

Assisting Young Persons Missing from Care-Supplemental Materials Run Prevention Tips and Youth Engagement

This is a list of discussion prompts to prevent youth from running from DCF care and/or from a program. These prompts can serve as a guide for providers and for DCF staff. Please feel free to contact Transitional Supports and Success for brainstorming/consultation.

Create a youth run prevention plan: Develop a plan with the youth, caregiver, and anyone else working with the youth. The plan should identify what interventions are needed to help break the behavior cycle that leads to running. The run prevention plan should help support the youth and could include regular check-ins by the youth with caregivers throughout the day. The check-in gives the youth the opportunity to process what he or she is feeling that would cause him to run.

Provide targeted interventions to help reduce the reasons for the youth running: Some causes of running and interventions could be:

- If the youth runs to see friends, work with the caregiver/provider to increase activities and time they have with their friends or look to see if any of the friend's family the youth can be a support.
- If a youth runs to see his or her biological family, assess safety issues and, if possible, place with the family or increase family visits.
- If the youth runs to abuse substances, coordinate with the youth's social worker to refer the youth for a substance abuse assessment and treatment if recommended.
- If the youth is struggling at school, confer with the social worker regarding accessing regional office educational coordinator supports. Each regional office has educational coordinators who can assist with education related issues.
- Ensure that the youth has completed the LIST assessment and has a Life Skills plan in place. Be flexible and increase their responsibilities as appropriate. Be supportive and involved in their life skills development.
- Review the current placement and the youth's lack of engagement. Work with the youth and the youth's social worker to alleviate issues.

Let youth have voice and a choice: It's important that the youth feels a sense of empowerment. Allow youth to express their opinions and whenever possible make decisions regarding his or her life. Be flexible and increase responsibilities when appropriate. Help devise solutions to identify barriers.

Provide a sense of purpose, belonging and safety: Incorporate the youth's stated goals in his or her treatment planning and ensure that staff and other stakeholders are aware of the goals. Provide support and the help needed to achieve their goals.

Include youth in all activities, trips and other events. Have clear rules that apply to all youth. Promote an environment of caring and support. Set clear limits: All youth need guidance; however, they should be involved in setting rules and consequences. Consequences should be consistently applied to all youth and be directly related to the behavior.

Have meals together: Try to sit down as a group at mealtime. This promotes bonding among members of the group.

Share ordinary time: Look for everyday opportunities to bond with the youth. This could be while driving to appointments or during informal meetings. Offer the youth a chance to talk about what is on his or her mind.

Get involved, be involved and stay involved: Attend the youth's school activities such as sports, events or practices. Ask about homework or school projects and help when needed or asked. Look for chances to support the youth's hobbies and interests.

Be interested: Show the youth you care about their ideas, feelings and experiences. If you listen to what they say, you'll get a better sense of the guidance and support they need.

Provide meaningful activities and opportunities: Helping a youth gain skill needed for the future shows that the caregivers are invested in their life and what they want to achieve.

Form a relationship with the youth's parents or extended family and with their friends.

Openness regarding case information: Share all appropriate information to help build trust and a sense of control.

Permanency planning with specific goals for the youth: Help the youth plan for his or her permanency goals.

Safety Plan: Youth may not feel safe so develop a safety plan with the youth. Provide the youth with numbers to call to find local places to stay (such as shelters) and access to food.

**Supplemental Material for the Missing from Care Policy
Transitional Support and Success
Youth Run Prevention Plan**

Name:

DOB:

Area Office:

DCF Social Worker:

Date:

LINK #:

Current Placement:

Who is completing this form:

Caregiver(s):

Youth-Young Adult:

When you leave your home or congregate setting without permission or as agreed upon by yourself and your caregiver, it can place you at risk. Part of this plan is to identify run triggers along with interventions that would help you to remain where you are and seek other ways to address your needs.

When you have run or feel the need to leave, what are some of the reasons?

To be with friends []

School problems []

To see parents []

To use substances []

To see boyfriend/girlfriend []

Need some space/time away []

Not feeling safe in placement []

Got mad and left - did not mean to run []

Any other reason not listed:

With the list above, what can be done to help you address these triggers without the need for you to leave your location?

Is there a way to increase visits or activities with friends, family or boyfriend/girlfriend? This may need to be assessed and based on that, may look to incorporate more visits and activities as planned events.

List some of what you would like to do with family and/or friends?

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For school problems, the area office social worker and regional office educational coordinators can assist with the specific school related issues. What are the school issues that are interfering with you attending?

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For substance use, the social worker can make a referral for a substance abuse assessment and treatment if recommended. Can also create a list of activities that you can participate in to help with your leisure time. What are some activities that you like to do?

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If you are not feeling safe or connected with your current living situation, how can we help make you feel safer and more connected so that you don't feel the need to leave?

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When we get angry, we can make decisions at that moment that puts us at risk or can be hurtful to ourselves or others. What are some things that make you angry? What can we do to help you when you're angry?

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In each of the sections above, the youth, caregiver and social worker shall try to incorporate these into the treatment plan and establish what needs to be done in order to achieve them.

List of Supports and Contact Numbers:

DCF Social Worker:

Child-Young Adult Attorney:

Parent:

Other Family Members

Friends:

Girlfriend:

Boyfriend:

Work:

School:

Others - please identify and list

This list is a resource for the youth and caregiver particularly when the youth-young adult has left their current placement and is missing.

Signatures

This plan must be developed, reviewed and agreed upon with the youth-young adult and the caregiver. By signing this form, the caregiver and youth-young adult agree with the plan that has been collaboratively developed and to follow the plan to the best of their ability. A signed copy will be given to the youth, caretaker and social worker. The original is placed in the case file.

Youth-Young Adult Signature: _____ Date: _____

Caregiver's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Social Worker Signature: _____ Date: _____

