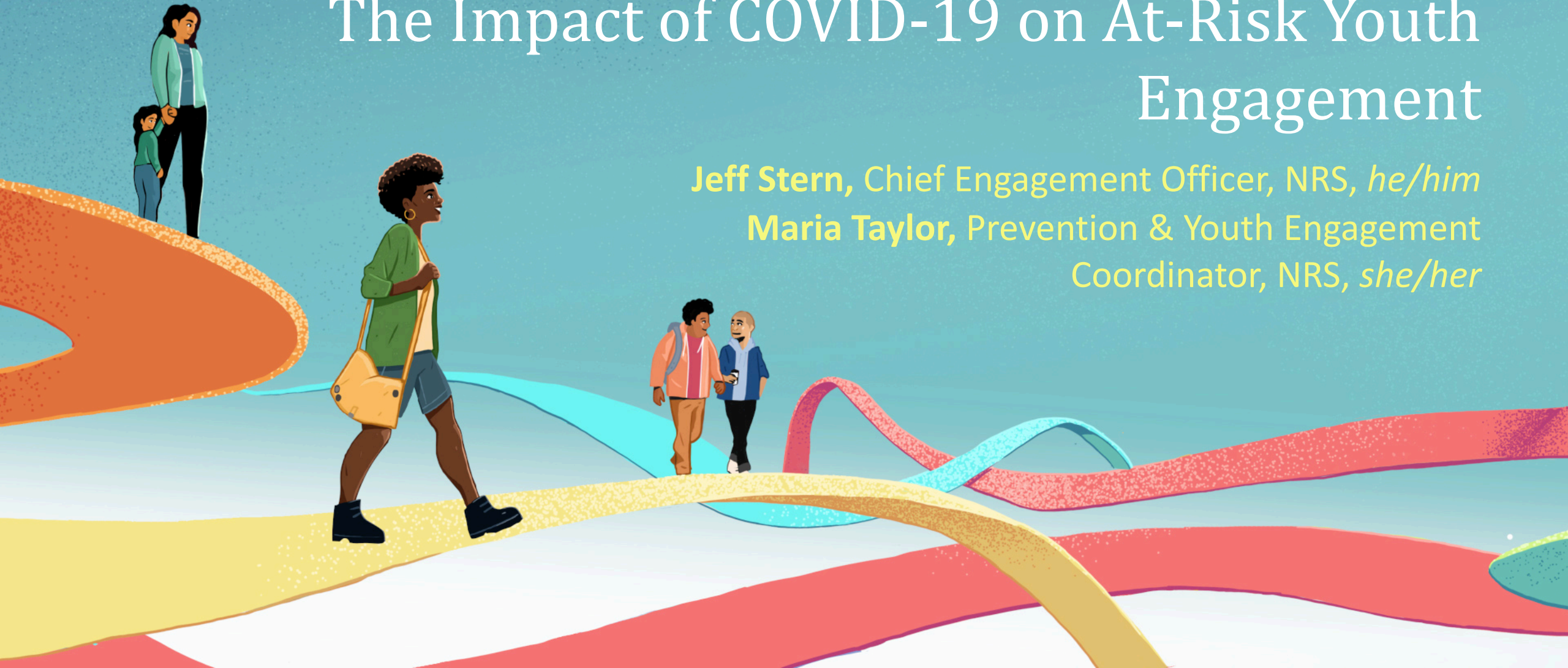


The Impact of COVID-19 on At-Risk Youth Engagement

Jeff Stern, Chief Engagement Officer, NRS, *he/him*

Maria Taylor, Prevention & Youth Engagement
Coordinator, NRS, *she/her*





The Impact of COVID-19 on At-Risk Youth Engagement

Jeff Stern,
Chief Engagement Officer

Maria Taylor, Prevention &
Youth Engagement Coordinator

Learning Objectives

- Become familiar with the National Runaway Safeline's services and resources available for youth, families, and youth-serving organizations;
- Understand how the 2020 Crisis Services & Prevention Data informs crisis services and support to young people, as well as prevention strategies; and
- Learn how to use digital platforms to enhance visibility, outreach and engagement amongst young people, focusing on:
 - Audience
 - Platforms
 - Impact



National Runaway Safeline (NRS)

- The National Runaway Safeline is the federally-supported national communication system for youth in crisis, runaway, and homeless youth.
- Our mission is to keep America's runaway, homeless and at-risk youth safe and off the streets.
- Each year, NRS makes over 125,000 connections to offer help through hotline, online and offline resources.



