



### Runaway Taskforce Purpose Statement

The Purpose of the Runaway Taskforce is two-fold:

- Prevent youth who are exhibiting runaway risk factors and behaviors from entering the juvenile justice system, by ensuring that appropriate community resources exist and meet the needs of youth.
  - Ensure the justice system is effective, compassionate and empowers youth and their families to succeed while building an environment of mutual trust and accountability.
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- Welcome and Introductions  
Present: Cara Stirts, Rebekka Hall, Rosy Htu, Shelly Salter, Adam Nordstrom, Krynn Pekny, Jim Hubbard, Cassandra Dittmer, Karla Dush, Janee Pannkuk
  - Activity
    - National Runaway Safeline Training Follow up meeting
      - Date, agenda items, etc.
        - Discussed possible dates of September 12<sup>th</sup> and August 8<sup>th</sup>. September 12<sup>th</sup> is the same timeframe of the Court Improvement Project Children’s Summit, thus, attendance may be low and August may be too soon.
        - Need to check on room availability and proceed accordingly.
        - Meeting needs to be prior to September 30<sup>th</sup> as final grant report is due at that time and follow up information is needed from participants for the report.
        - Would like to have the follow up meeting from 9am to 11am as it’s the same time as the RTF meeting so TF members could attend and hear feedback from the participants.
        - Suggestion given that we should ask the participants to begin thinking about their ‘asks’ for the leftover funds when we send the meeting invite so when they come to the meeting they have some ideas that we can discuss as a group.
        - Karla will follow up with Debora to find out room availability at the CEC; if none, will look to community partners and possible other dates.
      - HFS-Refugee Runaway Youth
        - Rosy Htu with Heartland Family Service spoke with the TF about the services they have been providing via the grant they received with support of this TF.
        - To date, they have worked with 40 youth, primarily of the Karen and Somali communities; 11 males and 29 females; with the largest number being from the Karen community.
        - The most common zip codes are 68111, 68104, 68132 and 68107
        - The referrals have come from Project Harmony, OPD, self-referrals (Families), OPS Social Workers.
        - They have seen better success when they have been able to intervene earlier.
          - They are working with OPD to refer sooner.
        - The biggest barriers identified are also the biggest needs-mentors for the youth. Specifically mentors of the youth’s same culture.
        - Rosy also indicated that once she has met with the family she has been able to build that relationship and they are initiating the reach out for help as opposed to the school or OPD. An additional “Rosy” would also be beneficial as her caseload is high.

- Workplan
  - The group continued discussions from last month on data and next steps of the workplan
  - Could each entity that we've looked at bring the following information of runaway youth for the TF to analyze (total #, ages, gender, race, ethnicity and zip code)?
  - Should we look at reasons why youth go missing/runaway (push/pull)?
  - Cassandra talked about the MYRA –Missing Youth Risk Assessment that KVC. The TF asked if Cassandra could provide a presentation on this and Cassandra is able to do so in October's meeting.
- Decision Making/Next Steps
  - Karla and Debora-confirm NRS follow up meeting space and date
  - TF members (PH, Helpline, HFS, OPD, PromiseShip-clarify if we can review the above data routinely)
  - All members bring final thoughts on what data we want to look at, as well as next action items
- Feedback Survey – Handed out

**Next Meeting:** Thursday August 8, 2019, from 830am-10am, UNO Barbara Weitz Community Engagement Center, Room 128

**OYS Mission Statement:** Across Douglas County, our vision is a **comprehensive, coordinated, and community-wide** approach to **juvenile services** that **eliminates** the need for youth involvement with our justice system while maintaining **public safety**.

For **all youth** who do enter our justice system, our goals are to provide **effective, compassionate and individualized** support that empowers youth and their **families** to **succeed** and to build an environment of **mutual trust and accountability**.