

Report to Congress

on the

Runaway and Homeless Youth Programs of the
Family and Youth Services Bureau

for Fiscal Years
2008 and 2009

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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 2008 and 2009. Grantees submit data twice a year, in the spring and fall.

FY 2008 RHYMIS data included in this report reflect information collected in fall 2008 and spring 2009. FY 2009 RHYMIS data included in this report reflect information collected in fall 2009. Information collected in spring 2010 may alter the FY 2009 service provision numbers included in this report.

Introduction

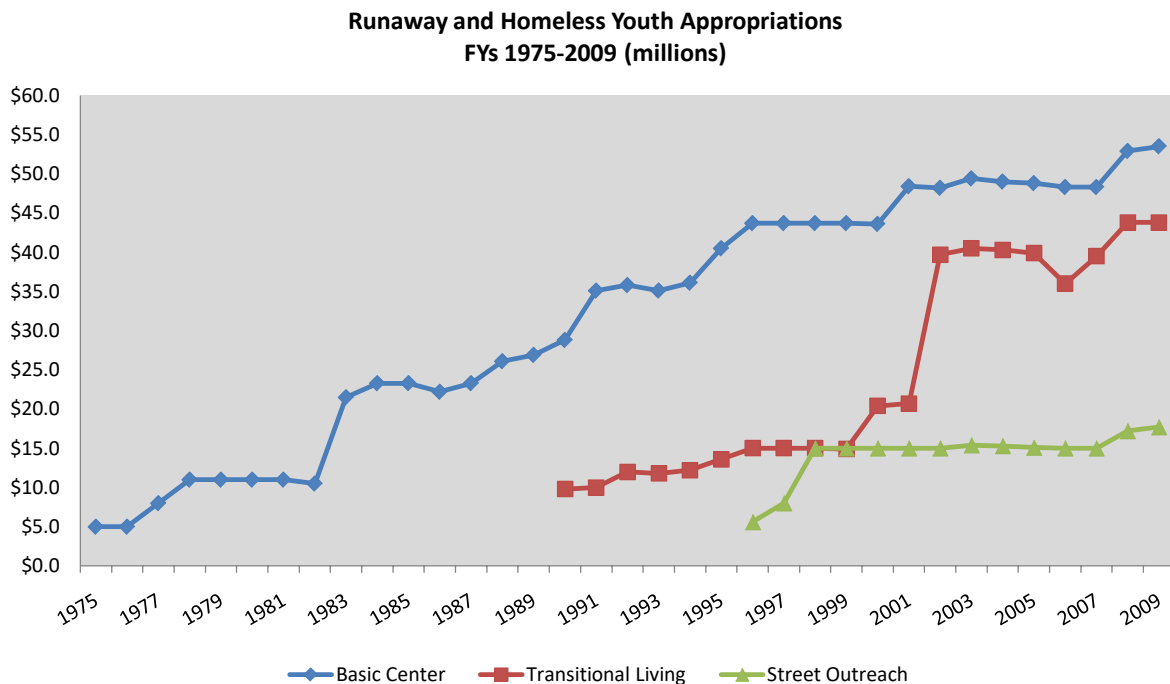
According to a 2002 report from the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, between 1.6 and 2.8 million young people run away from their homes, are asked to leave home, or become homeless in the United States each year.

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, 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.

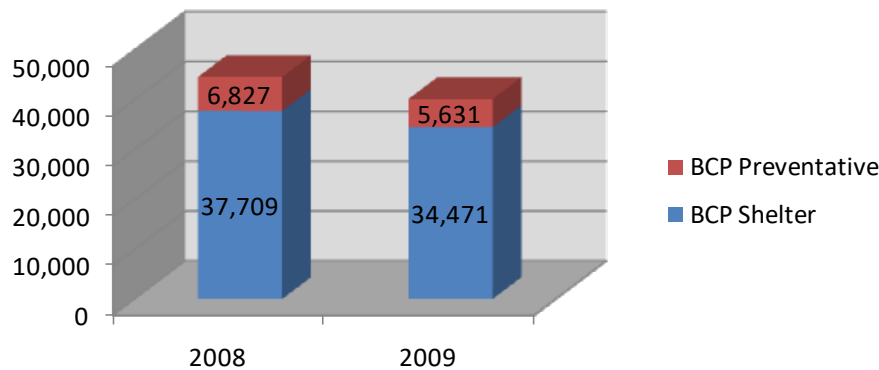
FYSB achieves this mission through its three **Runaway and Homeless Youth (RHY) Programs**, rated “effective” by the Office of Management and Budget:

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

Authorized by Parts A, B, and E of the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act, as last amended by the Reconnecting Homeless Youth Act of 2008 (P.L.110-378), 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. Three types of programs provide services for these youth in crisis shelters, through long-term support, and on the streets:

1. **The Basic Center Program:** Federally funded basic centers, sometimes called BCPs, provide youth, up to age 18, with emergency short-term (21 days) 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.

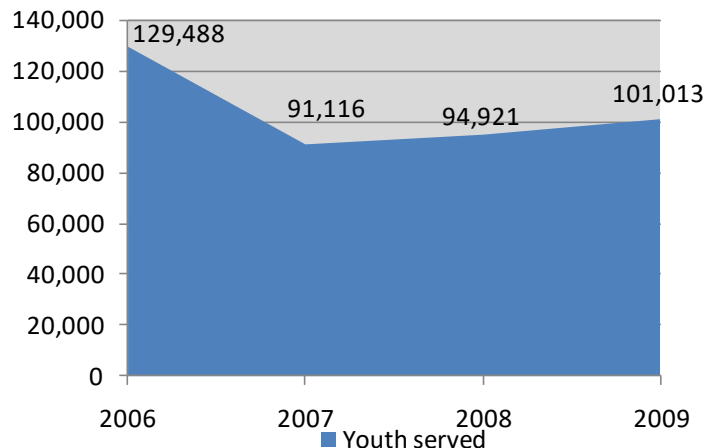
**Youth Entering Basic Center Programs
FYs 2008-2009**



Basic centers provided services to 44,536 youth in FY 2008 and 40,102 youth in FY 2009. Approximately 85 percent were entered directly into shelters. The rest received preventative services to avert the need for sheltering.

Runaway and Homeless Youth Program grantees also made 195,934 “brief service contacts” with youth in FYs 2008 and 2009. During such a contact, youth drop in or call a youth center and receive help without necessarily being admitted to the shelter. Often, grantee staff can counsel youth while they still live at home and can thus prevent them from running away.

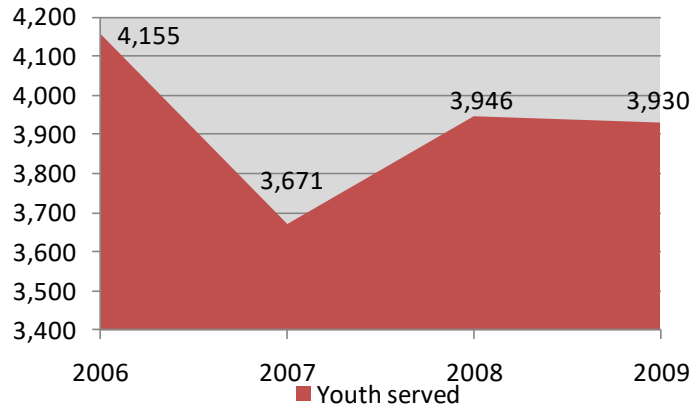
**Youth Served, But Not Admitted
FYs 2006-2009**



- 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 16-21, who cannot 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.

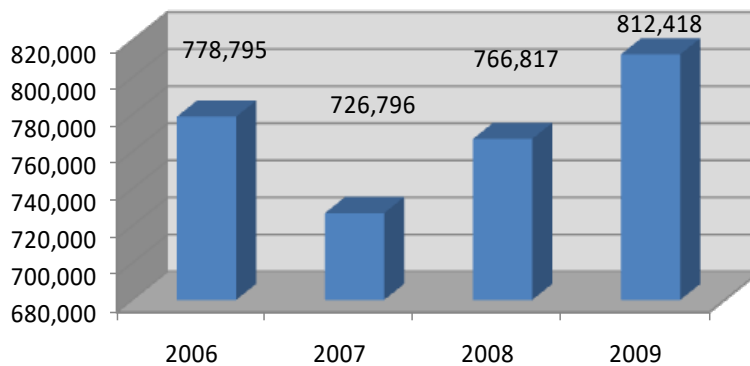
Within the Transitional Living Program, maternity group homes allow young people vulnerable to abuse, neglect, and poverty to live with their children in community-based, adult-supervised environments. In addition to the services that youth receive in all transitional living programs, young people in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

**Youth Entering Transitional Living
FYs 2006-2009**



- 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.

**Street Outreach Contacts With Youth
FYs 2008-2009**



Outreach teams go to the places frequented by runaway 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.

(See Chapters 1–3 for more information on each of the three Runaway and Homeless Youth programs.)

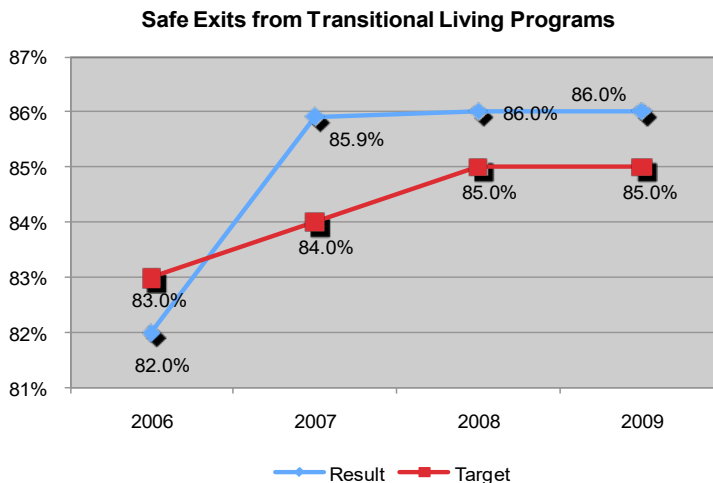
FYSB complements its RHY grant programs with a network of support services:

- 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 **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 RHY 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 2008 and 2009, FYSB’s Runaway and Homeless Youth Programs continued to be rated as effective by the Office of Management and Budget. The rating is based on meeting three fundamental goals: safety, success, and the development of character.

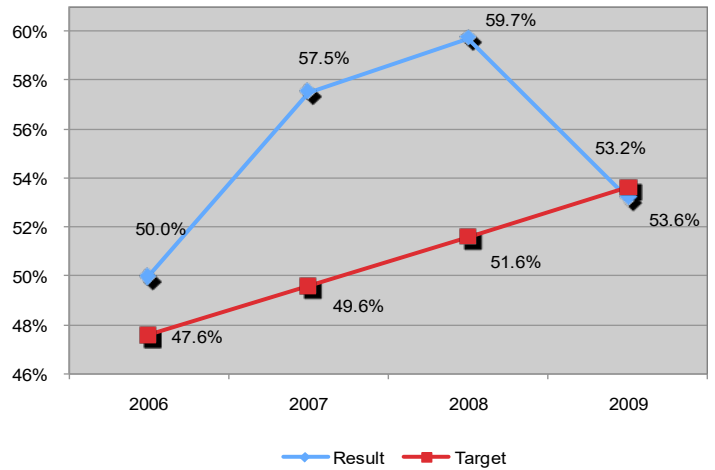


Safety. The “Safe and Appropriate Exits” goal means that, upon discharge from a basic center or transitional living program, a youth has been helped to find a living situation suitable for his or her further development, security, and success.

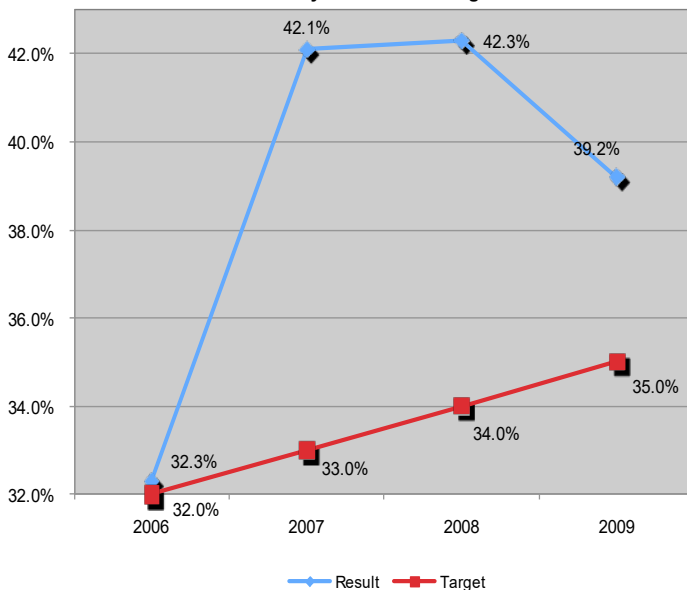
Success. The “Program Completion” goal measures the degree to which transitional living programs enable youth to learn how to make commitments, plan for the future, stick to objectives, gain skills, and seek opportunities.

Development of character. The “Community Service Learning” goal measures the extent to which young people in transitional living programs engage in activities that benefit others as well as themselves.

Youth Completing Transitional Living Programs



Community Service Learning



Overall, the substantial performance gains achieved in FY 2007 were sustained in FYs 2008 and 2009. The statistics exceeded the targets for safe exits and development of character and came very close to target for program completion.

FYSB expects all grantees in the Runaway and Homeless Youth Program to make these goals a part of their service delivery.

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 help 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 2008 and 2009, 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:

- **Teaching youth to make healthy choices.** The 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.
- **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 situations—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. Eight organizations were awarded demonstration grants to engage in efforts to reduce adolescent dating violence. They implemented community awareness activities and education and prevention programs and worked to increase the capacity of youth programs to address domestic violence, and domestic violence programs to serve youth experiencing dating violence, develop training materials and curricula, and develop protocols for effective prevention and intervention strategies that should lead to improved service delivery patterns.
- **Supporting State and local collaboration on youth development.** For 5 years, FYSB’s Positive Youth Development State and Local Collaboration Demonstration Projects explored how local communities could increase opportunities for young people to learn and grow, feel useful and connected, and make successful transitions to adulthood. In FY 2008, the last year of the demonstration, FYSB evaluated how this grant program promoted innovative youth development strategies in the nine grantee States. In FY 2009, FYSB initiated another collaborative State and local demonstration project, Support Systems for Rural Homeless

Youth, and funded six States. (See pages 58–60 for more information about demonstration projects.)

