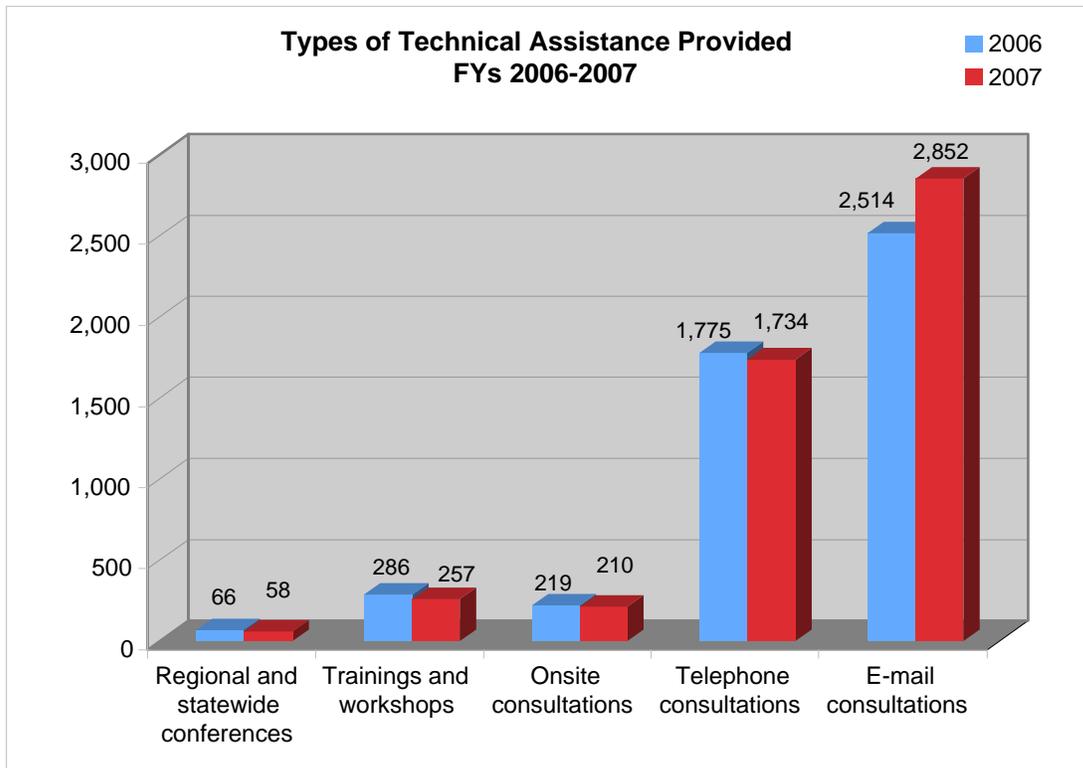
In FYs 2006 and 2007, FYSB used 10 Regional Training and Technical Assistance Providers to give Runaway and Homeless Youth Program grantees this kind of guidance. The providers trained staff members, helped find potential funding sources, assisted with grantwriting, and connected agencies to peers who have worked through similar issues. By providing these services, they made sure runaway and homeless youth grantees had the tools they needed to serve runaway, homeless, and street youth as effectively as possible, in a welcoming and well-managed environment.

#### **A Coordinated Network**

Congress first established the runaway and homeless youth training and technical assistance system as “coordinated networks” of providers through amendments to the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act in 1977 (Public Law 95–115). In 2003, Congress reauthorized the system through FY 2008 via Part D, Section 342, of the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act, as amended (Public Law 108–96).

In FYs 2006 and 2007, FYSB funded training and technical assistance providers in each of the 10 ACF regions, selecting them through a competitive process. Each organization primarily served FYSB-funded runaway and homeless youth programs, potential grantees, and others in its region. At the same time, the groups worked together to identify and solve problems of national concern.

Each training and technical assistance provider offered technical assistance in a variety of ways, depending on the needs and geographic distribution of the grantees in its region. The providers sponsored or cosponsored dozens of regional and statewide conferences; held hundreds of trainings, workshops, and onsite consultation sessions; and gave thousands of pieces of advice over the phone or by e-mail.



## Responding to Varied Needs

RHY grantees are a diverse group with varied needs. They include small, single-service agencies and larger organizations that offer comprehensive services. Some are relatively new nonprofits while others have served their communities for many years. They may work with urban, suburban, or rural populations.

To accommodate the diversity of runaway and homeless youth grantees, training and technical assistance providers had to do their best to respond appropriately to every request for help, taking into account the circumstances of the agency asking for assistance. They did so in a number of ways.

At one experienced transitional living program, staff struggled with youth who acted out and did not abide by the program's rules. The training and technical assistance provider in that region worked with program staff to create new policies that youth could more easily live by.

First, they developed a more flexible chore schedule. Now, youth do their chores with fewer reminders from staff.