NRS Services


1-800-RUNAWAY:


- Trauma-informed, solution-focused crisis intervention
- Information and referrals
- Message Service
- Conference calls
- Home Free family reunification and transportation program


1800RUNAWAY.org:


- Interactive live chat
- Crisis forum and email
- Text “HELP” to 66008
- Free educational and promotional materials





 CALL 1-800-RUNAWAY

 CHAT

 EMAIL

 FORUM

 TEXT

 EXIT



Youth & Teens

Concerned Adults

Service Providers

Prevention & Education

Media Center

About Us



HERE TO LISTEN.
HERE TO HELP.

24/7 Crisis Connection

 CALL
Tap To Call Us
Learn More

 CHAT
Tap To Live Chat
Learn More

 EMAIL
Tap To Send Email
Learn More

 FORUM
Tap To View Forum
Learn More

 TEXT
Learn More



2020 Crisis Services & Prevention Report

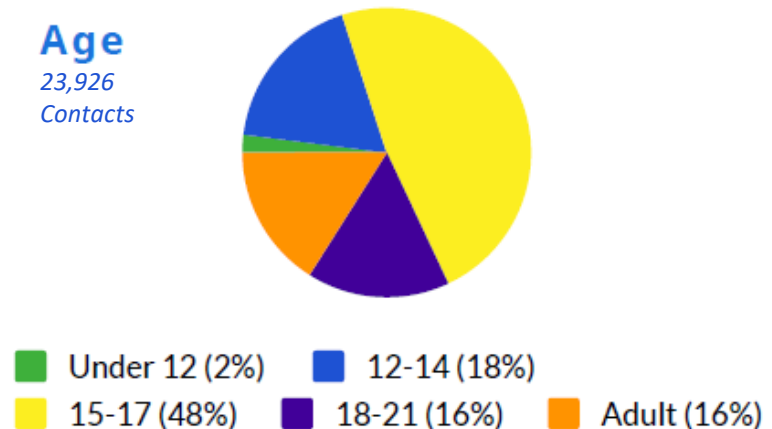


- Provides a snapshot of the individuals who reached out to NRS, via demographics, reasons for reaching out, and method of outreach.
- Considers self-reported data from contacts to better understand who reaches out to NRS, why they reach out, and how we can better serve youth and families in the future
 - Voluntary nature of data also results in different number of contacts (N) who respond to each question
- 2020 report specifically includes a section on the impact of COVID-19 based on collected data
- Available on our website: www.1800runaway.org/media-center/media-contacts-and-materials

Poll Question – 2020 Crisis Services Contacts

What is the most common age range of those reaching out to the National Runaway Safeline?

- a) Under 12
- b) 12 – 14
- c) 15 – 17
- d) 18 – 21
- e) Adults

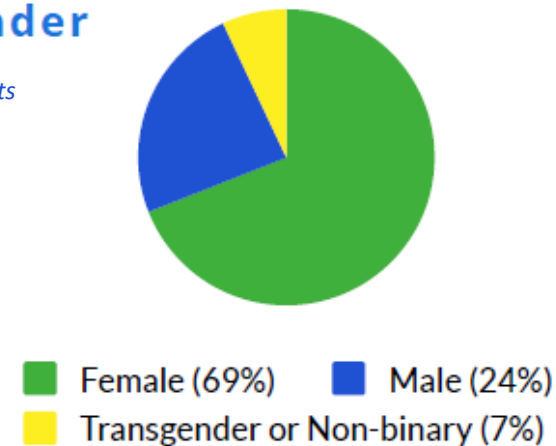


Poll Question – 2020 Crisis Services Contacts

People identifying as what gender reach out to the National Runaway Safeline most often?