In FYs 2008 and 2009, FYSB also collaborated with other Federal agencies and groups in a variety of ways to promote PYD:

- 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 co-host 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 14th annual Pathways to Adulthood conference took place May 14–16, 2008, in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. The 616 attendees came from all 50 States, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and Guam. The 15th annual conference took place June 1–5, 2009, in San Diego, California. The 435 attendees came from 45 States, the District of Columbia, Guam, and Taiwan.
- 2. Collaborated with the Office of Refugee Resettlement to support unaccompanied alien children.** FYSB worked with this agency to help provide a safe and appropriate environment for minors during the interim period between their transfer into an Unaccompanied Alien Children’s program and their release from custody or removal from the United States by the Department of Homeland Security. When the Office of Refugee Resettlement’s holding facilities became full, FYSB helped to place unaccompanied alien minors in nearby RHY shelters currently funded by the Bureau.
- 3. Supported Helping America’s Youth, a national initiative led by First Lady Laura Bush.** The initiative raised awareness about the challenges facing American youth and worked to motivate caring adults to connect with youth in three key areas: family, school, and community. In FYs 2008 and 2009, FYSB supported the Web site connected to this initiative, an online resource offering information about existing youth programs, promising program approaches, and sources of financial support, and a tool for mapping youth resources in a local community.
- 4. Served on the Coordinating Council on Juvenile Justice (CCJJ) Task Force of the Coordinating Council on Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention.** The Council is an independent organization in the executive branch that coordinates all Federal juvenile programs that work to prevent delinquency, detain or care for unaccompanied juveniles, and relate to missing and exploited children. In FYs 2008 and 2009, FYSB assisted the Council in developing a Web-based toolkit to help Federal managers fund Comprehensive Community Initiatives. These are projects that move beyond fragmented service delivery to undertake fundamental systems change in their efforts to promote child, youth, family, and community well-being.

3. **Served on the Federal Mentoring Council.** Spearheaded by the Corporation for National and Community Service, this interagency group was formed in May 2006 to better coordinate the Federal government's mentoring programs. Its goal is engaging three million new mentors by 2010.
4. **Participated in the Interagency Working Group on Youth Programs.** The Working Group was established in February 2008 by Executive order to promote achievement of positive results for at-risk youth. It does this through creating and supporting a new Federal Interagency Website on Youth (FindYouthInfo.gov) to help interested citizens and decisionmakers plan, implement, and participate in effective programs for at-risk youth; identifying and disseminating promising and effective strategies and practices that support youth; promoting enhanced collaboration at the Federal, State, and local level, as well as with faith-based and community organizations, schools, families, and communities; and engaging government and private organizations in improving the coordination and effectiveness of programs serving and engaging youth.
5. **Participated in Shared Youth Vision.** This interagency working group focuses on the following objectives, outlined in the 2003 *White House Task Force Report on Disadvantaged Youth*: developing and coordinating policy, within existing policy structures, to address the needs of disadvantaged youth; maximizing interagency collaborations to utilize the significant expertise within specific Federal agencies; coordinating Federal research so the government can fund programs that produce results that help disadvantage youth; promoting models of "what works" and helping replicate them nationwide; and developing innovative model strategies that efficiently and effectively respond to the needs of disadvantaged youth.
5. **Participated in the Federal Interagency Forum on School Health and Safety,** formed in February 2008. This group aims to improve communication, coordination, planning, and collaboration among Federal agencies in order to enhance the effectiveness of Federal efforts aimed at improving the education, health, safety, nutrition and physical fitness, and overall well-being of school-aged children and youth.

Making Headway in 2008 and 2009

This report provides information on FYSB's runaway and homeless youth programs in FYs 2008 and 2009. 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 2008 and 2009, 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 last amended by the Reconnecting Homeless Youth Act of 2008 (Public Law 110–378), 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 Basic Center Program, the Transitional Living Program for Older Homeless Youth (which includes maternity group homes), and the Education and Prevention Services to Reduce Sexual Abuse of Runaway, Homeless, and Street Youth Program (known as the Street Outreach Program). Each chapter includes an example how that program helped a particular youth, and each provides information about FY 2008 and 2009 funding levels.

Chapter 1

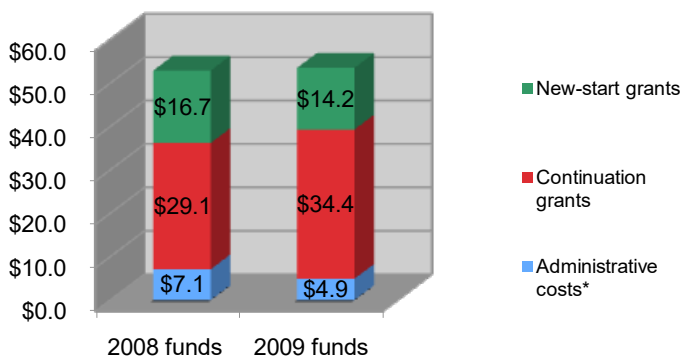
The Basic Center Program

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. 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.

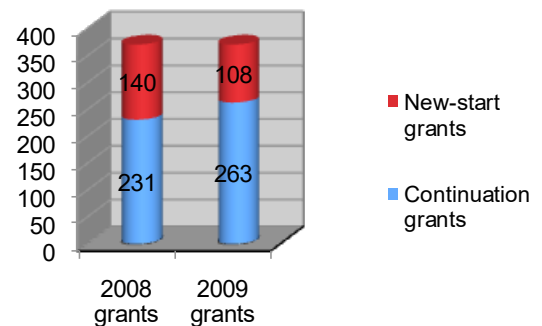
Young people find that emergency shelter and assistance at **basic centers**. These programs, run by community- and faith-based public and private agencies, meet the immediate needs of runaway and homeless youth up to age 18 while staff attempt to reunite them with their families or, if that is not an 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. Prior to September 2008, youth could stay in basic centers for up to 15 days. The stay was subsequently increased to 21 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.

**Basic Center Funding Allocations
FYs 2008-2009 (millions)**



**Basic Center Grants
FYs 2008-2009**



**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 1973 (Public Law 98-415). In October

2008, the program was reauthorized through FY 2013 by the Reconnecting Homeless Youth Act (Public Law 110-378).

In FY 2008, 371 basic centers were funded: 231 continuations and 140 new starts. In FY 2009, 371 basic centers were funded: 263 continuations and 108 new starts. The average annual grant to basic centers was approximately \$123,181 in FY 2008 and \$130,997 in FY 2009.

How Does FYSB Award Funding for Basic Centers?

FYSB solicits grant applications for the Basic Center Program through announcements on 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 the Reconnecting Homeless Youth Act of 2008, each State receives not less than \$200,000 per fiscal year. The Virgin Islands of the United States, Guam, American Samoa, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands receive not less than \$70,000 each.

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.

Total program funding for the remainder of the project period is dependent upon the availability of funds.

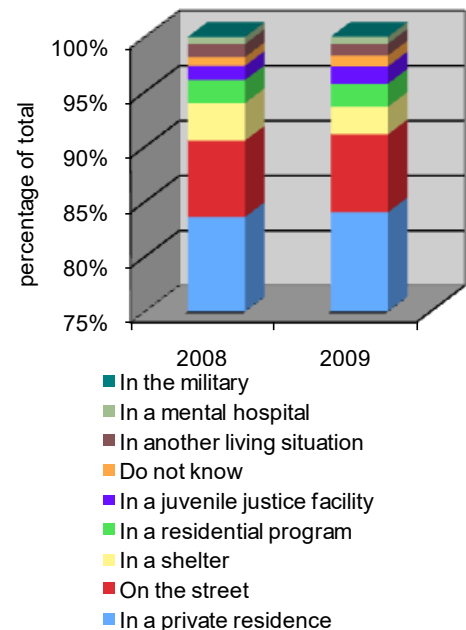
Meeting Youths' Basic Needs

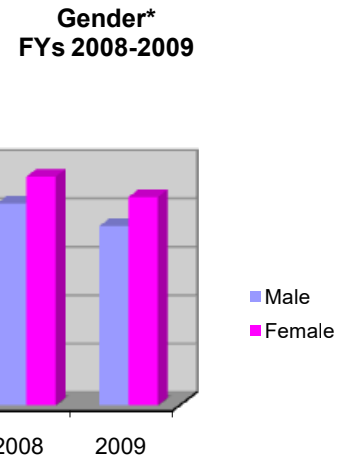
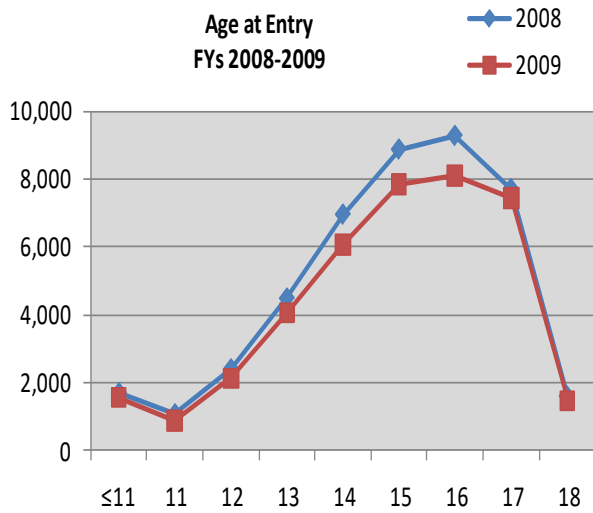
Basic centers must offer youth adequate support in a home-like atmosphere. Centers must have an adequate ratio of staff to youth, with at least one adult on the premises at all times when youth are present.

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.

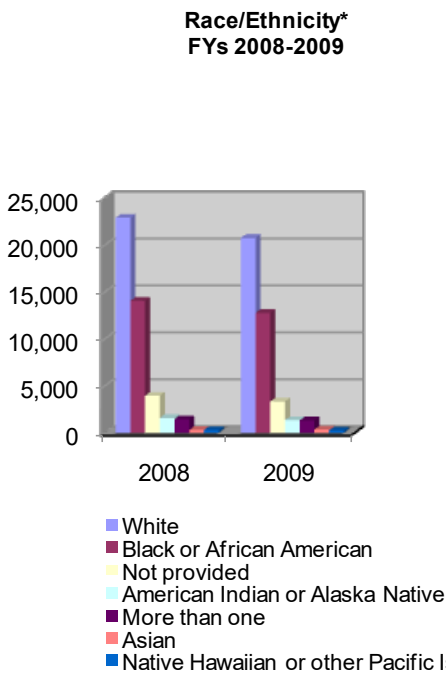
When a youth arrives, staff assess his or her needs, explain shelter services, ask for the young person's voluntary agreement to participate, and record basic background information. Managers assign a staff member to oversee the young person's treatment plan.

Where Youth Lived Upon Entry
FYs 2008-2009





*Transgender, other, and not known make up less than 1% of the total.



* In FYs 2008 and 2009, 17.4 percent and 17.0 percent, respectively, of young people said they were ethnically Hispanic or

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 2008-2009					
Critical Issues	2008	2009	Services Rendered	2008	2009
Family dynamics	38,646	35,807	Basic support	38,496	35,838
School/educational	21,232	19,883	Counseling/therapy	38,140	35,567
Mental health	14,474	13,798	Planned aftercare	34,050	31,222
Abuse/neglect	12,064	11,019	Life skills training	24,990	24,688
Alcohol/drugs	11,985	11,118	Recreational activities	23,485	22,707
Housing	11,405	10,606	Educational	14,208	14,132
Unemployment	6,637	6,801	Substance abuse prevention	11,105	9,834
Health	4,547	3,848	Peer counseling	7,734	8,931
Insufficient income	2,640	2,575	Physical health care	7,350	6,307
Sexual orientation/gender identity	2,179	2,181	Substance abuse assessment	5,281	
			Preventative services (home or shelter-based)*		5,439

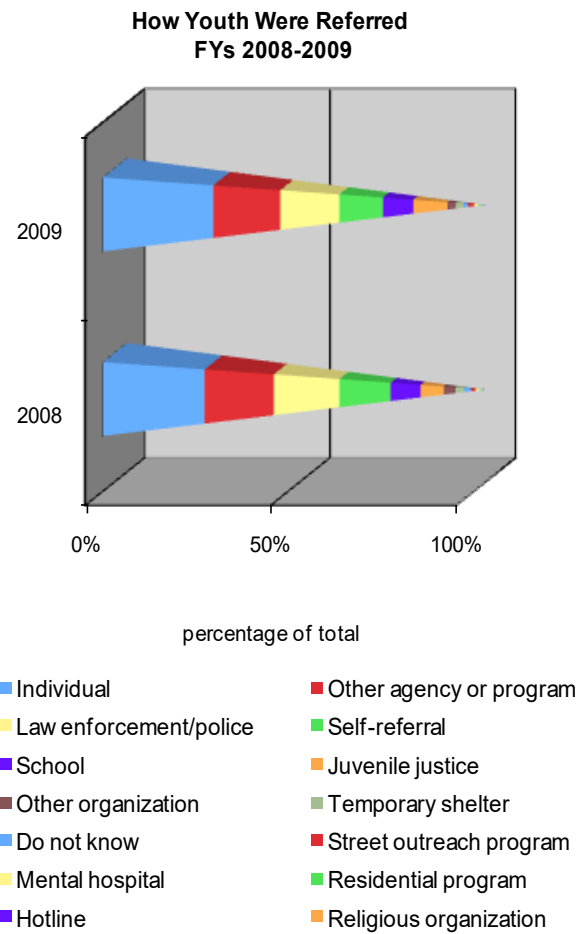
*Data collection for preventative services (home or shelter-based) began in June 2008.