### Keeping Grantees Informed

In FYs 2006 and 2007, training and technical assistance providers produced many print and online materials including, among many others:

**The newsletters *Into Practice*, *Currents*, *ConneXions*, and *The Ninth Wave***, featuring news, research, promising practices, funding announcements, and information about events, trainings, and conferences

**Fact sheets** on the services made available by the **McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act**, which mandates immediate access to public schools for runaway and homeless young people and supports their education needs

**Tips** for inputting and updating **Runaway and Homeless Youth Management Information System (RHYMIS) records**, so that grantees can accurately reflect their performance, especially regarding youths' safe exits from shelters

**Reports on housing options for young adults** leaving transitional living programs and on the ways **executive leadership in the youth services field is changing** as Baby Boomers begin to retire

**Guides** to developing and operating **host home programs for youth in crisis** and to educating and counseling runaway and homeless youth about the **rapid test for HIV infection**

**Weekly e-mail messages** outlining **issues in the field** and announcing funding opportunities, trainings, and conferences

**Online distance learning modules on core issues** related to serving runaway and homeless youth

Next, the agency changed the way it set curfews. Now, each youth's curfew is based on how well the young person meets program expectations related to school or work. If youth receive good grades and keep steady jobs, the program rewards them with a later curfew. Youth like the new system and now regularly come home on time.

Finally, young people were given the opportunity to weigh in on how to fulfill a mandatory volunteering requirement. Now, youth and staff can choose how they volunteer their time.

In addition to working one-on-one with agencies, training and technical assistance providers looked for solutions to region-wide problems. Recognizing that agencies in its region had difficulty hiring and retaining qualified staff, one training and technical assistance provider offered a training meant to develop "youth worker competency."

The session taught new employees the specific skills and knowledge they would need to effectively advocate for runaway and homeless youth. Agencies in the region report that as a result of the training, newer, inexperienced staff are better prepared to work with at-risk youth, are more confident in their ability to deal with crises, and are less likely to quit.

In the wake of Hurricane Katrina and other devastating natural disasters of the past several years, another training and technical assistance provider trained coastal programs to prepare for weather-related emergencies. The provider also developed and put in place a system for communicating with Federal staff and other agencies in the event of a severe storm or other large-scale emergency.

When a runaway and homeless youth program in its region encountered young people victimized by human traffickers, a provider saw the need for a far-reaching response. Working with the

agency, a farm worker coalition, and the Florida State University Center for the Advancement of Human Rights, it developed safety and outreach protocols for working with victims of human trafficking. By sharing the protocols with runaway and homeless youth programs, the provider is raising awareness about human trafficking in its region.

One training and technical assistance provider collected data from each runaway program in Wisconsin, producing a statewide picture of clientele, including demographics, common problems faced by youth, and the number of youth exiting safely from programs. The provider also coordinated a statewide effort to develop Safe and Drug Free School initiatives. As a result, 23 programs submitted collaborative applications for funding to the State's department of family services; all 23 programs were successful.

Another provider surveyed more than 1,000 homeless youth in New York City. The survey was designed to establish a baseline of the number of youth in the city who may be homeless or at risk of homelessness and to investigate their needs. The survey's results will be published in 2008.

### **Playing a Role in FYSB's Monitoring System**

Training and technical assistance providers support the Runaway and Homeless Youth Program Monitoring System (see Chapter 9) by working with grantees to fix problems and address areas for improvement flagged by monitors. In this way, the technical assistance providers played an important role in ensuring the overall quality of FYSB's runaway and homeless youth programs in FYs 2006 and 2007.

To help a relatively new basic center improve its protocols for supervising youth and keeping them safe, one training and technical assistance provider sent a specialist to spend four days at the agency, working alongside program staff. When a young person came to the center needing immediate help, the specialist showed staff what to do and helped them establish better ways of supervising youth. He also trained staff on how to connect emotionally with clients, assess risk, and prevent disagreements from turning into fights. Since the four-day visit, program staff have implemented new procedures, increased their ability to connect with clients and prevent escalations, and established routine safety precautions.

Another training and technical assistance provider worked with a basic center grantee that was out of compliance in a number of ways, primarily because of persistent staff turnover. The provider identified several ways to use staffing changes as opportunities for program improvement. Technical assistance specialists trained program staff in Basic Center Program standards and Positive Youth Development, or PYD, principles, focusing on how to involve youth in designing and delivering the program's services. The specialists also gave program staff resource packets on outreach, case management, and aftercare planning and linked the program's new residential director with a network of peers who could provide ongoing support.

When peer monitors found an agency was not in compliance with certain Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements, the training and technical assistance provider in its region proposed solutions to the grantee. Suggesting the use of host homes to meet ADA regulations,

the provider helped the agency research that option in its community. The agency now places wheelchair-bound clients in licensed foster homes.

In some cases, training and technical assistance providers arrange for grantees to share their strengths with one another. One agency's monitoring report noted high marks in all areas except its client files, which were poorly organized. Meanwhile, a nearby agency received high praise for its client records. The regional training and technical assistance provider arranged for a staff member from the second agency to spend a day helping the first group reorganize its filing system, an approach that allowed both agencies to learn from each other.