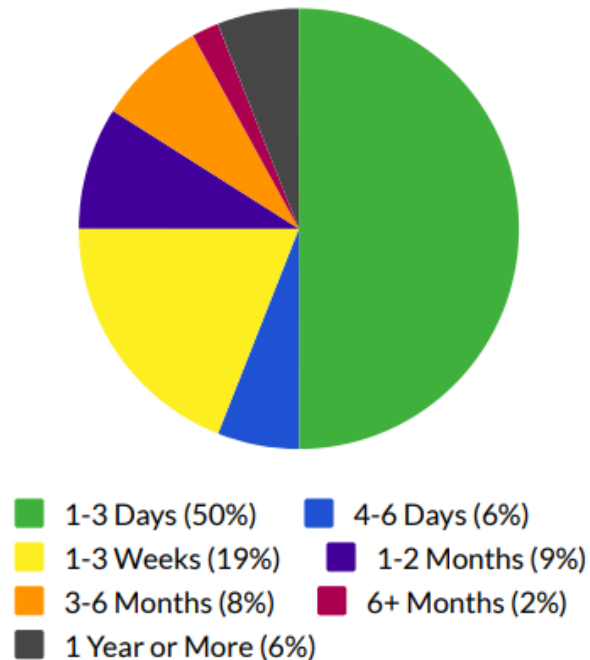
- a) Female
- b) Male
- c) Transgender/Non-binary