Reaching Out to At-Risk Youth

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

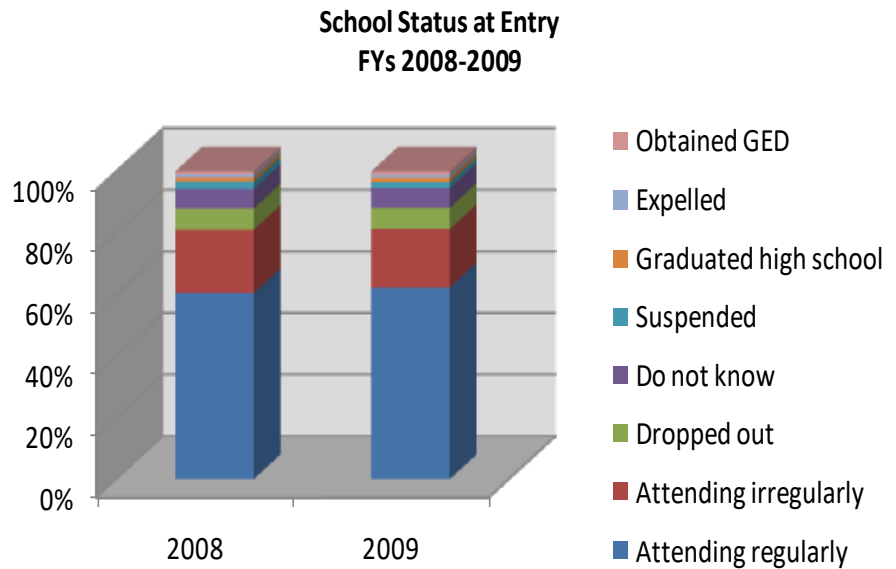
FYSB asks shelters to network with law enforcement agencies, the juvenile justice system, school systems, and other community agencies. These links ensure that:

- 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

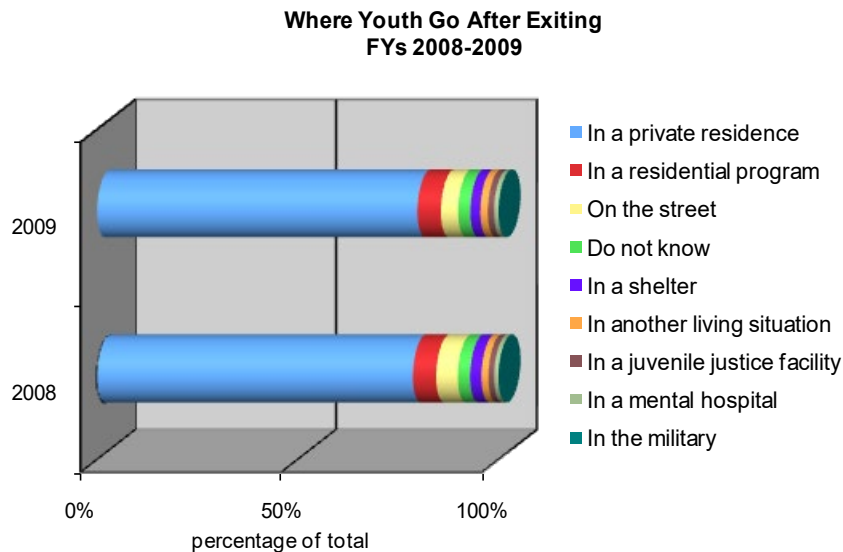


- Community agencies give youth access to services not provided directly by the shelter.

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 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 A, pages 61–62, for a full description of performance standards.)

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

The Basic Center Program in Action

Michael was 14 years old when he found himself alone on the streets. Michael's family had been troubled by homelessness and substance abuse, and Michael himself had been physically abused by a family member. He had not been to school in a year at the time he entered the Center.

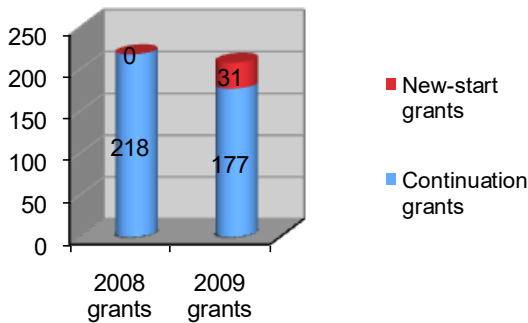
The Center provided Michael shelter, helped him enroll in school, and offered other services to help address his experiences of abuse. Michael now is living in a foster home, finishing high school, and offering peer support to other youth from troubled situations.

Chapter 2

The Transitional Living Program for Older Homeless Youth

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 help fill out financial aid forms. 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.

**Transitional Living Grants
FYs 2008-2009**

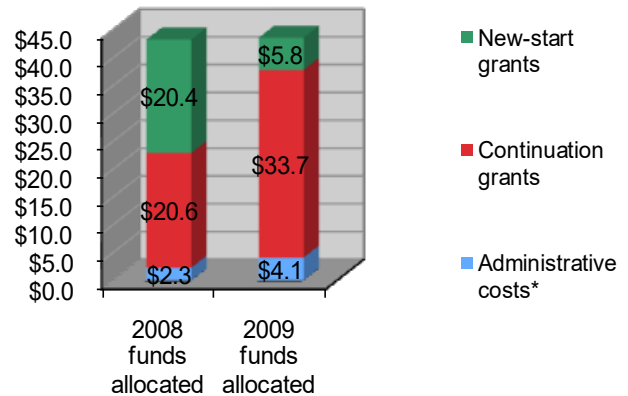


Through the **Transitional Living Program**, these youth find someone to guide them on their path to self-sufficient adulthood. Created by a 1988 amendment to the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act, the program supports agencies that provide longer term residential services to older, homeless youth ages 16-21 for up to 540 days, or in exceptional circumstances 635 days.. (Underage youth may stay in the program until they reach their 18th birthday.) In October 2008, the Transitional Living Program was reauthorized through FY 2013 by Public Law 110-378, the Reconnecting Homeless Youth Act of 2008.

In FY 2008, 218 transitional living programs were funded, all continuations. In FY 2009, 208 transitional living programs were funded: 177 continuations and 31 new starts. The average annual grant to transitional living programs was approximately \$188,073 in FY 2008 and \$189,904 in FY 2009.

Reauthorization of the Transitional Living Program expanded it to include eligibility of maternity group homes. Transitional Living Program grants were awarded to 37 programs that also served as maternity group homes in FY 2008 and to 39 in FY 2009. The average annual grant to maternity group home programs was \$189,189 in FY 2008 and \$184,615 in FY 2009.

**Transitional Living Funding
FYs 2008-2009 (millions)**



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

How Does FYSB Award Funding for Transitional Living Programs?

FYSB solicits grant applications for the Transitional Living Program through announcements on www.grants.gov. Peer panels review the applications.

Agencies compete nationally for Transitional Living 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 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 \$200,000 per fiscal year for a Transitional Living Program grant. Total program funding for the remainder of the project periods is dependent upon the availability of funds.

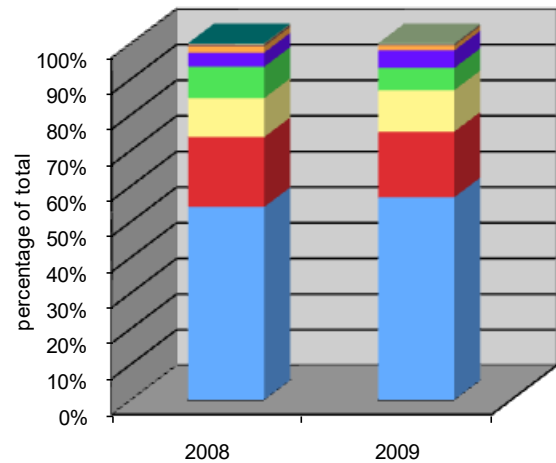
A Place of Their Own

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:

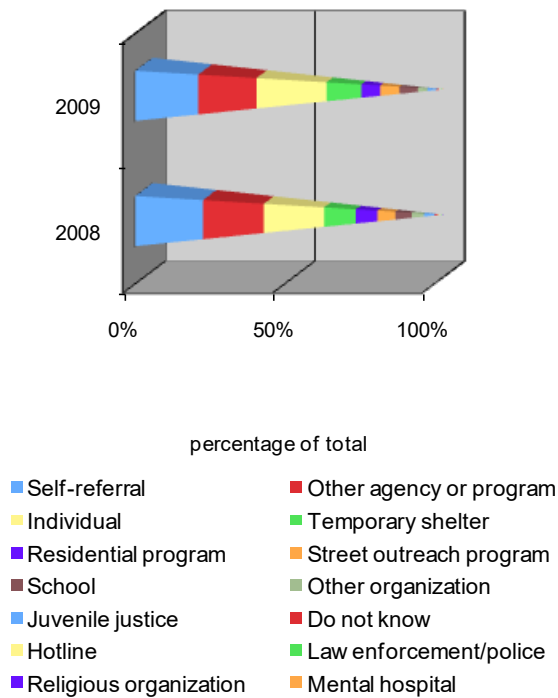
1. In the **host-home approach**, youth live in the community with families who have volunteered to house them, make sure that their basic needs are met, and provide support and supervision with assistance from program staff.
2. **Group homes** give youth the opportunity to move toward independence in 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.

Where Youth Lived Upon Entry
FYs 2008-2009



- In a private residence
- In a shelter
- On the street
- In a residential program
- In another living situation
- In a juvenile justice facility
- Do not know
- In a mental hospital
- In the military

How Youth Were Referred
FYs 2008-2009

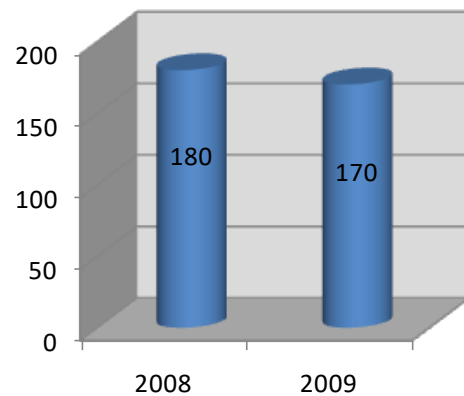


3. Programs also house young people in **supervised apartments**, which can take several forms. A grantee, for example, may own an apartment building and house youth in individual units. A staff person stays on the premises to assist youth as needed. Other programs use “scattered-site” apartments: single-occupancy apartments rented directly by young people, with the sponsorship of a transitional living program. Youth rent apartments in locations 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.

Average Length of Stay (Days)



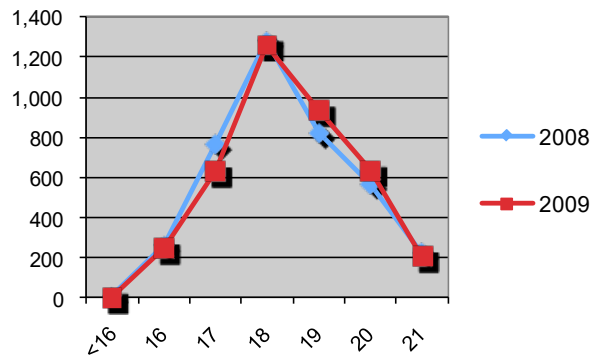
Top Ten Critical Issues Identified and Services Rendered, FYs 2008-2009					
Critical Issues	2008	2009	Services Rendered	2008	2009
Housing	2,611	2,606	Basic support	3,180	3,051
Family dynamics	2,506	2,480	Life skills training	2,996	2,853
Unemployment	2,199	2,204	Planned aftercare	2,963	2,969
School/educational	1,998	1,933	Counseling/therapy	2,709	2,737
Mental health	1,314	1,394	Employment services	2,528	2,428
Alcohol/drugs	1,225	1,224	Educational	2,198	2,016
Abuse/neglect	1,108	994	Program connection services	2,195	2,164
Insufficient income	988	1,129	Recreational activities	1,917	1,823
Pregnant teen or teen parent	774	887	Physical health care	1,478	1,331
Health	720	630	Community learning services	1,382	
			Services to nonresident or preresident youth*		2,046

*Data collection for services to nonresident or preresident youth began in June 2008.

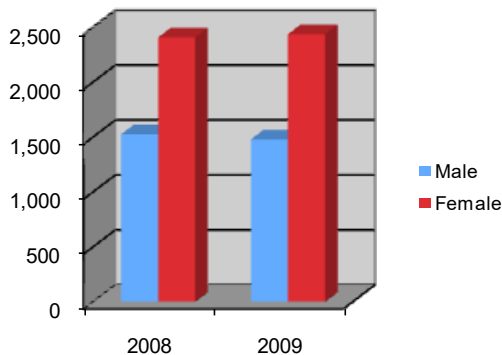
Skills for Life

Youth work or go to school while participating in transitional living programs. As youth progress through their program, staff 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.

Age at Entry
FYs 2008-2009



Gender*
FYs 2008-2009



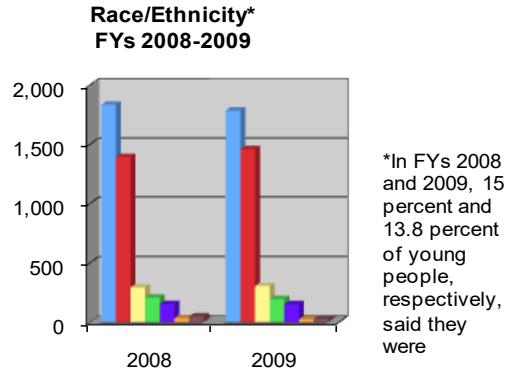
*Transgender, other, and not known make up less than 1

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;

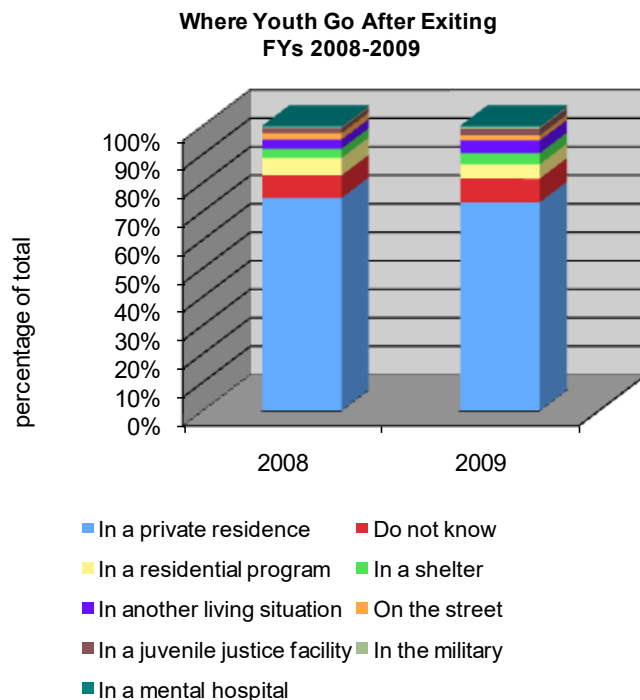
- **Interpersonal skills**, such as establishing positive relationships with peers and adults, making decisions, and managing stress; and
- **Parenting skills**, including education in child rearing and child development for the young parent.



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 on site or by referral, individual and group counseling as well as drug abuse education and prevention.