One monitoring report recommended that a grantee develop a street outreach policy and procedures manual, visit and receive training from other street outreach programs, and develop clear policies for responding to street youth requesting shelter. The regional training and technical assistance provider gave the grantee sample street outreach policy manuals and matched them with another grantee they could visit to get advice. Staff at the monitored grantee made several changes to their street outreach program, developed a policy and procedures manual, and, based on their visit to the other grantee, created a spreadsheet to organize their data tracking system and help them collect more complete follow-up data on youth served.

## **Collaborating Across Regions**

As part of their mission to ensure consistent quality in runaway and homeless youth services across the nation, FYSB's training and technical assistance providers regularly collaborate on special projects that address issues of national interest. In FYs 2006 and 2007, a number of these initiatives bolstered FYSB's efforts to increase the number of youth who exit runaway and homeless youth programs safely (i.e., leaving for a private residence or another shelter rather than going back to the streets) and to ensure positive outcomes for all young people in FYSB grantee programs.

Making sure that young people who leave transitional living programs continue to have a safe, affordable place to live is a challenge for grantees, especially in parts of the country with skyrocketing housing costs. A national study compiled by FYSB training and technical assistance providers in FY 2006 (*Where to Now? Innovative Housing Options for Young Adults Leaving TLPs*) explores housing models designed for graduates of transitional living programs. It examines the design of these models, why they were created, their outcomes, and their cost (both in dollars and in staff time) and highlights innovative practices that social service agencies are using to secure stable housing for young adults leaving transitional living programs.

The training and technical assistance providers also took on the task of analyzing and sharing "safe exit" data collected by the Runaway and Homeless Youth Management Information System (RHYMIS). One training and technical assistance provider has taken the lead on this project, keeping grantees up to date on FYSB news, RHYMIS data, performance goals, and strategies to improve grantee performance, especially regarding safe exits.

In addition, the regional providers worked together to gather information from a sample of grantees nationwide. Approximately 30 agencies (three from each region, including urban, rural,

and suburban agencies) provided information about how they input, update, and prioritize data and how this affects their safe-exit-rate data in RHYMIS. The report based on this information, *RHYMIS: Goals, Tips, and Traps*, emphasizes the importance of updating RHYMIS properly and recommends ways grantees can improve the accuracy of the data they submit.

One provider has continued in FYs 2006 and 2007 to work on a system designed to help agencies set realistic expectations and goals with clients, identify and organize information, and measure the degree to which their program fosters participant achievement. Called ImProve Outcomes, the project has three components: training, implementation at agencies, and the free downloadable *ImProve Outcomes: Measuring What Matters Most in Child and Youth Services Toolkit*. The provider has worked with FYSB, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, and other government agencies to integrate and streamline information gathering. ImProve is designed to help both government agencies and youth-serving organizations collect the information they need without the undue burden of multiple reporting.

Training and technical assistance providers collaborated to develop grantwriting guides for community- and faith-based organizations applying for Runaway and Homeless Youth Program grants.

One training and technical assistance provider maintained a national Listserv on pregnant and parenting adolescents for Transitional Living Program grantees serving that population.

## **Promoting Positive Youth Development**

An important part of the work training and technical assistance providers do is promoting the PYD approach as a way to improve youth services.

Providers encourage the use of PYD among local youth-serving agencies by offering workshops and training sessions. Twice a year, one training and technical assistance provider brings together teams of youth and adults from around its region for an introduction to Community Youth Development, which combines youth development and community development. Another provider hosted, in FY 2006, a national training of facilitators for the Advancing Youth Development Curriculum, created by the Academy for Educational Development in Washington, DC. Both providers gave participants the tools to put PYD into practice back home.

Training and technical assistance providers also lead by example, creating opportunities for young people in their own organizations. For example, one provider has four young adults on its board, and with their leadership, began offering mini-grants for youth-led service projects in FY 2007.

## **Part III**

### **Research and Evaluation**

To ensure the quality of federally funded runaway and homeless youth programs, the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act authorizes FYSB to collect information about grantees and evaluate their programs. FYSB also has the authority to make grants for research, evaluation, demonstration, and service projects that increase knowledge about runaway and homeless youth and improve services for them.

Chapters 7–9 describe FYSB’s Runaway and Homeless Youth Monitoring System, through which runaway and homeless youth professionals assess their peers’ programs; the Runaway and Homeless Youth Management Information System, a computerized method of collecting demographic and other information about youth served by FYSB grantees; and the Bureau’s research and demonstration activities, ongoing in nine States.

## **Chapter 7**

### **Runaway and Homeless Youth Program Monitoring System**

To young people like Crystal, the services provided by runaway and homeless youth programs should, ideally, appear seamless. But behind the scenes, Runaway and Homeless Youth Program grantees face a long list of to-dos every day.

To properly serve youth, runaway and homeless youth providers must offer a host of interconnected services. Depending on what programs they run, grantees act as a kind of housing agency, education and mental health counseling service, employment agency, financial consultant, and life coach—all rolled into one. They must identify and reach out to potential clients. They must conform to State and local licensing requirements. They must properly supervise the young people in their care, keep them from landing back out on the street, and provide many other kinds of support.

Most programs accomplish all of the above with ease. A few need help to become better.