Gender
20,043
Contacts

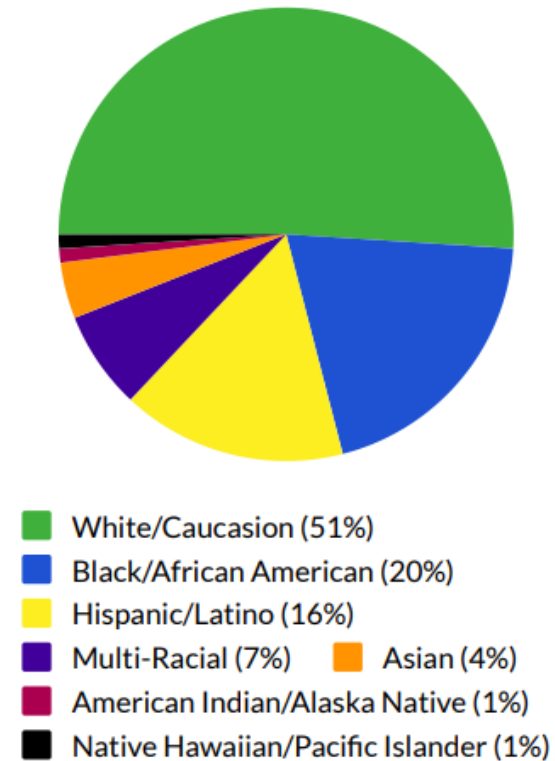


2020 Crisis Services Contacts

Homeless Youth
Time on the Street



Race



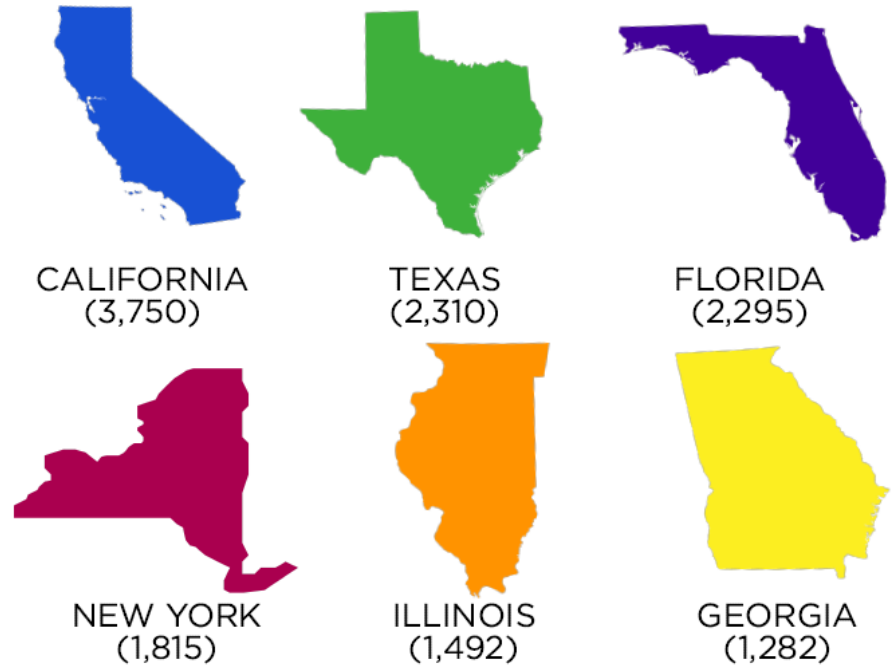
2020 Crisis Services Contacts

Reasons for Crisis Intervention	N	%
Family dynamics	22,837	88%
Emotional abuse	7,934	31%
Peer/social	6,880	27%
Mental health	6,099	24%
Physical abuse	4,706	18%
Economics	3,444	13%
Neglect	3,295	13%

Youth Status at Time of Contact

Youth Still at Home
at Time of Crisis Contact **71%**

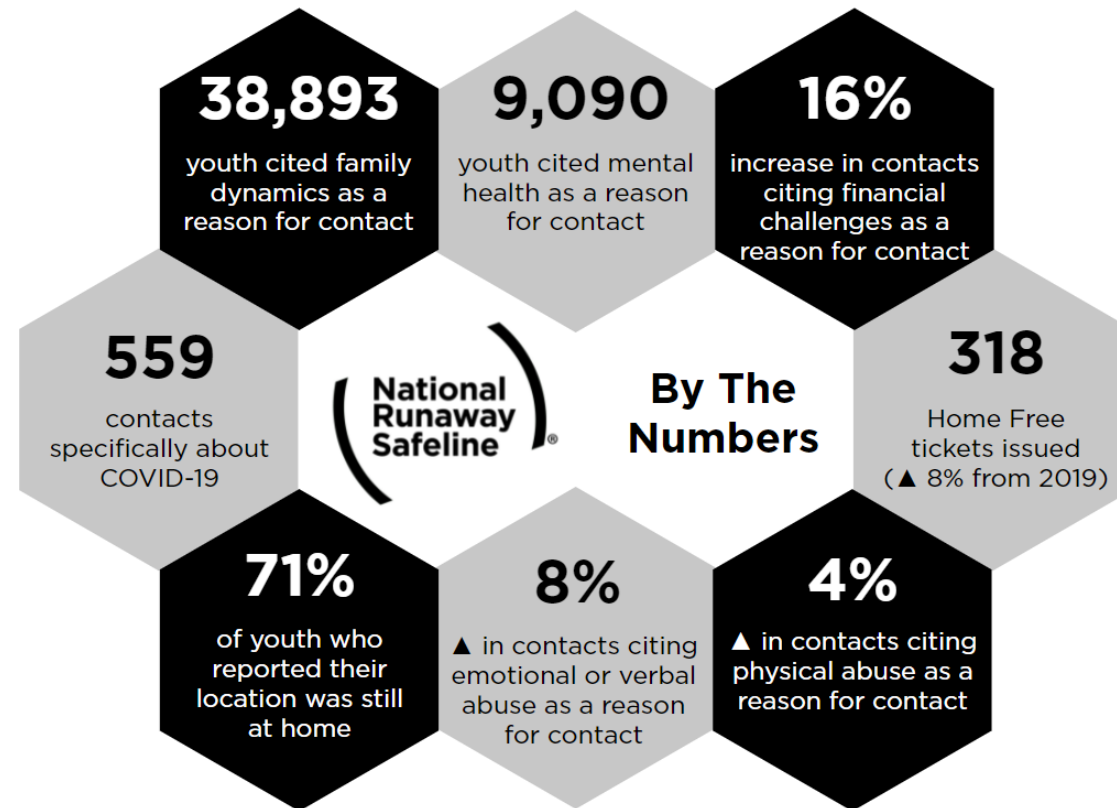
States with Highest Crisis Contact Volume



The Impact of COVID-19

- Limited to no availability of shelter resources;
- Limited to no access to transportation for safe housing and shelter;
- Heightened anxiety and limited access to support systems at schools, drop-in centers, case management, and other resources; and
- Confined to home or in current living arrangement with abusers or other potentially unsafe living situations.