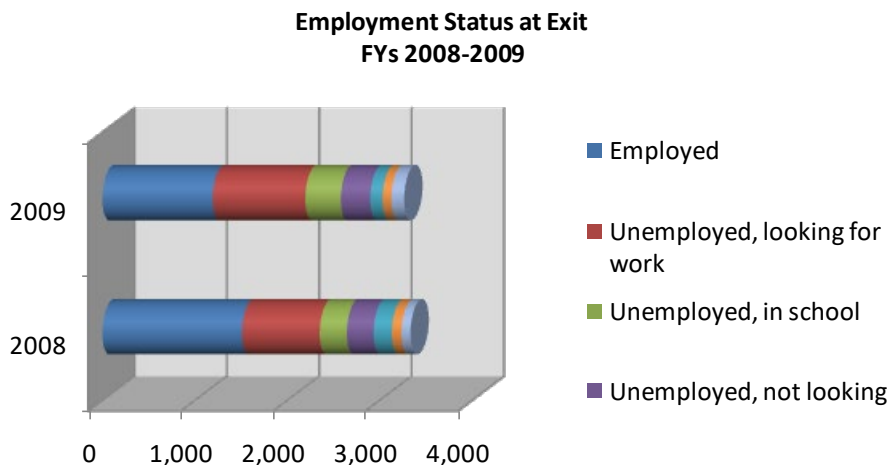
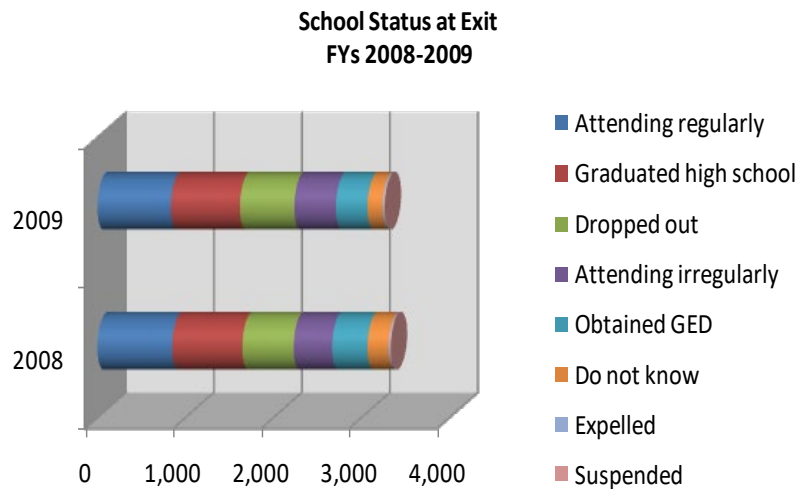
Physical health care: Youth are able to receive routine physicals, health assessments, and emergency treatment. Pregnant youth receive prenatal care and abstinence education.

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

(See Appendix B, pages 63–64, 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.

The Transitional Living Program in Action

Tracy entered a Transitional Living Program at age 16 after she and her sister relocated to the Dallas area and found themselves homeless. She completed the program, which gave her the skills she needed to live on her own. The program required her to pay a modest rent, half of which was later returned to her to use in establishing permanent housing.

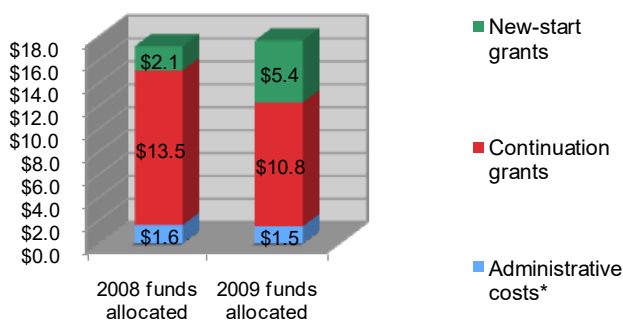
Tracy applied her funds to a down payment on a home. Today, at age 19, she is a longstanding employee of a local hotel, a student at the local community college, and a homeowner.

Chapter 3

The Street Outreach Program

Young people 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.

**Street Outreach Funding
FYs 2008-2009 (millions)**



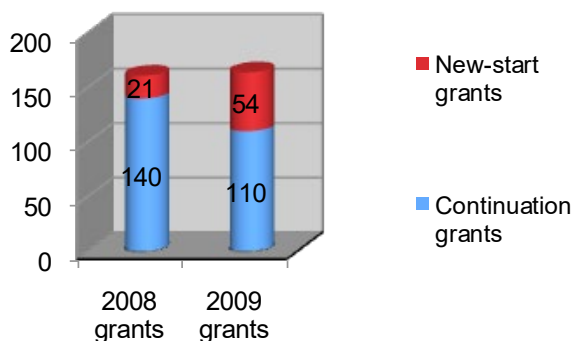
*Administrative costs include logistics, support systems, and collaboration with other Federal agencies.

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.

The Street Outreach 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 2008, Public Law 110–378 reauthorized the program through FY 2013 as part of the Reconnecting Homeless Youth Act of 2008.

In FY 2008, 161 street outreach programs were funded: 140 continuations and 21 new

**Street Outreach Grants
FYs 2008-2009**



starts. In FY 2009, 164 street outreach programs were funded: 110 continuations and 54 new starts. The average annual grant to street outreach programs was approximately \$96,894 in FY 2008 and \$98,780 in FY 2009.

How Does FYSB Award Funding for Street Outreach?

FYSB solicits grant applications for the Street Outreach Program through announcements on 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.

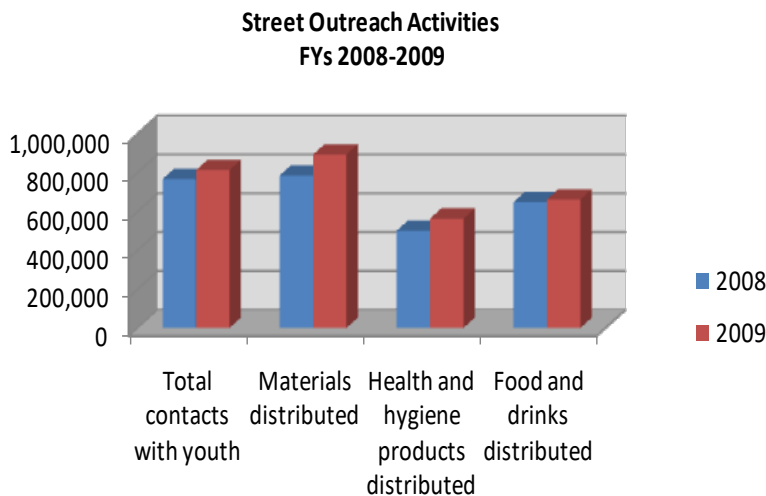
Successful new applicants receive funding for one year. After the first year, agencies may apply for continued funding for up to two more years. Agencies do not compete against one another for renewed funding; whether a project receives a continuation depends on its satisfactory progress, the availability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

FYSB awards an individual grantee a minimum of \$100,000 per fiscal year, with a ceiling of \$200,000 per fiscal year. Total program funding for the remainder of the project period is dependent upon the availability of funds.

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.

Programs are encouraged to 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. Training must prepare staff to effectively work with youth of diverse cultural backgrounds, show gender and cultural sensitivity and use appropriate language. 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, and they must provide back-up personnel for on-street staff.

Each program is required to have 24-hour access to local emergency shelter space that is appropriate for youth. 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 C, pages 65–66, for a full description of performance standards.)

The Street Outreach Program in Action

A Street Outreach Program staff person met 16-year-old Jamal at a mobile soup kitchen. Jamal had been sporadically homeless and absent from school because of congenital health problems. Perhaps because of his health condition and experiences, he at first was withdrawn and unwilling to engage in conversation with the outreach worker.

After several weeks of repeated contact, however, he gained enough trust to allow the outreach worker to link him with medical services. In addition, the outreach staff helped him enroll in a program that could help him earn a GED.

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 the Runaway and Homeless Youth Training and Technical Assistance Centers, which give Runaway and Homeless Youth Program grantees the tools they need to serve youth effectively.

Chapter 4

National Communications System

“National Runaway Switchboard”

“Hi, I’m having some problems at home. I don’t know what to do. Can you help me?”

“I’m glad you called. We are here to help. Can you tell me a little bit about your situation?”

“Well, I live at home with my mom and stepdad. My stepdad is always yelling at me. It’s like I can’t do anything right. Yesterday, I came home from school a little late, and he got so angry that I was afraid he was going to hurt me. I just turned right around and left the house. I am at my friend’s house right now because I’m scared to go home.”

“It sounds like a really tough situation. Can you think of anyone who can help you talk with your stepdad? Maybe your mom? Are there any family members you can go to that will help you make sure you are safe?”

“I think my mom is pretty mad right now too. My friend’s mom is here, so I’ve been talking to her, but she says that I can’t stay the night. I really just want to find a place to stay tonight so that maybe my stepdad will cool off.”

Like most callers to the National Runaway Switchboard (NRS), the caller sounded tentative, but her need was immediate. She wanted a safe place to be for a while, but she did not want to return home. After talking with the youth about her options and finding out her location, the NRS volunteer located a local youth shelter and helped the youth develop a plan for her friend’s mom to take her there for the night.

NRS responds to calls like this every day. Its 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 communication 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 and was reauthorized by the Reconnecting Homeless Youth Act of 2008 (P.L.110-378).



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 go for assistance and information on where to get help. NRS links runaway, homeless, at-risk youth and their families to crisis

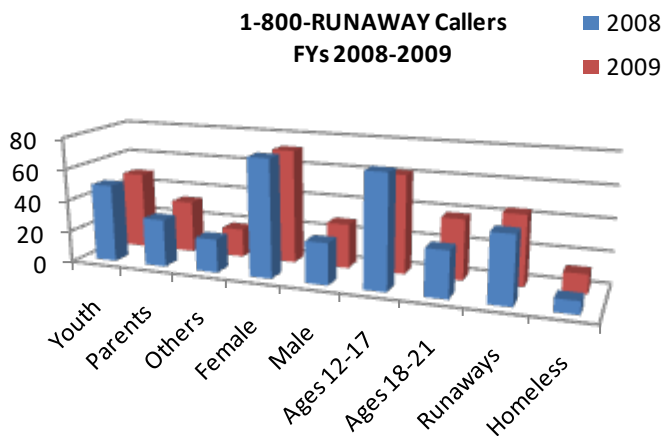
counseling, programs and resources, and each other, when appropriate. It does so using a multipronged approach that combines a 24-hour hotline, a Web site, public service announcements, outreach activities, and collaborative relationships with local and national partners.

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 staff and volunteers, each trained in solution-focused crisis intervention training, answer the calls. Those volunteers, along with others giving of their time in supportive roles, provided 11,705 hours of service in FY 2008 and 14,012 hours in FY 2009. There were 225 individuals in FY 2008 who volunteered on site at the NRS Chicago location, and in FY 2009, the number grew by over 15 percent to 259.

The frontline team handled 118,067 calls in FY 2008 and 126,714 calls in FY 2009 (a 7-percent increase). The daily average was 324 calls in FY 2008 and 348 calls in FY 2009. Some days there were many more calls than the average. Call volume typically peaked on Monday and decreased slowly throughout the week.

The increase in the number of calls in FY 2009 resulted from strategic efforts of FYSB and NRS to enhance 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 the NRS hotline in FYs 2008 and 2009.



FY 2008, 49 percent of crisis calls came from youth, 30 percent were from parents about a youth, and the other calls were from young people's relatives and friends, youth professionals, or other adults. Almost three-quarters of youth crisis callers were female (74 percent), and 71 percent were ages 12 to 17. Youth ages 18 to 21 made up 29 percent of crisis callers.

In FY 2009, 49 percent of crisis calls were from youth, 33 percent were from parents about a youth, and the rest were from young people's relatives and friends, youth professionals, or another adult. Almost three-quarters of youth crisis callers were female (72 percent) and 62 percent were ages 12 to 17. Youth between ages 18 to 21 made up 38 percent of crisis callers.

Of the youth in crisis who called NRS in FY 2008, 42 percent were runaway youth and 8 percent were 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 NRS. Sixteen percent had been away for four to seven days, 23 percent for one to four weeks, and 21 percent longer than that.

Of the youth in crisis who called the NRS in FY 2009, 44 percent were runaway youth and 12 percent were thrownaway and homeless youth (combining for a 12-percent increase). Of youth callers who had run away, 36 percent had been away from home for one to three days before calling. Sixteen percent had been away for four to seven days, 24 percent for one to four weeks, and 24 percent longer than that. The trend identified is that youth are away from home longer before calling NRS, and the percentage of youth gone one week or longer is growing.

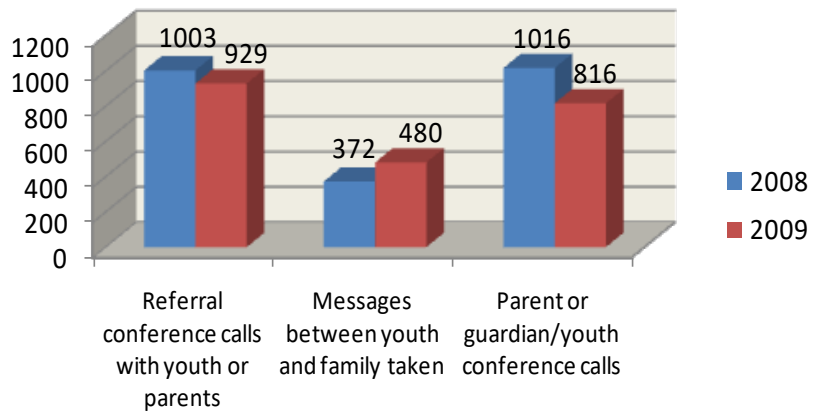
In the middle of FY 2008, NRS began collecting some new data which enrich the profile of youth it serves. Of all youth crisis logs in FY 2008, 4 percent were regarding youth either currently or formerly wards of the State. The percentage increased to 5 percent in FY 2009.

Further new data that NRS began collecting in late FY 2008 document service needs that went unmet during the course of crisis calls. Categories of unmet needs are health care services, inpatient and outpatient drug/alcohol treatment, inpatient and outpatient mental health services, and shelter. There are five reasons why each type of need may have gone unmet: waiting list/program full; lack of funds; lack of transportation; unable to locate services; and caller not eligible for services. In both FYs 2008 and 2009, the highest percentage of unmet needs fell under the shelter category (82 percent in FY 2008 and 78 percent in FY 2009). In both years, health care was the second highest identified unmet need at 10 percent.

To make its services available to all young people, NRS has a dedicated phone line for hearing-impaired youth. To reach callers whose first language is not English, NRS uses bilingual staff and volunteers as well as a translation service which provides access to 144 different languages.

NRS offers a message relay service for runaway youth and their families. A youth can leave a message for a parent, and staff delivers the message to the parent. Often this is the first step toward relationship repair; sometimes a youth uses this service for days or weeks before feeling ready to talk directly with family.

