

# SELF STUDY

## Runaways and Foster Care 3.0 Training Credits

### **CREDITS:**

*Preventing and Responding to Runaways from Foster Care* Children's Services Practice Notes, Vol. 17, No. 3  
<https://practicenotes.org/v17n3/runaway.htm>

*Tips for Parents* National Runaway Safeline <https://www.1800runaway.org/>

*Preventing and Responding to Runaways from Foster Care Fostering Perspectives* NC Division of Social Services  
\*<https://fosteringperspectives.org/fpv18n2/runaways.htm>

*When a Child Runs Away from Foster Care* Adoption.com <https://adoption.com/when-a-child-runs-away-from-foster-care-what-you-need-to-know/>

*Preventing Your Foster Child Running Away* and *The Importance of communicating with your Foster Child*  
Lorimer/At the Heart of Fostering [www.lorimerfostering.com](http://www.lorimerfostering.com)

*Responding to Youth Missing from Foster Care* Child Welfare Information Gateway  
[https://www.childwelfare.gov/pubPDFs/missing\\_youth.pdf](https://www.childwelfare.gov/pubPDFs/missing_youth.pdf)

*Runaway Children* Ohio Foster, Adoption and Kinship Care  
<https://fosterandadopt.jfs.ohio.gov/wps/portal/gov/ofc/foster-care/currently-a-foster-parent/runaway-children>

*Running Away—Why Kids Do Run and How to Stop Them* Empowering Parents.Com  
<https://www.empoweringparents.com/article/running-away-part-i-why-kids-do-it-and-how-to-stop-them/>

*Human Trafficking* Covenant House <https://www.covenanthouse.org/homeless-issues/human-trafficking>

The following self-study course was researched and first presented by Kendall Musser, Rural Outreach Coordinator for the Alaska Center for Resource Families. If you wish to receive training credit for reading this packet, please fill out the "Check Your Understanding" Questionnaire at the back of this packet. Return the questionnaire to the Alaska Center for Resource Families for 3.0 hours of training credit. The articles are yours to keep for further reference.



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The Alaska Center for Resource Families, a project of Northwest Resource Associates, is under contract with the State of Alaska Office of Children's Services to provide training and information to foster parents statewide.



# RUNAWAYS and FOSTER CARE

## Part One: The Foster Parent's Responsibility/The OCS Response

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Any parent who discovers a youth has run away experiences stress and fear in locating them. For resource families, the anxiety is just as great because of the sense of responsibility for a youth placed in their home. Unfortunately, running away is a relatively common behavior among children in foster care. Recognizing the risk factors and being prepared in knowing what to do and how to respond can help decrease your stress. With knowledge and a few additional strategies learned from this training, you may even be able to keep them from running in the first place.

### What Do We Mean by “Runaway”?

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Let's begin by outlining the foster parent's responsibility in reporting a runaway youth and the Office of Children's Services response to receiving a report of a runaway.

There are two terms OCS uses to define the status of a minor who is gone from their placement. The first is '**Missing Minor**' and is defined as any individual under 18 whose whereabouts are unknown to the child's legal custodian. The second term is '**Runaway Child**' and is defined as a child who willfully leaves the residence of a parent or guardian without the permission of the parent, caregiver, or guardian.

Definition:  
**“Runaway”**

A youth who willfully leaves the residence of a parent or guardian without the permission of the parent, caregiver, or guardian.

### Reporting Missing or Runaway Youth

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As a resource parent, you are required to report to OCS if a youth in your care has an unapproved absence of 10 hours or more or as soon as you suspect a youth has run away. If you find yourself in the situation of questioning whether or not to contact the caseworker, it is better to err on the side of caution. The *Alaska Resource Family Handbook* directs you to first call the child's caseworker. If you're not able to reach them, then attempt to contact the licensing worker. It's good practice to contact both the caseworker and the licensing worker so you know they are both aware of the situation.

If you are unable to reach either of those staff, contact the OCS Statewide Intake Unit at 1-800-478-4444 especially if it is after business hours. If you're unable to reach any OCS representative then you should call the local law enforcement agency.

Research states the first 48 hours are the most critical in locating a youth in order to prevent human trafficking, delinquency, and/or being sexually or physically victimized. Again, if you are unable to contact an OCS representative, contact law enforcement yourself and tell them to place the youth on the National

Crime Information Center for Missing Persons File - that's abbreviated as NCIC. Continue to try contacting an OCS representative and as soon as you do, let them know you already contacted law enforcement. If you haven't already done so, ask them how they want you to proceed in helping to locate the youth. If you know or suspect where they are, the caseworker may ask you to try to pick them up. Each youth and each situation will differ so it benefits everyone to have open communication.