2020 Crisis Contacts



Data indicating the impact of COVID-19

- Contacts skewed younger
 - Under age 15: 3,500 contacts in 2019 / 5,353 contacts in 2020 (up 53%)
 - Under age 12: 284 contacts in 2019 / 619 contacts in 2020
- Digital services becoming increasingly popular
 - Chat service: 16,361 contacts in 2019 / 18,956 contacts in 2020 (up 16%)
- Reasons for reaching out
 - Family dynamics: represented 57% of contacts in 2019 / 88% of contacts in 2020
 - Mental health: 4,690 contacts in 2019 / 6,099 contacts in 2020 (up 30%)
- Reaching out from home
 - 10,986 contacts in 2019 / 13,925 contacts in 2020 (up 27%)
- Challenge finding local resources
 - NRS made 500 more referrals to local resources in 2020 than in 2019



Building an Effective Response

- Integrated & updated technology, allowing NRS staff to work fully remote while maintaining fully operational 24/7 crisis services.
- Expanded & updated resource referral database for youth and families in need – with a state-by-state focus on critical services with a particular focus on housing, transportation & mental health services and other.
- New wellness initiatives to support the physical & mental health of NRS crisis services team members.
- Increased direct outreach to youth through website and social media.



Poll Question – Outreach to Youth

Where do you see the greatest potential to increase engagement with the youth your organization serves?

- a) Physical promotional materials (brochures, etc.)
- b) Digital outreach (social media, etc.)
- c) Street outreach (person-to-person)

Poll Question – Outreach to Youth

Does your organization currently have a digital outreach plan that specifically targets youth?

- a) Yes
- b) No

How Contacts Learned of NRS	N	%
Internet	21,656	82%

Method of Contact	N	%
Chat	18,956	53%
Hotline call	10,506	29%
Forum post	3,985	11%
Email	2,660	7%
Total	36,107	100%

Notable in the data: the power and popularity of digital services and engagement.



Direct Outreach to Youth



- Social media campaign targeting young people who may need NRS' services now or in the future.
- Initially partnered with a marketing agency to develop initial campaign (Dec. 2020 – Jan. 2021)
 - Campaign messaging, design, administration
 - Branding refresh: applied to all NRS digital assets



Let's Step Forward Together



<https://www.1800runaway.org/stepforward>



Let's Step Forward Together

**24 hours a day.
365 days a year.**

A better tomorrow starts
by calling 1.800.RUNAWAY.
Let's step forward together.



**M A K E
2021
THE YEAR YOU
STEP FORWARD
WE'RE HERE TO DO IT
WITH YOU.**



Asking for help is not a sign of weakness.
Rather, a sign of strength.



**You took me seriously when
everyone else didn't believe
or didn't understand.**

Post from our public forum

**PARENTS AND
GUARDIANS,
WE'RE HERE FOR
YOU TOO.**

**WE'RE HERE
TO LISTEN 24/7.**



**HERE
TO LISTEN.
HERE
TO HELP.**

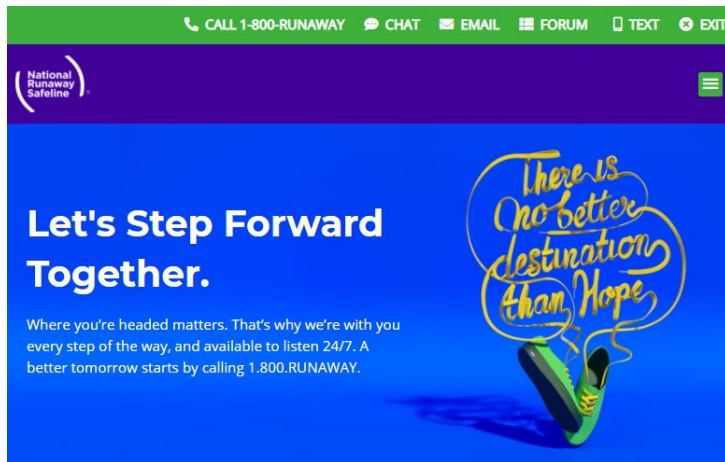
**WE DON'T KNOW
WHAT IT'S LIKE
TO WALK IN YOUR
SHOES, BUT WE DO
KNOW WHAT IT'S
LIKE TO HELP.**