**Calls Placed on Behalf of Youth
FYs 2008 and 2009**

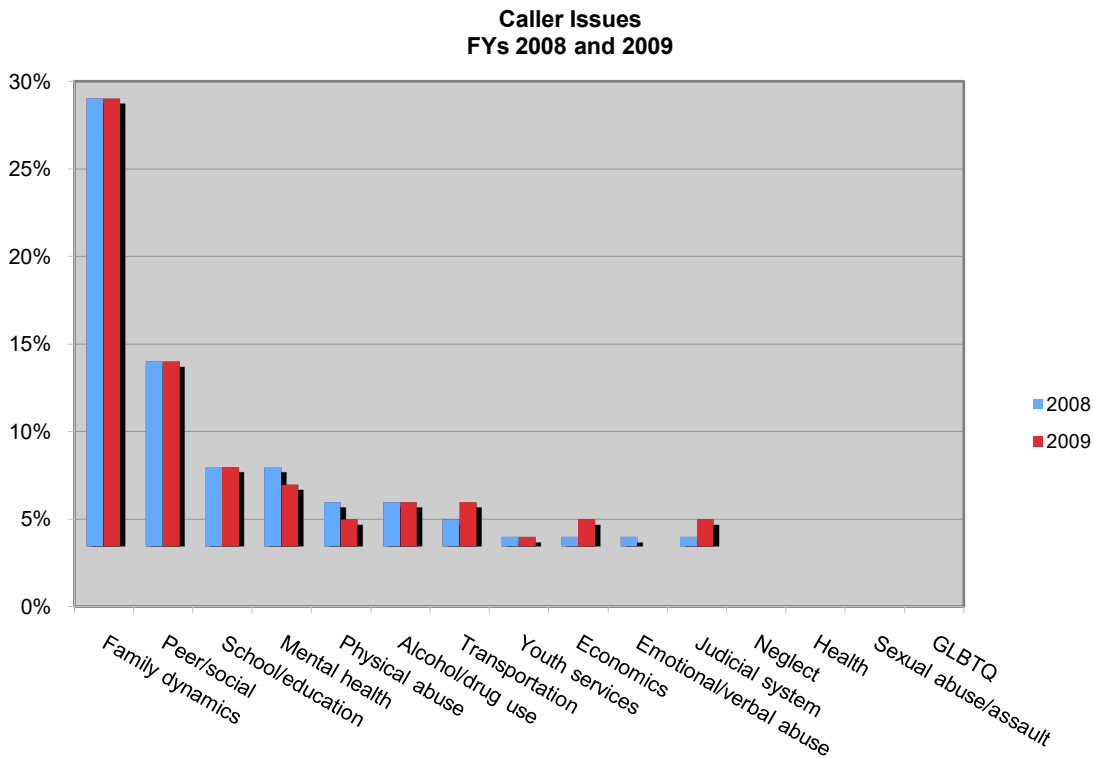


A completed message from a youth to family might sound like this: “I am fine. I am in a safe place. I called Ellen from a restricted number, so she doesn't know how to contact me, but I did tell her that I am going away. Again, I am safe and I am fine. I love you and I will contact you soon.”

Additionally, parents leave messages for their youth. The NRS generally advises parents of a child on the run to call their child’s friends to let the friends know, if they have any contact with the runaway, that a message is waiting for him or her at NRS. A sample parent message: “Just wanted to let you know that you can always come home. We love you. If you can't or don't wish to come home, please just call and let us know that you are safe! ”

NRS offered the message relay service 887 times in FY 2008 and 1,347 times in FY 2009. It took 372 messages from runaway youth in FY 2008 and 480 messages in FY 2009.

Youth call the hotline for many reasons. The most frequently reported issues in FY 2008 were family dynamics, followed by peer and social issues, school-related issues, mental health issues, physical abuse, alcohol/drug issues, transportation issues, and youth services issues. In FY 2009, the most frequently reported issues were family dynamics, followed by peer and social issues, school-related issues, mental health issues, substance abuse, transportation, physical abuse, economics, judicial system issues, and youth services issues. This data may underreport the incidence 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 connect callers to services they need, referring them to community- and faith-based programs. NRS maintains a comprehensive up-to-date database with detailed service information on 13,156 youth-related agencies nationwide. In addition, staff and volunteers have information about more than 100,000 organizations through hard-copy and Web-based resource directories. NRS provided 14,962 referrals in FY 2008 and 15,559 referrals in FY 2009 (a 4-percent increase).

NRS also has memorandums of understanding with over 1,135 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, hotline staffers mediate conference calls between young people and community agencies that can assist them. They also mediate calls between runaway youth and their parents to facilitate communication and initiate the process of family reunification.

www.1800RUNAWAY.org

With FYSB's guidance and support, in FYs 2008 and 2009 NRS has continued to focus on innovation and content on the Web at www.1800RUNAWAY.org. Youth-centric initiatives have been developed, including electronic magazine *Switched-On* and a blog created and managed by the Youth Task Force. The media section has been redesigned to serve as a user-friendly source of information that includes NRS caller statistics, NRS trends analysis, and third-party research. The newest NRS service, *Let's Talk: Runaway Prevention Curriculum*, has a comprehensive section on the Web site where educators and other youth service providers can access English and Spanish classroom modules and tools.

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 97,599 people in FY 2008 and 100,830 people in FY 2009.

In the multifaceted youth section, young people can share thoughts on an NRS bulletin board, access service information, read the youth-centric magazine *Switched-On*, and comment on the magazine blog. *Switched-On* magazine attracted 24,947 unique visitors between October 1, 2007, and September 30, 2009. The *Switched-On* blog had 1,364 unique visitors June 5, 2008, through September 30, 2009.



NRS is also utilizing social media vehicles to connect with youth. During FYs 2008 and 2009, its MySpace page secured 851 friends, and on Facebook it attracted 249 fans, 209 group page members, and 559 cause page members.

Staff members respond to e-mail messages and bulletin board postings generated by the Web site. Postings on the message boards address family issues, legal issues, parenting, peer pressure, and relationships. NRS responded to 491 bulletin postings in FY 2008 and 582 in FY 2009, a 19-percent increase. Staff members respond to information requests, whether via e-mail or the bulletin boards, within four hours.

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

My mom, she has like anger management problems. She is consistently yelling. If you tell her that she needs to just calm down, she will just start yelling more. I can never talk to her about anything because then she goes against everything I say. I can't runaway, obviously (I wish I could), but I would like to be out of the house as much as possible. Is there anywhere a 14 year old can get a job or anything that I can do just to get away? Thanks.

The NRS Web site is an important source of information for members of the general public looking to access statistics on runaway and homeless youth or NRS materials. The following portions of the Web site were the most popular destinations in FYs 2008 and 2009:

- The 2008 public service announcement, featuring hip-hop entertainer Ludacris, promoting the Home Free program (more information about this resource below)
- NRS caller statistics broken down into numbers by States and area codes
- NRS youth section with youth-centric magazine *Switched-On*, blogs, and connections to youth social media vehicles like MySpace, Facebook, and Twitter
- NRS media section with audiovisual materials to assist reporters in communicating the plight of runaways
- NRS Street Team section to help visitors become ambassadors and promote 1-800-RUNAWAY
- *Let's Talk: Runaway Prevention Curriculum* in English and Spanish
- "Green Light Project" resources (see below for more information about this project promoting National Runaway Prevention Month, or NRPM)
- 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

Getting the Word Out

In addition to offering free information and materials on the Web, NRS gets the word out in more traditional ways. In FY 2008, NRS distributed 461,350 brochures and prevention materials through the mail and at conferences. In FY 2009, to increase cost-effectiveness, more information was provided by download at www.1800RUNAWAY.org. Due to the cost-saving efforts, 185,911 hard copy materials were distributed in FY 2009.

In FYs 2008 and 2009, NRS also spread its message by collaborating with media outlets and entertainment professionals. Continuing its partnership with award-winning hip-hop entertainer Ludacris, who promoted runaway prevention through his 2007 hit, "Runaway Love," NRS

created a new television public service announcement featuring Ludacris to promote the Home Free program. It had 1,173 broadcasts on 25 networks/stations, for 49,872,500 total media impressions. NRS also continued discussions with Ludacris' management team for 2009 NRPM opportunities and with the management of country singer Jason Michael Carroll to include the NRS logo and 1-800-RUNAWAY on his new music video, "Hurry Home," and explore possible NRS ambassador partnership opportunities with Celebrity Street Team, NRPM, and a download sales fundraiser. NRS worked with One Spark Films to include www.1800RUNAWAY.org on the Web site promoting their new film "Guest Room" in the www.doorpost.com contest, where it won the filmmaker's choice award.

NRS utilizes a communication consultant to cultivate the media, generate press releases, and build exposure. Through an Associated Press wire exclusive, www.1800RUNAWAY.org had 10,432 visitors on April 7, 2008, and the wire story prompted the most page views ever at 3,539 views. NRS has been featured in major media outlets, including *USA Today*, *Chicago Tribune*, *Boston Herald*, *Kansas City Star*, *Dallas Morning News*, and *Houston Chronicle*. National, regional, and local media outreach efforts reached more than 138,450,922 readers, viewers, and listeners in FY 2008 and 112,938,905 in FY 2009. NRS continues work with a *New York Times* reporter on his article series about the plight of runaways.

NRS contracted the National Opinion Research Center (NORC) to conduct a comprehensive research project on runaway and at-risk youth. To gather information on each of these groups, NORC will pursue four complementary strategies. Information from those who go to friends' or relatives' homes, or couch-surf, will be obtained from each strategy. The study will take place in Chicago and Los Angeles, with samples derived from schools, shelters, the street, and child welfare agencies. Samples will be drawn from all four of these locations, which represent different types of adolescents, some having experienced a runaway episode, some having never experienced a runaway episode, and some having run away from foster care.

NRS will utilize the results of the research study to develop service and marketing strategies to better serve runaway and at-risk youth. The results will also be available to youth agencies to help them develop programming to better communicate services and meet the needs of today's youth. In addition, NRS will publicize the results through the media to bring national attention to the plight of runaway and at-risk youth. The target date for announcement of the results is April 2010.

Street Team

In May of 2008, NRS launched the Street Team initiative to give people all over the country a way to help runaway, homeless, and at-risk youth and their families in their communities. This grassroots community outreach program aims to increase awareness of the issues runaway and homeless youth face and the services NRS offers.



Once registered as a Street Team member, a person receives a starter kit with materials to be distributed in his or her community. After distributing those materials, the Street Team member can request more and continue to work on an ongoing basis.

The Street Team allows caring individuals to be creative in the ways they contribute. Activities can range from creating a YouTube video to promote awareness to getting 1-800-RUNAWAY printed on the back of school IDs, presenting the *Let's Talk: Runaway Prevention Curriculum*, or simply wearing a 1-800-RUNAWAY T-shirt.

Following are a few highlights of the Street Team since its inception:

- A secure Web site allows Street Team members to review the list of suggested activities, track the activities they've completed and points earned by completing the activities, and redeem the points for awards.
- During May–September 2008, 27 people from seven States became registered Street Team members. By September 2009, the total had grown to 117 registered Street Team participants from 14 States.
- On November 6, 2008, street teams in two cities (Chicago, Illinois, and Berlin, Maryland) hosted events to promote awareness and education as part of NRPM. In Chicago, registered participants passed out 450 green lights bulbs to passers-by at a downtown plaza. In Maryland, street team members hosted a youth summit to spread the word to youth and families.
- A motorcycle club registered as Street Team members—an exciting, mobile way to let people know about 1-800-RUNAWAY.

Family Reunification Through Home Free

Since 1995, NRS has worked with transportation company Greyhound Lines, Inc., to administer the Home Free program. Counting more than 13,000 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 transitional living facilities.

Of the 1,789 young people with whom NRS discussed family reunification in FY 2008, 509 completed the steps of the Home Free process and received free bus tickets to return home or go to an alternative program. In FY 2009, NRS discussed family reunification services with 2,551 young people and issued a free bus ticket to 417 of them.

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. The following partnerships were active in FY 2008 and 2009:

NRPM. In FYs 2008 and 2009, NRPM partners included Boys and Girls Clubs of America, American School Health Association, National Network for Youth, National Safe Place,

National Association of School Nurses, National Center for Homeless Education, National Association for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth, Girls Inc., National Resource Center for Youth Services, Circle of Parents, National Association of School-based Health Care, and National Association of School Psychologists. The groups posted Web spotlights and links to each others' Web sites.

National Safe Place. By collaborating with this national program of the YMCA of Greater Louisville, Kentucky, NRS can easily find a "safe place" that young people in crisis can go. 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. Safe Place coordinators implement the *Let's Talk: Runaway Education and Prevention Curriculum* with youth in their shelter sites and in their school-based outreach presentations.

Covenant House Neline Crisis Line. Due to a lack of funding, this nationwide youth hotline slashed its 24-hour operations to 2:00 p.m. to 12:00 p.m. daily. During the hours that the Neline is not staffed, callers are redirected to 1-800-RUNAWAY for services.

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

Child Helpline International. NRS is a member of this United Nations-affiliated organization, which is working to develop youth hotlines in all countries worldwide. NRS provides technical assistance on crisis intervention training, volunteer recruitment and management, and program evaluation and contributes crisis contact data for inclusion in an annual international report. This organization also sponsored NRS participation in training for hotline service providers in Mexico on the commercial sexual exploitation and trafficking of children in the United States.

Children's Human Rights Center of Albania/Defense for Children, Albanian Section. NRS provided onsite crisis intervention training and operations consultation for the launch of the newly created national youth helpline in Tirana, Albania.

National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC). NRS provided critical training on runaway youth issues for the NCMEC Team HOPE (Help Offering Parents Empowerment) program and participated in the NCMEC Victims of Child Prostitution Children Roundtable conference.

Documenting the Switchboard's Work

NRS uses its customized management information system (MIS) to collect data about the young people and families it serves on the crisis line. The NRS MIS is integrated with the referral agency database to ensure quick response to callers' needs.

Crisis line staff and volunteers document each 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, and follow-up that may be needed.

NRS can also identify incoming and outgoing calls by area code and State, which helps it conduct community outreach. By 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.