When reporting the missing or runaway youth be prepared to provide the following information:

- **A physical description:** This includes hair and eye color, height, weight, complexion, if they wear glasses, contacts, or braces, describe any unique physical characteristics such as body piercings or tattoos, and a description of the clothing they were wearing when last seen. Sharing a recent photo will also be very helpful. You can write down most of this information in advance so you don't have to guess or try to remember while under stress.
- **Contact information of the youth:** such as their cell phone number, email address, social networking contacts, aliases or nicknames. This is also information you can keep on file so you're not trying to locate it under the stress of the situation.
- **Describe the circumstances of the youth's disappearance:** such as the date and approximate time the youth left or was last seen, also possible *reasons* the youth left such as an argument or an event that took place.
- **Provide possible location(s) and/or names:** such as friends or family the youth might seek out, as well as the area or direction the youth was last seen going.
- **Provide health or behavioral health concerns:** such as medications left behind or the mental state of the youth.



## How Should OCS Respond?

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Once you've made your report to OCS, they must report to law enforcement within 24 hours so the information is entered into the National Crime Information Center (NCIC) and the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children (NCMEC) databases. This is due to federal legislation enacted in 2014 called the Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act which specifically targets active intervention and prevention of sex trafficking of children and youth.

According to the State of Alaska Child Protective Services Manual, the expected response from the Office of Children's Services regarding missing or runaway youths is to assign a Protective Services Specialist (often referred to a PSS) who is required to:

- Notify the legal parent and/or guardian, the resource family (if they weren't the ones who placed the report), local law enforcement, school, Tribal representative, Guardian ad Litem (GAL), and the Protective Services Specialist (PSS) with jurisdiction in the community of origin, if it differs. For example, if you live in Fairbanks and travel to Anchorage where the teen runs away, OCS would assign a PSS in Anchorage and they in turn would notify the PSS in Fairbanks.
  - The PSS will collect information regarding the reason for the child's absence and attempt to locate and return the child to the authorized placement or other designated place of

safety. To help locate the youth they may contact the youth's relatives, friends, past caregivers, neighbors, school personnel, local emergency shelters, and hospitals.

- If a runaway youth's whereabouts are known or when they are located, the PSS will:
  - Make contact with the youth and inform them of the requirement to notify law enforcement or that they have already been notified.
  - Notify the school, Tribal representative, GAL, and any others deemed appropriate.
  - Contact law enforcement to determine if a request to locate the minor has already been issued by the minor's legal custodian or inform law enforcement the youth has been located so the missing person's report can be removed.
  - Inform law enforcement of their need to interview the minor *before* they can be returned to the legal custodian. The PSS will interview the youth about their experience while away from care to assess for possible signs or information as to whether the child is at risk or has been a victim of sex trafficking. Any reports of abuse or neglect will be investigated as well.
  - Document significant information relating to the runaway, including findings of why the child was absent from care, information gained from collateral contacts, and information regarding potential indicators of sex trafficking. This will be reported to the Intake Unit within 24 hours and appropriate action will be taken.



## RUNAWAYS AND FOSTER CARE

### Part Two: What Do We Know About Runaways From Foster Care?

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#### Statistics/Risk Factors about Runaways:

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While it isn't possible to know for sure *which* youth will run from foster care, there are some statistics and common traits youth who run share.

- Youth in *foster care* are more than *twice* as likely to run away as children living with their families
- *Females* are more likely to run away than males.
- Youth placed with a *sibling* are *less* likely to run than those not placed with a sibling.
- The overall majority of runaway youth are *aged 12 to 18*, but youth *15 to 17* are *more likely* to run away.
- Runaways tend to have more *school problems, higher rates of suicidal ideation, more reported behavioral problems, and more alcohol, substance abuse, and mental health disorders.*
- Foster youth are *more likely* to run away if they entered care *due to lack of supervision* and *less likely* if they entered *due to sexual abuse or physical abuse.*
- The *more placements* youth have, the *more likely* they are to run.
- Youth in *group homes or residential facilities* are *more likely* to run away than youth in *foster homes*; youth placed with *relatives* are *least likely* to run away.
- Youth who entered care *after they turned 12* are *more likely* to run away and *the older* the youth is when entering care, the *more likely* they are to run away.

Statistics indicate that the ramifications of running away put youth at a higher risk for delinquency and victimization. Running away can be a gateway to human trafficking and criminal behavior. Youth in foster care are disproportionately vulnerable to sex trafficking. In 2018, 88% of the youth who were reported as missing and identified as child sex trafficking victims *were* from foster home or group home placements (National Center for Missing and Exploited Children). What makes runaways especially vulnerable to human trafficking is that traffickers are looking for those who need a place to stay, need money, are looking for drugs, or have mental health issues. All of these factors make easy targets for traffickers to prey upon.

It's also found that youth who run are more likely to drop out of high school which leads to poor employment prospects.

## Motivations and Warning Signs

A youth's decision to run may be triggered by a number of factors. It's important to understand why youth run away and what factors may increase this risk.