**THIS HOLIDAY SEASON IS
DIFFICULT FOR EVERYONE.
WE'RE HERE TO SPEND IT
WITH YOU VIRTUALLY IF
YOU WANT REACH OUT
24/7.**



1800runaway.org/stepforward



WE RESPECT YOUR PRIVACY.

We won't pry.

When telling your story, you choose what information to share.

Our conversation is personal and private.

Although we won't share your story, if someone is hurting you and you give identifying information, we are required by law to report it – but remember the decision is yours to give us that information.

WE ARE HERE TO SUPPORT YOU.

We won't judge.

You can expect to share your story with someone who won't judge or tell you what to do.

We're trained to help you.

Each team member has been trained to provide support, listen to your story, and help you determine your next steps.

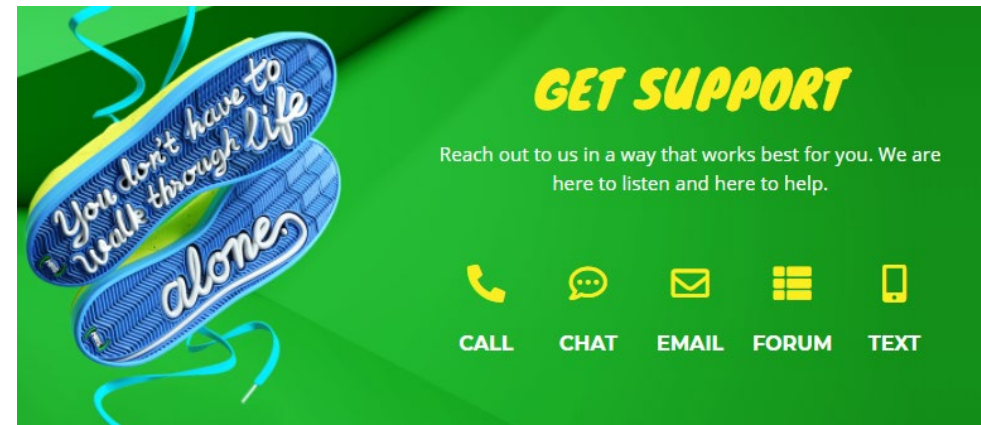
IMMEDIATE HELP IS AVAILABLE 24/7/365.

Four ways to connect.

Call 1-800-RUNAWAY. Or use the online services to chat, email, or post on the forum.

Experience helping people just like you.

Each frontline team member has over 40 hours of crisis intervention training.



Spanish Translations



<https://www.1800runaway.org/caminemos>



1800runaway.org/caminemos

¡CAMINEMOS JUNTOS!

No hay mejor destino que la esperanza.

Tu destino es importante. Por eso estamos contigo a cada paso y dispuestos a escucharte 24 horas al día todos los días de la semana. Un mejor mañana comienza con llamarnos al 1.800.RUNAWAY.



RESPETAMOS TU PRIVACIDAD.

No somos entrometidos.

Cuando nos platicas tu historia, tú decides lo que vas a compartir.

Nuestra conversación es personal y privada.

Aunque nunca compartimos lo que nos cuentas, si alguien te está lastimando y tú nos das información que le identifica, la ley nos obliga a reportarlo — pero recuerda: la información que compartes es tu decisión.

ESTAMOS AQUÍ PARA APOYARTE.

No juzgamos.

Puedes estar seguro que compartirás tu historia con alguien que no te va a juzgar ni te va a decir qué hacer.

Estamos capacitados para ayudarte.

Cada miembro de nuestro equipo está capacitado para apoyarte, escuchar tu historia y ayudarte a definir tus siguientes pasos.