Disaster Preparedness

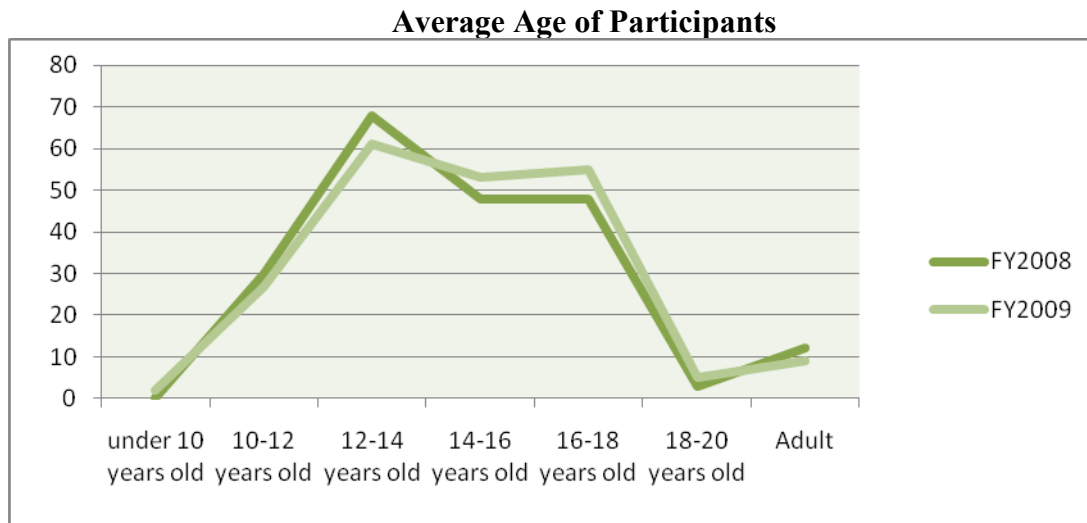
NRS has partnered with the HHS-funded National Domestic Violence Hotline on a business continuity plan to ensure continued crisis line service in the event either organization's crisis call center is not operational due to natural or manmade disaster. The plan includes procedures for transferring and handling crisis calls, providing access to critical referral agency databases, training staff, collecting data, and conducting an annual review.

Runaway Education and Prevention

With DePaul University's Center for Community and Organization Development, NRS developed a first-of-its-kind resource, the *Let's Talk: Runaway Prevention Curriculum*. This interactive, 14-module curriculum is intended to address interpersonal and coping skills, increase knowledge about runaway resources and prevention, educate about alternatives to running away, and encourage youth to access and seek help from trusted community members.

The curriculum is available free of charge in CD format or by download from 1800runaway.org. Via download, NRS distributed 13,586 copies in FY 2008 and 9,563 in FY 2009. It also fulfilled 777 CD orders in FY 2008 and 365 in FY 2009.

Let's Talk was used in 13 States in FY 2008 and in 20 States in FY 2009, a 53-percent increase. In FY 2008, more than 5,100 youth participated in it, and in FY 2009, 3,300 participated. Of 370 classes or groups participating, 99 were in high schools, 87 in middle schools, 51 in afterschool programs, 27 in mentoring programs, 26 in youth shelters, 24 in mental health settings, and the rest in a variety of other settings.



The NRS staff is building ongoing partnerships to promote the use of the curriculum. In FY 2008, partners included Girls Scouts of Greater Chicago, Child Find America, School Social Worker Association of America, and a number of middle and high schools in the Chicago area. In FY 2009, NRS also partnered with the National Parent Teacher Association, Children's Home and Aid Society, Nevada Partnership for Youth, the United South Eastern Tribes, the New Orleans Recovery School District, and school districts in four cities.

Chapter 5

The National Clearinghouse on Families & Youth

A pastor wants to know how what kinds of programs his church might be able to offer to give local youth an alternative to hanging out on the street corner.

A new program director at a basic center wants to know how other shelter programs take care of young residents' educational needs.

Staff at an afterschool program are interested in developing ways to get young people more involved in community service, to promote Positive Youth Development.

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.

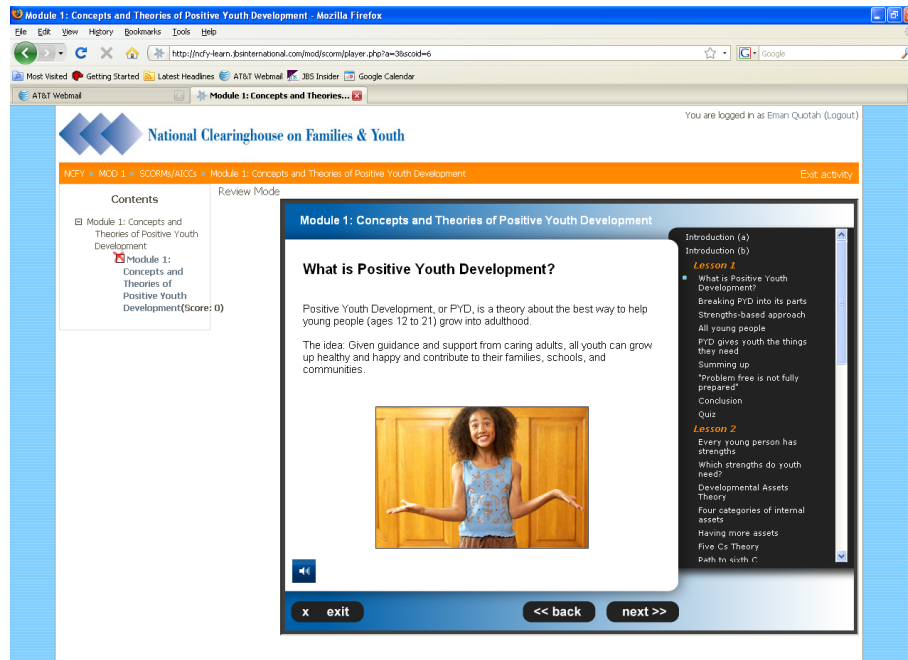
People such as teachers, counselors, and employees of shelters, residential youth programs, street outreach programs, and afterschool programs ask NCFY for facts and resources on a variety of youth-related topics. NCFY staff help them find answers to their questions and guide them toward government and nonprofit agencies, 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, but over the past few years has transitioned to disseminating information to the public primarily through its Web site (ncfy.acf.hhs.gov). NCFY staff responded to 772 requests for customized research in FY 2008 and 821 requests in FY 2009. The NCFY Web site was visited between 250,000 and 350,000 times a month, on average.

With FYSB’s encouragement, NCFY redesigned its Web site, in FY 2008 and further in FY 2009, to increase its user-friendliness and highlight current activities and new resources. In addition, the clearinghouse worked with FYSB to improve its Web marketing, expand its electronic mailing list, and release award-winning new print and online products.



To further reach out and enhance its accessibility, NCFY undertook a major rebranding effort in FY 2009 to achieve a friendly, consistently approachable look in its Web site and publications (more about this initiative below). In addition to launching a new logo and a streamlined home page, NCFY reviewed every aspect of its Web site to ensure complete compliance with Section 508 of the Americans with Disabilities Act. It also prepared English and Spanish “video book” versions of its popular *Keep in Touch* publication that encourages safe exits from FYSB shelter programs to make it more accessible via the Web.



NCFY also took advantage of audio technology on the Web by producing a series of podcasts, online audio programs available individually or by free subscription, four in FY 2008 and six in FY 2009. Subscribers can sign up to automatically download podcasts each time a new episode is released.

Responding to a need among youth services professionals for on-demand training, NCFY also designed for FYSB an online introductory course on Positive Youth Development. The course had more than 1,500 registered users in its first 6 weeks after launch.

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's 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.

At FYSB's request, NCFY also wrote and sent out another, twice-monthly e-newsletter in FYs 2008 and 2009, *Abstinence Education E-Update*. This electronic publication was sent to all of FYSB's Abstinence Education Program grantees and to RHY grantees who subscribed to it.

Both NCFY e-newsletters for grantees were redesigned in FY 2009. Three original columns were developed for *Youth Initiatives Update*: Bright Idea, about innovative and promising practices; Primary Sources, summarizing recent research; and Right on the Money, about "how to keep the doors of nonprofit organizations open in good times and bad." Also, a new NCFY Recommends feature highlighted resources from others.

Since its inception, NCFY has helped FYSB build a comprehensive collection of publications on youth-related issues. In FYs 2008 and 2009, NCFY gathered 2,100 items, bringing the collection to more than 17,000 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 with

an abstract of every publication in the NCFY collection. In addition, the NCFY reading room is open daily to members of the public interested in reviewing materials in the collection.

On FYSB's behalf, NCFY exhibits at conferences and forums to inform youth service providers, policymakers, and young people about FYSB programs and about the information services the clearinghouse provides. NCFY exhibited at eight national conferences in FY 2008 and eight more in FY 2009. In FY 2008, NCFY sent print materials to be distributed at an additional 28 events. To maximize cost-effectiveness, those who requested materials for distribution at other events in FY 2009 were encouraged to download and print them from the NCFY Web site.

NCFY staff also disseminate information by giving presentations on topics related to runaway, homeless, and at-risk youth at conferences where they exhibit on behalf of FYSB. NCFY made two such presentations in FY 2008 and three in FY 2009.

Free Publications and Products

Through NCFY, FYSB offers a range of free publications and products for youth, parents, youth workers, and the general public. In FY 2009, NCFY adopted two broad goals for its information products: (1) "brand" materials NCFY produces for FYSB by creating a more uniform look for them, while further reinforcing the idea that NCFY is a service of FYSB, and (2) prepare for and embrace electronic information dissemination, making NCFY publications attractive and reader-friendly to view online and easy to download for printing.

Selected New Products Offered by FYSB and NCFY in FYs 2008 and 2009

Speak Up! Using What You've Got to Get What You Want (in English and Spanish), a booklet for youth on self-advocacy

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

National Mentoring Month campaign materials, print and electronic postcards and posters to help FYSB grantees recruit mentors

Take the Lead: Inspirational Young People Tell Their Stories (Spanish version), a pamphlet to help youth build leadership skills

Podcasts on peer outreach, youth leadership, mentoring, summer programs, community service, acquaintance rape, abstinence, disaster preparedness, adolescent parenthood, and street outreach

Introduction to Positive Youth Development, a self-paced, online training course for youth and family service professionals

Cultural Competency in Youth Services, a manual for FYSB grantees and other service providers

Ready for Anything! A Disaster Planning Manual for Runaway and Homeless Youth Programs

NCFY produced two FYSB periodicals aimed directly at Runaway and Homeless Youth Program grantees and other youth workers in FYs 2008 and 2009. *The FYSB Update* produced in FY 2008 focused on RHYMIS, reporting on services to runaway and homeless youth. This

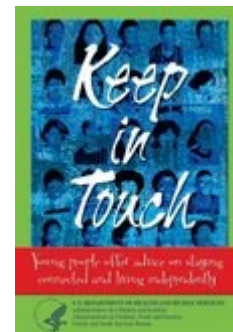
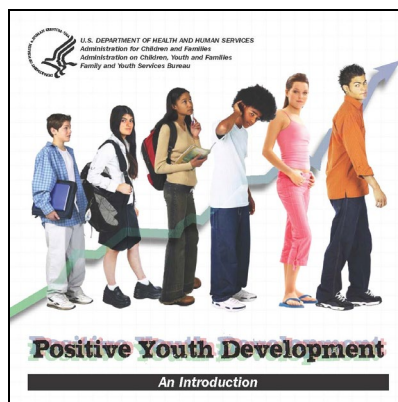
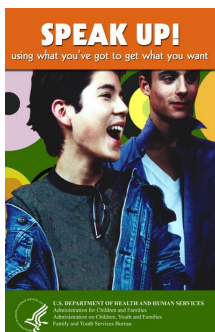
periodical was discontinued after FY 2008 in favor of providing FYSB update information via the FYSB Web site.

The other periodical, *The Exchange*, spotlights news from the youth services field. Since more and more people look for information first online rather than in print, *The Exchange* format changed in FYs 2008 and 2009. Instead of being distributed as a fairly lengthy print newsletter sent to just one person in each FYSB program, it became published in a series of shorter, more frequent installments that were available electronically to any grantee staff member or other subscriber who wanted it. This format increased its accessibility to busy youth workers while also increasing cost-effectiveness.

The three print issues of *The Exchange* in FY 2008 were about street outreach, runaway and homeless youth and relationship violence, and collaboration between independent living and transitional living programs. Electronic issues of *The Exchange* in FYs 2008 and 2009 focused on sustainability (fundraising strategies to ensure continuation of youth service programs), Positive Youth Development (PYD) today, and youth homelessness.

In FYs 2008 and 2009, NCFY developed three in-depth how-to resources for youth and family service program staff: manuals on emergency preparedness and cultural competency and a two-part online training course on PYD theory and practice. NCFY collaborated with other organizations in the RHY Network of Support to develop manuals on monitoring and on using the newest version of RHYMIS. It also produced five community education fact sheets—succinct how-to guides for youth and family service providers—on PYD resources, successful outreach, and Federal collaborators to maternity group home grantees, and also on incorporating youth in master-planning and counting homeless youth.

The clearinghouse sent 60 special outreach mailings in FY 2008 and 52 in FY 2009. These included mailings through which NCFY sent FYSB’s newest publications—or links to Web pages where they could be downloaded—to FYSB grantees and national organizations working on youth and family issues.



Behind the Scenes

NCFY provides behind-the-scenes support in many ways for FYSB's 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 2008 and 2009, NCFY briefed FYSB on one State's licensing requirements applicable to Basic Center and Transitional Living Program shelters, school-to-work issues relevant to a meeting with Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development representatives, and successes and challenges of the Mentoring Children of Prisoners program, among other topics.

The clearinghouse developed materials about FYSB and its programs to both educate new staff and give FYSB staff tools to educate others. They included a FYSB Briefing Book, updated several times in this two-year period, and a PowerPoint presentation about the agency and its programs that FYSB staff could easily adapt to present to different audiences. NCFY also prepared packets of print materials for FYSB to distribute and regularly updated fact sheets about all FYSB programs to include in these packets and on the FYSB Web site.

In addition, NCFY supported FYSB's planning, policy development, and program implementation. Clearinghouse staff participated in all three expert workgroups convened to lay the groundwork for FYSB's development of new standards for the three RHY programs. NCFY hosted a meeting of FYSB staff with all the RHY Network of Support organizations to encourage collaboration within the network, and this gathering led to a long-term campaign in collaboration with training and technical assistance providers to educate grantees about sustainability. NCFY also hosted a youth blog for the Positive Youth Development State and Local Collaboration Demonstration Projects and took notes at many meetings and conference calls of FYSB staff and grantees.

Finally, NCFY maintained and updated the FYSB Web site regularly. NCFY and FYSB staff worked together on a major redesign of the site in FYs 2008 and 2009 to improve its usability as well as an intensive effort to ensure its complete accessibility to visitors with disabilities.