#### **The Monitoring System**

To maintain the quality of the local programs it funds, FYSB assesses each program's services and offers program administrators the opportunity to improve, if necessary. The process through which FYSB does this assessment is called the Runaway and Homeless Youth Program Monitoring System.

Monitoring teams made up of FYSB staff and trained peer monitors from FYSB grantee agencies conduct the assessments by visiting programs, reviewing documents, and meeting with administrators, direct service staff, staff from coordinating agencies, and, sometimes, youth and parents. Such intervention ensures the best possible service for runaway and homeless youth across the nation.

In 2007, 20 regional youth specialists previously assigned to cover various ACF programs became dedicated FYSB staff. This reorganization has resulted in greater oversight and accountability.

FYSB monitors visited 117 runaway and homeless youth programs in FY 2006 and 131 programs in FY 2007. During monitoring visits, Federal reviewers address financial and compliance issues. Peer monitors address program issues, provide technical assistance, and share best practices. They might suggest ways to increase the number of youth a program serves or train staff on how to take cultural differences, language, and disability into account when working with clients. They also might share tips on keeping thorough client records or explain how to involve youth in updating rules and policies, such as curfews.

## The Peer Monitors

Peer monitors play an important role in the monitoring system. Selected because of their experience and knowledge as managers of FYSB-funded programs, they bring an expert perspective to the process. This background enables them to evaluate project performance against their own programmatic and administrative experiences and to share with grantees successful approaches to working with runaway and homeless youth.

Every other year, new peer monitors attend a two-day National Peer Monitor Training. They learn their roles and responsibilities as peer monitors, as well as how to collect findings and document them in the monitoring instrument. To practice monitoring skills before going out into the field, each trainee completes a monitoring visit at a local FYSB grantee agency.

## The Visit

Prior to the meeting, an On Site Review Protocol is sent to the grantee. Reviewers become familiar with the program in advance, leaving time during the site review for interaction, observation, and interviews.

Monitoring visits typically include the following activities:

**Entrance conference:** Reviewers meet with project staff to introduce themselves, explain the monitoring process, and identify programmatic areas that staff want to strengthen.

**Interviews:** Over several days, reviewers meet with the executive director, supervisors, administrators, frontline staff, and clients to discuss the programs' direct services, project development, resource coordination (including the extent to which the project provides opportunities for youth participation), and administrative issues.

**Observation:** Reviewers inspect facilities to determine safety; they also observe interactions among youth and staff and determine how well staff plan and supervise activities for young people.

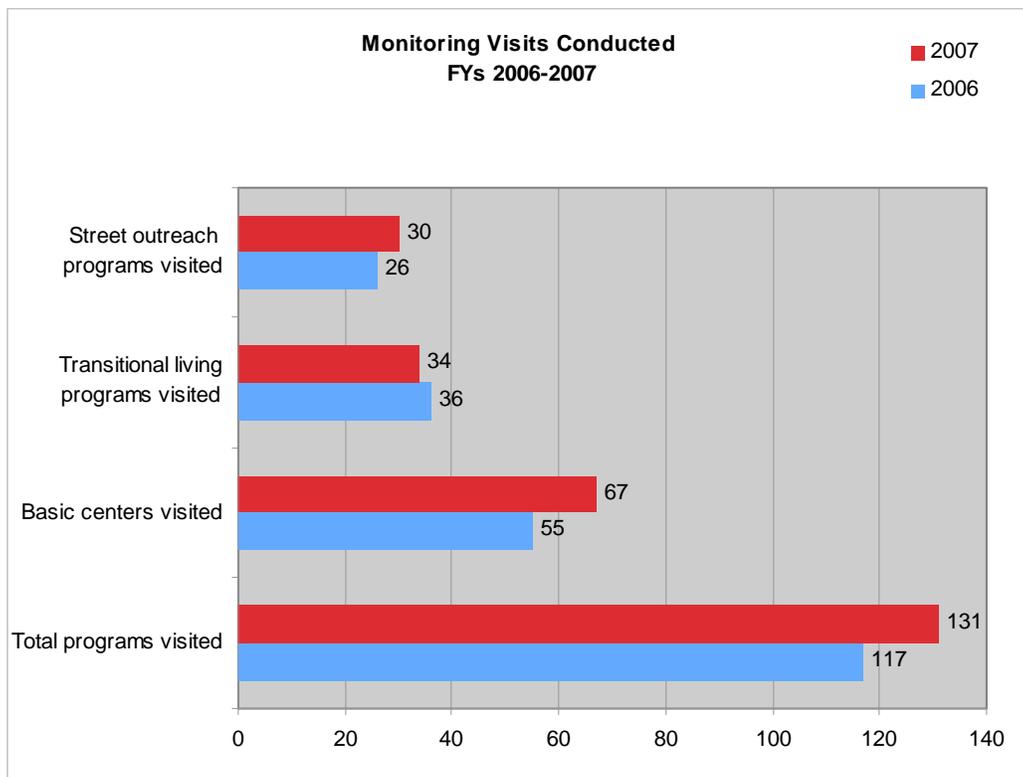
**Document reviews:** Monitors go over documents including policy and procedures manuals, financial reports, data on the demographic makeup of the client population and on the services they receive, annual reports, staffing charts, job descriptions, board notes, client files, and case notes.