AYUDA INMEDIATA Y DISPONIBLE 24/7/365.

Cuatro formas para conectarte.

Llama a 1.800.RUNAWAY. O usa nuestro servicio en línea para chatear, escribir o postear.

Tenemos experiencia para poder ayudarte.

Cada miembro de nuestro equipo tiene más de 40 horas de entrenamiento para intervenir en situaciones de crisis.



BUSCA APOYO

Conéctate con nosotros como mejor te convenga. Aquí estamos para escucharte y ayudarte.

¿Quieres saber más de nuestros servicios? [Haz click aquí.](#)

 LLAMA

 CHAT

 EMAIL

 FORO

 TEXTO

Media Results (Dec. 2020 – Jan. 2021)



- Campaign focus:
 - Platforms: Facebook/Instagram and Snapchat
 - Demographics: 15-21 year olds; all gender identities
 - Geography: Chicago, NY, LA, Seattle, Miami, Houston, Dakotas
- Reach:
 - Impressions: over 20 million; Clicks: over 117,000
 - Snapchat far more impactful than Facebook/Instagram



Back-to-School Campaign (Aug. – Sept. 2021)



- Build off December 2020 campaign to run internally:
 - Add TikTok, YouTube
 - Build out additional ads and messages based on effective social media messaging over past six months, time of year
 - Subscription to online service to track effectiveness of campaign across various platforms (Keyhole)
 - Adjust campaign throughout based on weekly results while carefully monitoring budgets