Chapter 6

Training and Technical Assistance Center

FYSB took a new approach to providing training and technical assistance to Runaway and Homeless Youth Program grantees in FYs 2008 and 2009: a centralized, national Runaway and Homeless Youth Training and Technical Assistance Center (RHYTTAC). Its mission is to enhance and promote the continuous quality improvement of the services provided by RHY grantees through high quality, capacity-building training, technical assistance, and consultation based on FYSB and grantee needs.

This centralized, national training and technical assistance system replaces the former coordinated network of 10 regional training and technical assistance providers. RHYTTAC incorporates the strengths of the previous system by subcontracting with the former regional providers and other consultants across the country to deliver training and technical assistance, but its centralization improves consistency in the delivery of information, training, and technical assistance to grantees across the country. This approach allows the Center to address the universal needs of grantees with regard to RHY service provision while still meeting the specific needs of individual programs or regions.

The first year of RHYTTAC operations was dedicated primarily to developing the structural supports necessary to meet its goals. Significant activities were hiring staff, developing marketing strategies, contacting new and existing grantees, providing grantees access to center services, and conducting an initial assessment of programmatic needs of grantees. Of particular significance, RHYTTAC formed an Advisory Board with representation from all RHY programs, FYSB, national organizations, topical experts, and youth. The Board met four times over the two-year period and supported and advised RHYTTAC on start-up activities and well as ongoing implementation of the training and technical assistance program.

Diverse strategies are being employed to meet the multiple training and technical assistance needs of RHY grantees. They include information, training, technical assistance, and consultation activities to help grantees address both service delivery and administrative aspects of running a FYSB-funded RHY program.

Information Services

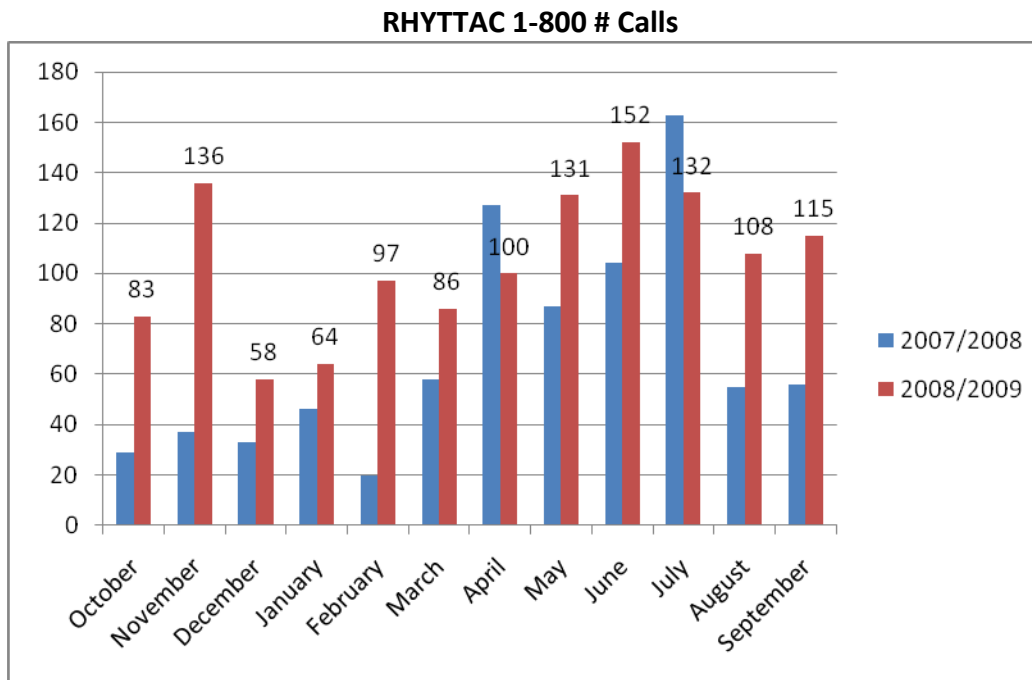
RHYTTAC offers resources, information, and guidance on service provision and best practices. The universal needs of the RHY community are met through an interactive Web site, tip sheets, quarterly newsletter, toolkits, sample policies and procedures, and other resources. The Web site enables grantee agencies and the general public to easily get timely information on RHY issues and general information and to request services from RHYTTAC.

As a result of frequent requests for information on PYD, RHYTTAC collected and reviewed multiple resources related to youth development philosophy and framework and collaborated with the National Child Welfare Resource Center for Youth Development and the National Child

Welfare Resource Center for Organizational Improvement to publish a *Positive Youth Development Toolkit*. The toolkit is being disseminated, along with other resources, through the Web site and at training and technical assistance events. Additionally, RHYTTAC is offering sample forms, policies, and procedures collected from existing programs as resources for other grantees. Tip sheets on aftercare and technical assistance were published and disseminated to grantees in FY 2009, along with two issues of the electronic *RHYTTAC e-news* which focused on an overview of the Center and aftercare.

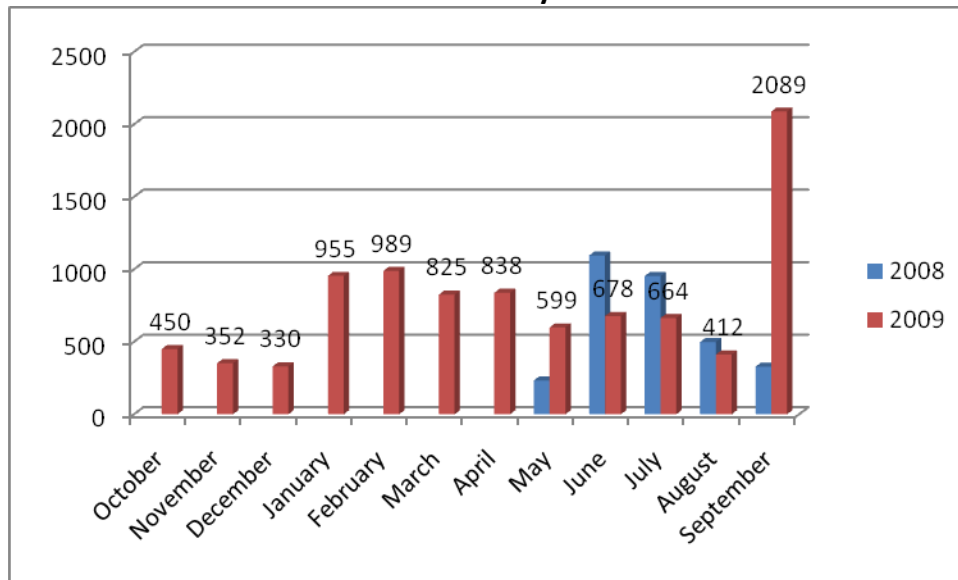
RHYTTAC has developed and facilitates a Community of Practice to encourage networking and collaboration across the FYSB RHY grantee community. Through participation, grantees can post questions, share knowledge around topical areas, and collaborate with their RHY colleagues. By the end of FY 2009, 174 grantee staff were networking with their colleagues in the Community of Practice.

In FYs 2008 and 2009, RHYTTAC received and provided support to RHY grantees through 2,127 calls to its toll-free telephone number.



In addition, through the RHYTTAC Web site, www.rhyttac.ou.edu, RHY grantees have direct access to on-demand training, resources, registration opportunities, and timely announcements about issues impacting the provision of RHY services. RHYTTAC uses e-blasts to disseminate announcements to all grantees regarding new resources, programs, and services available from the Center. RHYTTAC began tracking Web site data in May 2008 and documented 3,108 Web site visits in the remainder of FY 2008. For the full FY 2009, the site had a total of 9,181 visits.

Web Site Traffic - rhyttac.ou.edu



RHYTTAC in Action

When manufacturing plants in a Michigan community reduced their workforce by three-fourths, a basic center program there experienced a big decline in the number of youth served. Its shelter maintained only a 30- to 40-percent occupancy rate over a year.

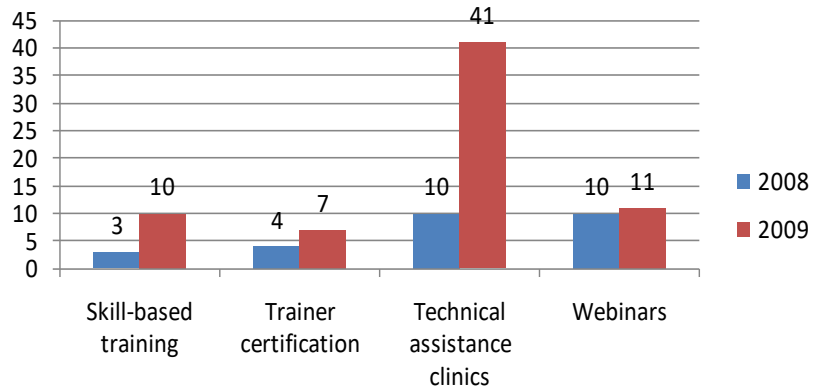
RHYTTAC consultants provided technical assistance to help this grantee evaluate and adapt its outreach strategy. They suggested creating an outreach calendar to track community education events and determine which ones led to an increase in youth served. RHYTTAC recommended working with the State's McKinney-Vento Liaison to get into local schools to make educational presentations directly to students, teachers, and school counselors. Another suggestion was meeting quarterly with other local FYSB grantees to discuss trends in the area and promising outreach approaches. The basic center is now successfully serving more youth as a result of new outreach strategies.

Types of Training and Technical Assistance

RHYTTAC's training and technical assistance delivery system is designed to address universal needs of all RHY grantees, targeted needs of groups of grantees, and intensive needs of individual grantees. RHYTTAC assists grantees through several media to ensure accessibility and accommodate the varying skill levels of grantee staff. Skill-based training, trainer certification, distance learning, on-demand training, and technical assistance clinics, along with a national RHY Grantee Conference and a Transitional Living Program grantee meeting, are all being used to address the varying needs of FYSB grantees.

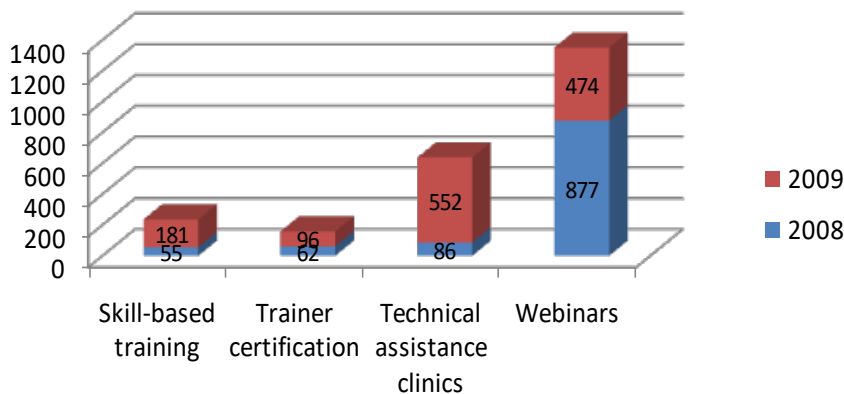
The integrated calendar allows RHYTTAC to address existing training and technical assistance needs while maintaining the flexibility to focus on other needs later identified through monitoring visits, surveys of grantees and FYSB staff, and grantee self-assessments. Training and technical assistance clinics are geographically distributed across the country to provide access for all grantees.

Training and Technical Assistance Events
FYs 2008 and 2009



E-blasts to RHY grantees are used to encourage registration. Topical focuses of training and technical assistance events have included youth care work, aftercare, outreach, cultural competence, supervision, disaster preparedness, management of aggressive behavior, and life skills assessment, among others. In FYs 2008 and 2009, 96 training and technical events were conducted, serving 2,383 participants.

Training and Technical Assistance Event Participants
FYs 2008 and 2009



Ongoing evaluation of RHYTTAC training and technical assistance services has provided consistent positive feedback on their quality and relevance. All feedback received is used to improve and modify training services to address the needs of RHY service providers.

Grantee Meeting and National Conference

RHYTTAC plans and coordinates an annual meeting of Transitional Living Program grantees, held in conjunction with the Pathways to Adulthood conference. This meeting provides an important forum for FYSB and grantees in the program to discuss current issues and trends in transitional living programming. It has proven to enhance collaboration between programs and

improve communication between RHY grantees and FYSB. The Transitional Living Program grantee meeting convened on May 14, 2008, in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, was attended by 269 participants representing 47 States, Puerto Rico, and the District of Columbia. The meeting held on June 3, 2009, in San Diego, California, was attended by 197 participants representing 43 States, the District of Columbia, and Guam.

In FY 2009, RHYTTAC worked closely with FYSB to convene the first annual RHY Grantee Conference, held in St. Louis, Missouri, on November 19–21, 2008. It was attended by 442 participants from 252 grantees representing 45 States, the District of Columbia, and Guam. The conference brought together grantees from all three FYSB-funded RHY programs to share ideas, promising approaches, and best practices, and it provided a structured learning environment for program staff, from direct care workers to executive directors. The conference planning committee included members of the RHYTTAC Advisory Board in addition to representation of both grantees and FYSB staff.

Utilizing information gathered through surveys, phone calls, trainings, and clinics, RHYTTAC planned 30 different workshops to address the universal needs of RHY grantees. An additional four workshops focused specifically on the programmatic needs of Basic Center, Transitional Living, and Street Outreach Programs. These sessions reviewed changes in the legislation pertaining to each program and included presentations by professionals from the field with vast experience specific to the particular program type.

The conference also offered inspiring messages from former RHY youth, information from FYSB officials, and a chance to network with peers and experts. During each continental breakfast, FYSB and RHYTTAC staff were available for RHY grantees to talk with about questions, needs, or concerns. An evening reception encouraged informal networking among grantees. Regional meetings gave participants a chance to meet fellow grantees from their areas and hear from FYSB staff. Materials from 20 workshops and recordings of keynote speeches are posted on the RHYTTAC Web site.

Evaluations from this inaugural conference indicated that grantees were very pleased.. As one participant wrote, “Wonderful conference! I learned so much as a person new in the social work field.”

Playing a Role in FYSB’s Monitoring System

RHYTTAC supports 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, it played an important role in ensuring the overall quality of FYSB’s RHY programs in FYs 2008 and 2009.

RHYTTAC provides intensive technical assistance to individual RHY grantees directed at specific concerns identified during monitoring visits as being out of compliance. It does this by providing written materials, (e.g., sample policies and procedures), conference calls, and Web-based meetings with individual grantees and/or onsite and offsite consultation with extensive follow-up. Comprehensive assessment, thorough design and delivery, and regular, targeted

follow-up ensure intensive technical assistance services facilitate continuous service improvement and capacity building within individual grantee agencies. Monitoring reports, RHYMIS data, corrective action reports, and other program-specific materials are used to design the targeted technical assistance response for each grantee.