**Exit conference:** The monitoring team meets with project staff to give feedback and discuss project strengths and areas that would benefit from improvement or that are out of compliance. Grantee staff can, if they wish, comment on the monitoring process and clarify issues that have arisen during the visit.

## After the Visit

The monitoring team prepares a written report that identifies strengths and areas that require corrective action within a specified time frame.

Grantees have the opportunity to review and respond to draft monitoring reports. FYSB's Training and Technical Assistance Providers offer help to grantees whose programs do not comply with requirements. In FYs 2006 (17) and 2007 (14), 31 of the 248 programs were found not to be in compliance and a corrective action plan was taken. (See pages 45-50 for examples of how training and technical assistance providers helped grantees improve in response to monitoring visit reports.)



## **Chapter 8**

### **RHYMIS, the Runaway and Homeless Youth Management Information System**

The local organizations awarded Runaway and Homeless Youth Act grants serve thousands of young people each year. Who are these young people? Are they girls or boys? What is their race and ethnicity? Do they attend school? What services do they receive from FYSB grantees? Where do they go when they leave FYSB-funded programs?

The answers to these questions come from FYSB's Runaway and Homeless Youth Management Information System, known as RHYMIS. Through this system, FYSB holds grantees accountable and ensures that they provide young people with the best possible care. FYSB also uses RHYMIS to keep track of how many young people grantees serve, the types of services they receive, and the issues they face. Even more important, FYSB uses data collected via RHYMIS to determine how many youth exit programs safely, rather than returning to the streets.

The graphs that illustrate Chapters 1 through 3 of this report use data collected in RHYMIS. Grantees submit data twice a year, in the spring and fall.

#### **Near-Perfect Reporting Compliance**

Congress created RHYMIS in 1992 when it authorized funding, through the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act (Public Law 93-415), to implement a national reporting system for programs receiving Federal runaway and homeless youth funds.

Until the end of the 1990s, only about 43 percent of grantees reported on the numbers of youth they served. Part of the problem, grantees said, was that filling out all the paperwork took too long and sapped their ability to provide youth with the highest quality services.

In responding, in FY 2000, the Bureau streamlined the RHYMIS data reporting system, releasing RHYMIS-LITE Version 1.0. The new software eased reporting for grantees and brought the response rate to 99 percent. Through the release of Versions 1.1 and 1.2, FYSB has maintained that high level of reporting. In FYs 2006 and 2007, close to 99 percent of grantees reported on the youth they served.

#### **Continual Improvements**

FYSB refines RHYMIS each year, simplifying some aspects of the system and clarifying others. The Bureau and its specialists continue to train the staff of new grantees and educate continuing grantees about how to input data so that program achievements are accurately recorded. In FYs 2006 and 2007, RHYMIS's toll-free technical support hotline and e-mail help desk responded to a total of 3,274 requests for assistance.

In FYs 2006 and 2007, FYSB developed a new section in RHYMIS in which grantees could report more easily on “preventive services,” such as family counseling or mediation, meant to prevent youth from running away. The section will also allow grantees to report on other services, provided in the home or through various community resources, that are used as an alternative to taking youth into shelters. The new reporting section will be added to RHYMIS in FY 2008.

Much behind-the-scenes work keeps RHYMIS operating smoothly. To ensure that programs submit their data, FYSB and its contractor stay in touch with programs throughout their grant periods, as well as update and validate data periodically.

FYSB also has made an effort over the past five years to improve access to national RHYMIS data. In FYs 2002 and 2003, FYSB released the National Extranet Optimized Runaway and Homeless Youth Management Information System, or NEORHYMIS (<https://extranet.acf.hhs.gov/rhymis>). This online companion to the reporting system allows grantees and others to access and analyze information about youth served by FYSB programs. Each year, FYSB uploads the national RHYMIS database and reports for the previous year to the NEORHYMIS Web site. Youth service providers and the general public can review and cite information on the site. Many grantees use the data in their efforts to attract non-Federal funding or to evaluate the successes of their programs.

## **Chapter 9**

### **Research and Demonstration Program**

In nine States across the country, youth leadership is taking root, through pilot ventures funded by FYSB.

For instance, in Northeast Lexington, Kentucky, young people surveyed residential areas, recording what they saw. They used the data they collected to determine what services neighborhood youth need.

In Massachusetts, youth from the Grove Hall neighborhood of Boston work with the police to solve community problems.

In Chicago, young people from the historic Bronzeville neighborhood serve on a youth-run advisory board, receiving stipends for the work they do to organize community events for their peers.

These efforts are part of the Positive Youth Development State and Local Collaboration Demonstration Projects, which were launched in 2003 and will last through 2008.

The Positive Youth Development approach to working with young people, also called PYD, suggests that helping youth achieve their full potential is the best way to prevent them from engaging in risky behaviors. The FYSB-funded demonstration projects take that idea and put it into practice.

Through a variety of activities, young people create opportunities for themselves and their peers, feel useful and connected, and learn skills that will help them make successful transitions to adulthood.