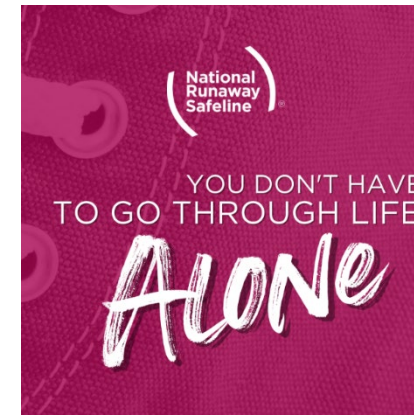
Back-to-School Campaign Goals



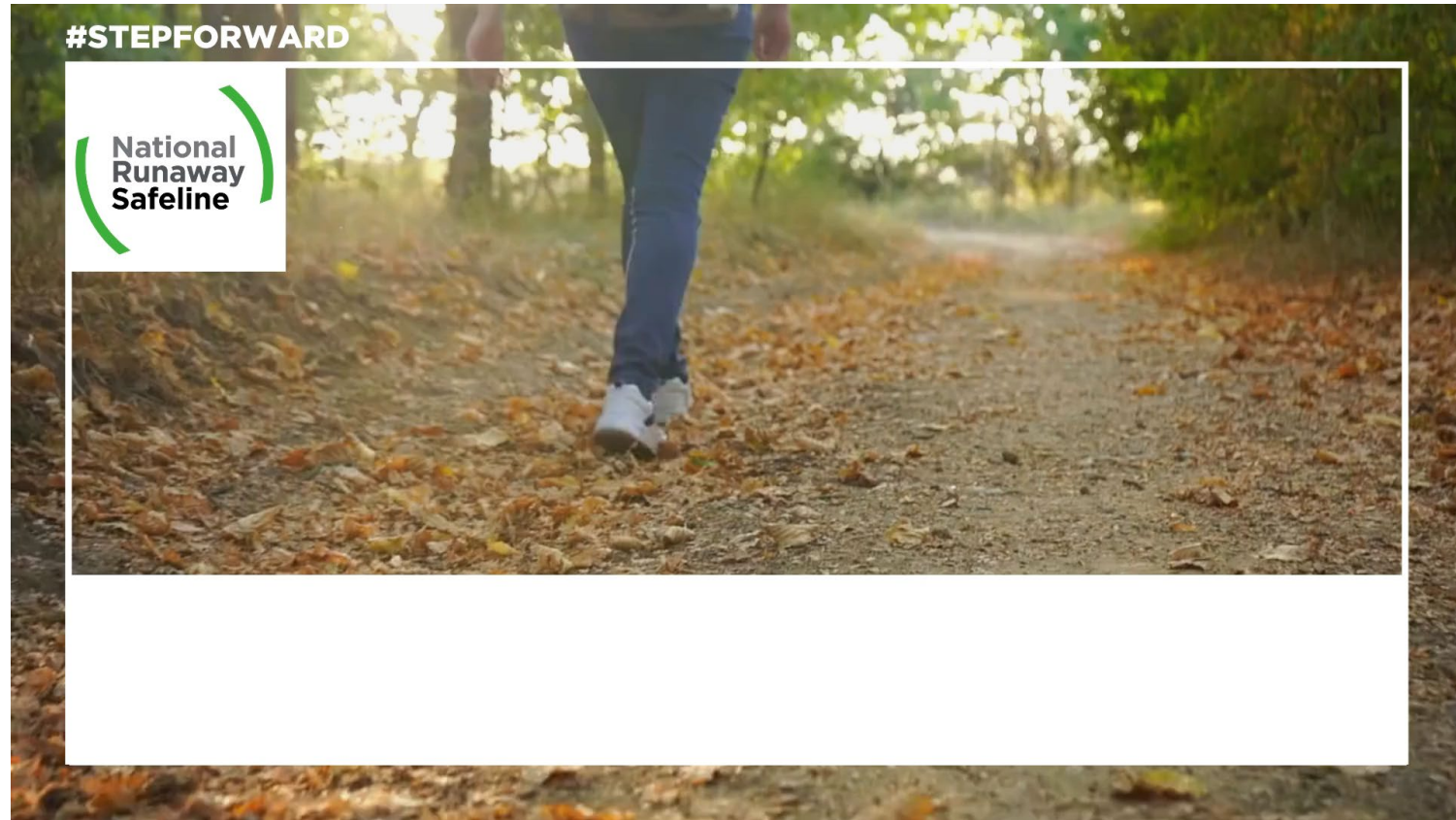
- Reach: 3 million impressions / 90,000 clicks (across all platforms)
- Primary target audience:
 - 15-17 year olds (represents nearly 50% of contacts in 2020)
 - Underserved audiences
 - Target cities/states: Atlanta, LA, Chicago, Detroit, Las Vegas, NY and Florida



Let's Step Forward Together



Let's Step Forward Together



Back-to-School Campaign Results



- Reach: 4.64 million impressions / 29,330 clicks (across all platforms)
- Most effective platform: TikTok
 - 1.15 million impressions / 18,473 clicks
- Effectively targeted:
 - 15-17 year olds (represents nearly 50% of contacts in 2020)
 - States with highest impression counts reflected targeting based on locations with highest number of crisis contacts (CA, TX, GA, FL, IL, NY)
 - Cities (YouTube) showed similar effectiveness (NYC, LA, Houston, Chicago, Dallas)



Strategies to Develop YOUR Digital Outreach



- Meet youth where they are: platforms that may be less comfortable and familiar to many of us!
- Impressions vs. Click rates are challenging!
 - New Year: 0.59% click rate
 - Back-to-School: 0.63% click rate
- Monitor budgets and platform results, and don't be afraid to modify (New Orleans example)

Strategies to Develop YOUR Digital Outreach



- Engage young people in messaging
- Use data to inform expectations and goals
- Don't expect immediate results:
 - Requires engaging over time to grow “popularity”
 - Young people may not need you right when they see ads



Join us on social media!

- Follow the National Runaway Safeline across digital platforms (@1800RUNAWAY)
- Steal from us! Retweet/share/like messages with your network.
- Tell us about your key activities and events for us to share with our network.

National Runaway
Safeline



@1800RUNAWAY



1800RUNAWAY





QUESTIONS

(NRS)

Contact Information

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Family & Youth
Services Bureau

Runaway and Homeless Youth
Training & Technical Assistance Center

BRIGHTER FUTURES
STRENGTHENING PATHWAYS FOR YOUTH SUCCESS

Thank You!

Please complete the evaluation for this session.

Click on the link in the Chat, then select:

Day Two

Workshop

The Impact of COVID-19 on At-Risk Youth Engagement