Peer-to-peer linkages between experienced and less experienced grantees are also used to enable grantees to learn from successful programs and leverage existing expertise from each other. Grantees have been enthusiastic about providing other programs with guidance, suggestions, and materials, including policy and procedure manuals, resident handbooks, case file packets, and outreach materials.

In 2009, RHYTTAC received and responded to 75 monitoring reports, either congratulating grantees on their monitoring outcomes or offering technical assistance to address compliance and/or nonbinding issues noted on their reports. RHYTTAC provided intensive technical assistance to 136 grantees operating 234 runaway and homeless youth programs. Of these grantees, 135 received telephone technical assistance, 40 received tangible resources, 15 received peer-to-peer connections, and 45 received onsite technical assistance. The top five areas in which RHYTTAC assisted these agencies to improve service delivery were outreach and community, management of individual client files, individual intake and case planning, safe and appropriate housing, and youth participation.

RHYTTAC also worked with the 19 Rural Host Home demonstration project grantees to provide support and to evaluate the effectiveness of this demonstration program. Consultants visited all of those grantees, performing strengths/needs assessments, delivering intensive onsite technical assistance, and discussing all aspects of providing quality services in rural areas. Many of the rural programs faced challenges related to securing licenses from their State agencies, recruiting and retaining host homes, and penetrating close-knit communities. The consultants helped the grantees to solve problems and recognize community partnerships they could leverage and ways they could conduct outreach, engage community support, and support host home families.

RHYTTAC Monitoring Follow-up in Action

On a monitoring visit, a FYSB staff member discovered that a Transitional Living Program grantee was not serving 16- and 17-year-olds, as required by Federal legislation and regulations. Grantee staff had concerns about the appropriateness of placing youth this young in scattered-site apartments.

RHYTTAC followed up on this finding by discussing with the grantee ways they might appropriately serve 16- and 17-year-olds. They considered options such as reorganizing staff shifts to provide greater supervision of youth, rearranging housing options to place younger youth in the fully supervised facility and older youth in scattered-site apartments, and providing referrals to agencies that had greater bed capacity. As a result of this assistance, the grantee has adapted its program to meet the needs of this target age group.

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 FYSB staff and runaway and homeless youth professionals assess programs; the Runaway and Homeless Youth Management Information System (RHYMIS), a computerized method of collecting demographic and other information about youth served by FYSB grantees; and the Bureau’s research and demonstration activities.

Chapter 7

Runaway and Homeless Youth Program Monitoring System

To a young person in need, 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 these young people, 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 ensure that the local programs it funds are meeting the needs of runaway and homeless youth, 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. Every FYSB grantee with a grant period of three years or more has an onsite review at least once within a three-year period.

Onsite reviews are done to ensure:

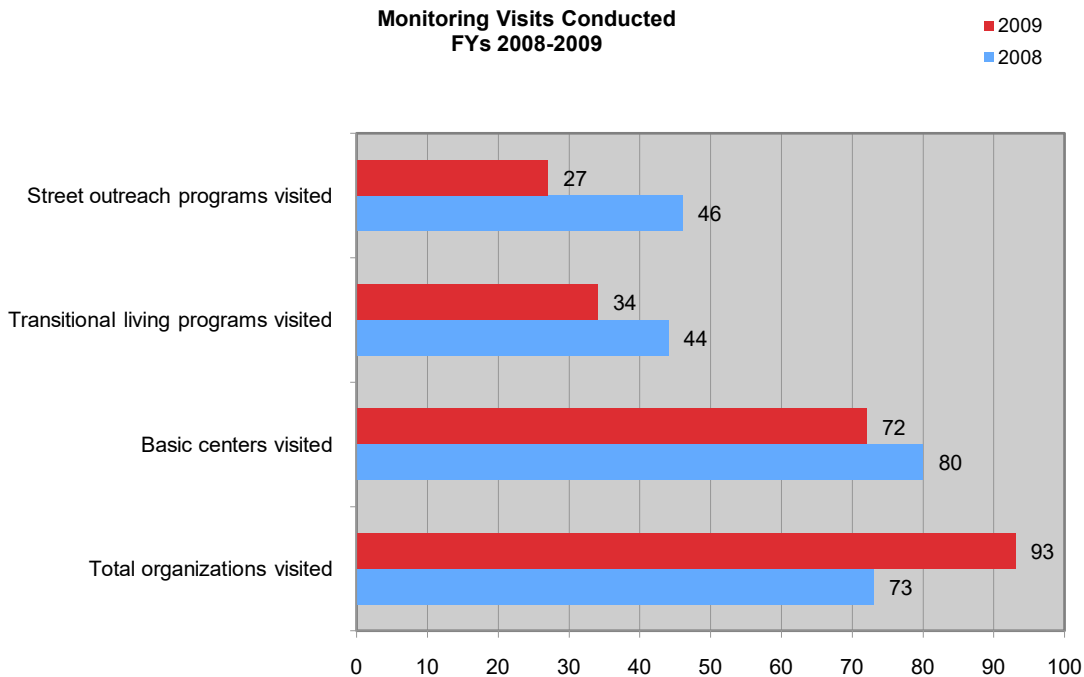
- Compliance with grant requirements—determining whether Federal grants are being used for the purposes for which they are made;
- Program evaluation—collecting additional information on the status, activities, and accomplishments of grantees for the biennial reports that the HHS Secretary delivers to Congress; and
- Assistance to grantees—providing information and assistance to grantees to enable them to improve RHY facilities, projects, and activities.

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 FY 2008, a new monitoring protocol was implemented to promote consistent practices by all onsite review teams and consistent criteria for determining grantee compliance with Federal

grant requirements. The protocol also provides guidance on how to prepare for and conduct each phase of a monitoring review and how to report the results accurately.

FYSB monitoring teams visited 73 agencies operating 170 runaway and homeless youth programs in FY 2008. They visited 93 agencies operating 133 programs in FY 2009.



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 organization.

During monitoring visits, Federal staff on the review team 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 Visit

Prior to the meeting, an onsite 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 review: 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. RHYTTAC offers assistance to grantees whose programs do not comply with requirements. (See pages 46–51 for examples of how training and technical assistance providers helped grantees improve in response to monitoring visit reports.)

Chapter 8

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), last amended by the Reconnecting Homeless Youth Act of 2008 (P.L.110-378), to implement a national reporting system for programs receiving Federal runaway and homeless youth funds. Refining and streamlining the RHYMIS data reporting system in the years since then has enabled FYSB grantees to report on the youth served and services provided more and more efficiently.

The result is an impressively high response rate. In FYs 2008 and 2009, about 99 percent of grantees reported on the youth they served.

Continual Improvements

FYSB continues to refine RHYMIS each year, simplifying some aspects of the system and clarifying others. The Bureau continues 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 2008 and 2009, RHYMIS's toll-free technical support hotline and e-mail help desk responded to numerous requests for assistance every day.

In FYs 2008 and 2009, FYSB included 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 also allowed grantees to report on other services provided

in the home or through various community resources that were used as an alternative to taking youth into shelters.

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 (extranet.acf.hhs.gov/rhymis). NEORHYMIS version 2.1 was released in FY 2008.

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

FYs 2008 and 2009 were exciting years for FYSB's Research and Demonstration Program, with a major project coming to completion and two new initiatives being launched. The five-year Positive Youth Development (PYD) State and Local Collaboration Demonstration Projects were evaluated in FY 2008, and new projects on Rural Host Homes for the Basic Center Program and Support Systems for Rural Homeless Youth began in FYs 2008 and 2009.

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 was authorized through FY 2013 by Part D, Section 343, of the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act, as last amended by the Reconnecting Homeless Youth Act of 2008 (Public Law 110-378).

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.

PYD State and Local Collaboration Demonstration Projects

FYSB's PYD State and Local Collaboration Demonstration Project, a five-year effort involving nine States, was evaluated in FY 2008. These projects evolved out of FYSB's role as the Federal agency that promotes PYD. Because youth programs are thought to be more effective when based on a PYD approach, FYSB set out to test the impact this approach would have if promoted within a State. State-level agencies collaborated with community organizations—including local FYSB runaway and homeless youth service providers, local government agencies, nonprofits, and schools—and, of course, young people, to plan and implement youth development strategies appropriate for their particular targeted community.

Though each State and collaborating local community pursued a different approach, they all had common goals: to increase opportunities for youth, to involve community members in the planning and development of programs for young people, to garner community support around PYD, and to impact youth policy.

The evaluation concluded that, among other achievements, the State and local collaboration 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

Since the start of this demonstration project, Federal funding from FYSB 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."

Rural Host Homes for Basic Center Program

In FYs 2008 and 2009, the Rural Host Homes Demonstration Project was initiated to expand Basic Center Program shelter and support services to runaway and homeless youth who live in rural areas not served by shelter facilities. Organizations funded through this project recruit, screen, train, and provide ongoing support to host home families that provide services to youth in their homes.

While in the program, youth under age 18 can receive shelter for up to 21 days, transportation, and individual, family, and group counseling services. They also receive assistance staying connected with their schools or staying current with the curricula, per provisions of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, and an aftercare plan to ensure continuing support after they leave the program.

FYSB awarded a total of \$1.9 million in FY 2008 to 20 grantees and \$1.8 million in FY 2009 to 19 grantees under this project. Through the demonstration, the Bureau will attempt to assess the gap in services to rural runaway and homeless youth. It will evaluate whether host homes were utilized and whether the youth were able to receive the same services as those in large metropolitan areas.

Support System for Rural Homeless Youth: A Collaborative State and Local Demonstration

FYSB also undertook another new initiative in FYs 2008 and 2009 to help young people in rural areas, including Tribal lands and other rural native communities, who are approaching young adulthood and independence but have few or no connections to a supportive family or community resources.

The Bureau awarded grants to six States—Colorado, Iowa, Minnesota, Oklahoma, Nebraska, and Vermont—to collaborate with local, community-based agencies to influence policies, programs, and practices that affect services to runaway and homeless youth, ages 16–21, in transitional living programs, as well as youth aging out of State child welfare systems and into independent living programs. Grants awarded in this program in FY 2008 totaled \$600,000, and those awarded in FY 2009 totaled \$1.2 million.

Specifically, the demonstration focuses on improving coordination of services and creating additional supports for rural youth in three areas:

- Survival support services—housing, health care, substance abuse, and/or mental health;
- Community—community services, youth and adult partnerships, mentoring, peer support groups, and/or PYD activities; and
- Education and employment—high school/GED completions, postsecondary education, employment training, and/or jobs.

The demonstration will have two phases, planning and implementation. In FY 2009, grantees were in the planning phase: identifying, convening, and consulting with local FYSB-funded agencies providing services to youth in Transitional Living and Independent Living Programs in rural communities.

Youth participation is fundamental to the success of these projects. Each project will emphasize youth participation and leadership development in the planning and implementation of project strategies and activities.

Appendix A

Requirements of Basic Center Program Grantees

Part A, Section 312(b) of the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act, as last amended by the Reconnecting Homeless Youth Act of 2008 (Public Law 110–378), requires that Basic Center Program 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;

(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; and

(13) shall develop an adequate emergency preparedness and management plan.

Appendix B

Requirements of Transitional Living Program Grantees

Part B, Section 322(a) of the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act, Part A, Section 312(b) of the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act, as last amended by the Reconnecting Homeless Youth Act of 2008 (Public Law 110–378), requires Transitional Living Program grantees:

- (1) to provide, by grant, agreement, or contract, shelter (such as group homes, including maternity group homes, host family homes, and supervised apartments) and provide, by grant, agreement, or contract, 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, or in exceptional circumstances 635 days, except that a youth in a program under this part who has not reached 18 years of age on the last day of the 635-day period may, in exceptional circumstances and if otherwise qualified for the program, remain in the program until the youth's 18th birthday;
- (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;

(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; and

(16) to develop an adequate emergency preparedness and management plan.

In addition to conforming to Transitional Living Program requirements as defined by the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act, maternity group homes must offer services to help pregnant or parenting youth to learn parenting skills, including child development, family budgeting, health and nutrition, and other skills to promote their long-term economic independence in order to ensure the well-being of their children.

Appendix C

Requirements of Street Outreach Program Grantees

Part E, Section 351 of the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act, as last amended by the Reconnecting Homeless Youth Act of 2008 (Public Law 110–378), provides the Secretary of HHS 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 Program grantees to:

- (1) assist runaway, homeless, and street youth in making personal choices regarding where they live and how they behave by building trusting relationships between grantee staff and these youth through the provision of services in their environment and through diverse modes of communication that will encourage trust;
- (2) provide services for these youth that address their behavioral and physical health, employment and educational support, and reunification with family or alternative, safe placements;
- (3) conduct outreach activities that encourage runaway, homeless, and street youth to leave the streets and make other healthy personal choices regarding how they live and behave—at a minimum, street-based outreach and education, access to emergency shelter, survival aid, individual assessments, treatment and counseling, prevention and education activities, information and referrals, crisis intervention, and follow-up support;
- (4) guarantee 24-hour access to age-appropriate emergency shelter services, either directly or by referral, for those youth willing to come in off the street, and maintain interaction with youth while they are in placement;
- (5) provide staff supervision and training, including on-street supervision by appropriately trained staff, back-up personnel for on-street staff, and initial and periodic training of staff to conduct outreach activities for runaway and homeless street youth, to provide street-based services to youth of diverse cultural backgrounds that reflects gender and cultural sensitivity and language appropriateness, and to integrate PYD in the services delivered to youth and their families;
- (6) practice a PYD approach by ensuring each young person served a sense of safety and structure, belonging and membership, self-worth and social contribution, independence and control over one's life, and closeness in interpersonal relationships, and through strategies such as youth leadership and opportunities for decision making, service learning, and job preparation and work shadowing;
- (7) keep adequate statistical records for profiling the youth and families served;

(8) receive and participate in technical assistance efforts as recommended by Federal staff;

(9) develop and document an emergency preparedness and management plan that addresses steps to be taken in case of a local or national situation that poses risk to the health and safety of staff and youth and, at a minimum, includes prevention, preparedness, response and recovery efforts; contains strategies for addressing evacuation, security, food, medical supplies, and notification of youth's families; designates an alternative location should evaluation be necessary due to specific facility issues; and specifies immediate notification of FYSB when evacuation plans are executed;

(10) develop a plan for continued service delivery at the culmination of the grant funding period, identifying specific services and organizational resources based on future projected needs of the target population, goals of the organization, and available resources.