#### **Ten Years of Research on Collaborative Approaches to Youth Development**

FYSB has long funded research and demonstration projects that enhance knowledge about how to best provide services for youth, especially those in at-risk situations. The Bureau's Research and Demonstration Program is authorized through FY 2008 by Part D, Section 343, of the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act.

Activities supported by the program aim to enhance knowledge about runaway and homeless youth and increase the efficacy of government and nonprofit services targeted at the most at-risk young people.

The State and Local Collaboration Demonstration Projects evolved out of FYSB's role as the Federal agency that promotes PYD. Over the years, Bureau staff have observed runaway and homeless youth programs using PYD to give youth the chance to exercise leadership, build skills, get involved, and make a difference in their communities. The self-confidence, trust, and

practical knowledge that young people gained from these opportunities helped them grow into responsible, productive, and self-sufficient adults.

Because youth programs are thought to be more effective when based on a PYD approach, FYSB set out to test the impact this approach to working with young people would have if promoted within a State. In 1998, the Bureau initiated the first phase of the demonstration, called the Positive Youth Development State Collaboration Demonstration Projects. Thirteen States participated in the five-year project. The original grants enabled the States to assess statewide policies and collect data relating to youth and youth services, provide PYD training, involve youth in program planning and policymaking, and develop statewide coalitions of youth-serving agencies.

After seeing the success of the State projects, FYSB devised a second phase that encouraged local pilot communities to work with the States to promote PYD. The ongoing State and Local Collaboration Demonstration Projects was designed on the assumption that communities have different challenges and strengths and, as a consequence, youth development strategies will likely be more successful when planned and coordinated locally, with support from State agencies and officials.

FYSB chose nine States (Arizona, Illinois, Iowa, Kentucky, Louisiana,

Massachusetts, Nebraska, New York, and Oregon) to take part in Phase 2. The Bureau awarded a total of \$1.9 million to the States in FY 2006 and \$1.9 in FY 2007.

Grantees are State-level agencies that collaborate with local nonprofits and the community's FYSB-funded runaway and homeless youth provider to build relationships with neighborhood organizations, local government agencies, nonprofits, schools—and, of course, young people.

The projects focus on three main objectives:

1. Increasing collaboration among State and local entities;
2. Building community partnerships that engage adults and youth equally; and

<b>Nine States Run Demonstration Projects To Improve Collaboration on Youth Issues</b>	
1. Arizona	Murphy School District, Phoenix
2. Illinois	Bronzeville Neighborhood, Chicago
3. Iowa	Southeast Iowa City
4. Kentucky	Martin Luther King and Woodhill Neighborhoods, Lexington
5. Louisiana	East Baton Rouge Metro-Council District 7, Baton Rouge
6. Massachusetts	Grove Hall neighborhood, Roxbury, Boston
7. Nebraska	Box Butte, Dawes, Scotts Bluff, and Sheridan Counties
8. New York	Rochester County, Sector 8
9. Oregon	City of Eugene

3. Promoting opportunities for youth to use their time positively, express themselves in positive ways, and become engaged in their communities.

## **Acting Locally**

In the first year of the State and Local Collaboration Demonstration Projects, each of the nine participating States designated a local neighborhood as the focus of its work throughout the grant's five years.

The populations of the nine demonstration sites are representative of the diversity of the United States. A number of the sites have high concentrations of minority residents, including Native Americans, Latinos, and African Americans. Other sites have racially and ethnically mixed populations.

The nine States have already made strides testing ways that adults and youth, community- and faith-based organizations, and local and State governments can work together. Though they still have work to do, the States have gone far in coordinating services for young people and involving them in improving their communities.

In FYs 2006 and 2007, the projects:

- Hosted community meetings, an intertribal powwow, career fairs, summer activities fairs, and other events
- Worked to improve health and human services provided to Native American and other youth
- Developed or improved afterschool programs for youth at risk of failing or dropping out
- Supported or coordinated neighborhood-, local-, and State-level youth advisory councils
- Provided training and technical assistance in youth development to communities and youth-serving organizations
- Worked to improve interactions between youth and police
- Encouraged youth participation in local and State public policy and government
- Opened neighborhood youth centers, providing a safe place for youth, as well as a range of social and educational programs
- Organized camping retreats, where youth facilitated discussions and led activities
- Solidified youth and adult partnerships, giving adults increased confidence in the youths' abilities and allowing them to view youth as leaders in the community
- Developed an asset-based youth development model touted as a best practice for enhancing curricula in school systems and for workforce development efforts
- Supported court-based youth development efforts, including the development of alternatives to secure detention for court-involved youth
- Provided housing vouchers for youth aging out of the child protective services and juvenile justice systems
- Supported collaborative efforts to better meet the educational needs of youth in State care and helped foster youth attend college

- Sustained strong partnerships in their communities and expanded their work to additional communities or throughout their States

To facilitate information sharing among projects, FYSB moderated monthly conference calls for adult project participants. In addition, a youth blog and monthly youth-only conference calls allowed young people in the project States to share local lessons and experiences.

FYSB also held annual meetings that brought the projects together. At each meeting, youth from the nine State projects collaborated with each other to create presentations about the issues that concern young people.

Since the start of the demonstration project, Federal funding from FYSB has enabled the nine communities to leverage resources from State and local partners (in the form of financial support, volunteers, and donations of space and materials) and further expand the PYD movement. A staff member in the Kentucky project describes the demonstration's impact in this way: "Through the FYSB grant, we've created opportunities for young people to really be involved in creating positive change. If young people are the future, we need to give them these opportunities today so they can be prepared."

# Appendix A

## Requirements of Street Outreach Program Grantees

Part E, Section 351 of the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act, as amended by the Runaway, Homeless, and Missing Children Protection Act (Public Law 108–96), provides the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services the authority to make grants for the purpose of providing street-based services to runaway and homeless and street youth who have been subjected to, or are at risk of being subjected to, sexual abuse, prostitution, or sexual exploitation. FYSB developed the following performance standards, which require street outreach grantees to:

- (1) describe its youth development approach to serving street youth, including how youth will be involved in the design, operation and evaluation of the program;
- (2) describe current or proposed street outreach effort, including framework and philosophy, hours of operation, staffing pattern and staff support, services provided and efforts to deal with sexual abuse and exploitation;
- (3) describe a plan to provide street-based outreach services where street youth congregate and during hours when youth will most likely avail themselves of those services (late afternoon, evenings, nights and weekends);
- (4) show that there is guaranteed access to emergency shelter services that can be made available to street youth;
- (5) describe the range of services that will be offered to street youth and how those services will be provided. At a minimum, plans should be provided for street-based outreach and education, survival aid, individual assessment, counseling, prevention and education activities, information and referral services, crisis intervention and follow-up support;
- (6) discuss the expected impact of the SOP on the organization's capacity to effectively provide other services to runaway and homeless youth in the community, such as temporary shelter and transitional living services, if the organization is funded by FYSB to provide these services as well;
- (7) explain, if applicants propose to serve a specific RHY population (e.g. single sex programs, gay and lesbian youth, a particular ethnic group, etc.), why the population requires focused services, how the services to be provided will meet the special needs of the population, and how the applicant will make referrals or otherwise address the needs of otherwise eligible runaway, homeless and street youth who are not in the population the applicant intends to serve;
- (8) demonstrate that supportive training and appropriate street-based outreach supervision is provided to street outreach staff and volunteers;

(9) show that staff and volunteer gender, ethnicity and life experiences are relevant to those of the young people being served;

(10) describe how the project has established or will establish formal service linkages with other social service, law enforcement, educational, housing, vocational, welfare, legal service, drug treatment, health care and other relevant service agencies in order to ensure appropriate service referrals for the project clients;

(11) describe current or anticipated barriers to effective delivery of services and actions the program will take to overcome these barriers to serving this population;

(12) describe procedures for maintaining confidentiality of records on the youth and families served;

(13) describe how the activities implemented under this project will be continued by the agency once Federal funding for the project has ended and . . . describe specific plans for accomplishing program phase-out in the event the applicant cannot obtain new operating funds at the end of the 36-month project;

(14) agree to gather and submit program and client data required by FYSB through the Runaway and Homeless Youth Management Information System (RHYMIS);

(15) agree to cooperate with any research or evaluation efforts sponsored by the Administration for Children and Families; and

(16) agree to submit the required Basic Center (BC) or Transitional Living Program (TLP) Annual Report to the Secretary of HHS as a Basic Center and other required program and financial reports, as instructed by FYSB.

## **Appendix B**

### **Requirements of Basic Center Program Grantees**

Part A, Section 312(b) of the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act, as amended by the Missing, Exploited, and Runaway Children Protection Act (Public Law 108–96), requires that basic center grantees:

(1) shall operate a runaway and homeless youth center located in an area which is demonstrably frequented by or easily reachable by runaway and homeless youth;

(2) shall use such assistance to establish, to strengthen, or to fund a runaway and homeless youth center, or a locally controlled facility providing temporary shelter, that has—

(A) a maximum capacity of not more than 20 youth, except where the applicant assures that the State where the center or locally controlled facility is located has a State or local law or regulation that requires a higher maximum to comply with licensure requirements for child and youth serving facilities; and

(B) a ratio of staff to youth that is sufficient to ensure adequate supervision and treatment;

(3) shall develop adequate plans for contacting the parents or other relatives of the youth and ensuring the safe return of the youth according to the best interests of the youth, for contacting local government officials pursuant to informal arrangements established with such officials by the runaway and homeless youth center, and for providing for other appropriate alternative living arrangements;

(4) shall develop an adequate plan for ensuring—

(A) proper relations with law enforcement personnel, health and mental health care personnel, social service personnel, school system personnel, and welfare personnel;

(B) coordination with McKinney-Vento school district liaisons, designated under section 722(g)(1)(J)(ii) of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11432(g)(1)(J)(ii)), to assure that runaway and homeless youth are provided information about the educational services available to such youth under subtitle B of title VII of that Act; and

(C) the return of runaway and homeless youth from correctional institutions;

(5) shall develop an adequate plan for providing counseling and aftercare services to such youth, for encouraging the involvement of their parents or legal guardians in counseling, and for ensuring, as possible, that aftercare services will be provided to those youth who are returned beyond the State in which the runaway and homeless youth center is located;

(6) shall develop an adequate plan for establishing or coordinating with outreach programs designed to attract persons (including, where applicable, persons who are members of a cultural minority and persons with limited ability to speak English) who are eligible to receive services for which a grant under subsection (a) may be expended;

(7) shall keep adequate statistical records profiling the youth and family members whom it serves (including youth who are not referred to out-of-home shelter services), except that records maintained on individual runaway and homeless youth shall not be disclosed without the consent of the individual youth and parent or legal guardian to anyone other than another agency compiling statistical records or a government agency involved in the disposition of criminal charges against an individual runaway and homeless youth, and reports or other documents based on such statistical records shall not disclose the identity of individual runaway and homeless youth;

(8) shall submit annual reports to the Secretary detailing how the center has been able to meet the goals of its plans and reporting the statistical summaries required by paragraph (7);

(9) shall demonstrate its ability to operate under accounting procedures and fiscal control devices as required by the Secretary;

(10) shall submit a budget estimate with respect to the plan submitted by such center under this subsection;

(11) shall supply such other information as the Secretary reasonably deems necessary; and

(12) shall submit to the Secretary an annual report that includes, with respect to the year for which the report is submitted—

(A) information regarding the activities carried out under this part;

(B) the achievements of the project under this part carried out by the applicant; and

(C) statistical summaries describing—

(i) the number and the characteristics of the runaway and homeless youth, and youth at risk of family separation, who participate in the project; and

(ii) the services provided to such youth by the project.

## Appendix C

### Requirements of Transitional Living Program Grantees

Part B, Section 322(a) of the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act, as amended by the Missing, Exploited, and Runaway Children Protection Act (Public Law 108–96), requires that transitional living grantees agree:

(1) to provide, directly or indirectly, shelter (such as group homes, including maternity group homes, host family homes, and supervised apartments) and services (including information and counseling services in basic life skills which shall include money management, budgeting, consumer education, and use of credit, parenting skills (as appropriate), interpersonal skill building, educational advancement, job attainment skills, and mental and physical health care) to homeless youth;

(2) to provide such shelter and such services to individual homeless youth throughout a continuous period not to exceed 540 days, except that a youth in a program under this part who is under the age of 18 years on the last day of the 540-day period may, if otherwise qualified for the program, remain in the program until the earlier of the youth's 18<sup>th</sup> birthday or the 180<sup>th</sup> day after the end of the 540-day period;

(3) to provide, directly or indirectly, onsite supervision at each shelter facility that is not a family home;

(4) that such shelter facility used to carry out such project shall have the capacity to accommodate not more than 20 individuals (excluding staff);

(5) to provide a number of staff sufficient to ensure that all homeless youth participating in such project receive adequate supervision and services;

(6) to provide a written transitional living plan to each youth based on an assessment of such youth's needs, designed to help the transition from supervised participation in such project to independent living or another appropriate living arrangement;

(7) to develop an adequate plan to ensure proper referral of homeless youth to social service, law enforcement, educational (including post-secondary education), vocational, training (including services and programs for youth available under the Workforce Investment Act of 1998), welfare (including programs under the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996), legal service, and health care programs and to help integrate and coordinate such services for youths;

(8) to provide for the establishment of outreach programs designed to attract individuals who are eligible to participate in the project;

(9) to submit to the Secretary an annual report that includes information regarding the activities carried out with funds under this part, the achievements of the project under this part carried out by the applicant and statistical summaries describing the number and the characteristics of the homeless youth who participate in such project, and the services provided to such youth by such project, in the year for which the report is submitted;

(10) to implement such accounting procedures and fiscal control devices as the Secretary may require;

(11) to submit to the Secretary an annual budget that estimates the itemized costs to be incurred in the year for which the applicant requests a grant under this part;

(12) to keep adequate statistical records profiling homeless youth which it serves and not to disclose the identity of individual homeless youth in reports or other documents based on such statistical records;

(13) not to disclose records maintained on individual homeless youth without the informed consent of the individual youth to anyone other than an agency compiling statistical records;

(14) to provide to the Secretary such other information as the Secretary may reasonably require; and

(15) to coordinate services with McKinney-Vento school district liaison, designated under section 722(g)(1)(J)(ii) of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11432 (g)(1)(J)(ii)), to assure that runaway and homeless youth are provided information about the educational services available to such youth under subtitle B of title VII of that Act.

In addition to conforming to Transitional Living Program requirements as defined by the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act, maternity group homes must offer the same services as [Transitional Living Program] grantees, along with the following services, either directly or by referral, to pregnant or parenting teens:

- Adult supervision;
- Parenting skills;
- Family budgeting;
- Health and nutrition;
- Life skills;
- Child care;
- Transportation;
- Parenting instruction and classes;
- Family planning, abstinence education and pregnancy prevention services; and
- Assistance connecting with outside services.