Their motivation for running generally falls into two categories: running "to" something (like friends, family, activities) or running "away" from something (such as their living circumstances). Often *both* of these reasons may be the motivation for a youth to run. For example, they may run *away* from a placement they find difficult while running *to* friends or family they haven't seen for a while. Youth who are using drugs or alcohol may run in an attempt to hide their use. Feelings of failure can also contribute to running away, especially those with learning disabilities or behavior problems because they get tired of feeling they can't do things right. Unfortunately, youth often don't have good problem-solving skills and react impulsively so when they have feelings they don't know how to process, they will often do something rash like run.

There is a difference between episodic running versus chronic running. A youth running away after something specific has happened, where it's not a consistent pattern would be considered *episodic* running. They might be trying to avoid a consequence or embarrassment about something they did. While this does show they are using poor problem-solving skills to address the issue, running isn't their primary way of coping. They may just be feeling overwhelmed and stressed in the moment and act impulsively.

Youth who consistently run, which is considered *chronic* running, are often using it as a way to gain power or manipulate their caregivers. They may threaten to run if they're made to do something they don't want to in hopes that the caregiver will back down. Youth who often threaten to run or do run are using this behavior as their *main* problem-solving skill. They aren't trying to solve a single problem like the episodic run-away. Instead, they are avoiding being accountable for their responsibilities.

Feeling stressed can contribute to thoughts about running away. For foster youth, the experience of being removed from their home and perhaps being involved with family conflicts or domestic violence can cause them to feel stressed. Youth who feel they are not being accepted because of their sexual orientation or are questioning their sexual orientation, their gender identity and/or gender expression often feel stressed. Youth who are being bullied at school or online feel stressed as well.

Another stressor for youth placed with a foster family is they may perceive expectations or consequences are unreasonable. Youth who have come from a home where there were no boundaries or they had no one to answer to may run away to seek independence, more freedom, and to assert adulthood. This is where chronic running may become their go-to method of problem-solving.



Think about other sources of stress by considering the youth's overall family dynamics with both their birth family and their placement family. Have they experienced their parents getting divorced or remarried? Have they experienced the loss of a parent or someone significant in their lives? Do their parents suffer from mental health or substance abuse issues? Do they have siblings they might be concerned about?

Some findings from interviews with runaways showed that:

- About two-thirds *did not plan* to run, they left on the spur of the moment. Again, this shows poor problem-solving skills and acting impulsively.
- About half of the runaways went to their old neighborhood. Very few ran to live on the streets.
- Most runaways contacted friends. Many *wanted* to see their family but sought out friends because they didn't want to get their parents in trouble or jeopardize reunification.
- About one-quarter called their caseworker; most who contacted the caseworker did so when they were ready to return to care.
- Most runaways returned voluntarily because they wanted to be back at their home, go to school, or avoid getting themselves or others in trouble. On the positive side, most youth who run away from foster care return or are found, and typical runaway episodes are relatively short with about half lasting less than one week and two-thirds lasting less than two weeks.

Some behaviors to be aware of that could indicate a youth may run away are:

- If they talk about or threaten to run away.
- If they're having problems at school either academically or socially, like failing grades, lack of friends, being bullied.
- You might notice them accumulating money or keeping their belongings packed.
- If they're having issues with either their placement family or their birth family.
- Signs of self-harming behavior such as cutting, alcohol or substance abuse, or displaying high risk sexual behaviors.
- If they're isolating themselves by not being sociable like staying in their room or spending excessive amounts of time online.
- If they change friends or their social group which results in a noticeable change in their behavior.
- A change in their typical mood or behavior, for instance, if they become uncharacteristically depressed, anxious, irritable, withdrawn, being unusually rebellious, argumentative, or angry. This can be a difficult one to pin as to whether they are going to run so you have to consider whether they are also displaying any of the other behaviors mentioned in this self-study.

## Why Do Youth Run?

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According to Foster Parent College.com's online training on *Runaways*, there are five common types of runaway behaviors.

**“Searching for Roots”** These would be youth who run back to birth family members as a way to connect with them. Children who entered foster care at a young age may not be able to remember their relatives so they become intent with the idea of getting to know their family members. They may become obsessed with locating a birth parent they've never met so may go to Grandma's house in hopes of finding them or wanting to know about their other siblings.

**“Running from Rules”** These youth use running as a way to rebel and test boundaries. It falls into the chronic running category because they use it as their main problem-solving skill. Children who grew up self-parenting, with little or no supervision often have a hard time adjusting to being told what to do and may have attachment issues. A psychological evaluation to assess attachment issues

would be beneficial. Keeping rules to a minimum, just focusing on safety issues can help. Also, if you're a two-parent foster family, shifting the parental roles of rule enforcement could help. For example, if the foster mom is usually the one who enforces the rules, switch it to foster dad doing so. The reason for this is that it gives the usual disciplinarian the chance to relate to the youth in a more casual, non-authoritarian way and you may find the youth responds more positively having rules enforced by the other parent.

**“Running from Love and Intimacy”** Children who have gone through multiple placements often *fear* becoming close because they don't want to be hurt again. They may feel they're being *tricked* into loving you so they run before they get hurt. Look for signs that the youth projects any fear of getting close and help them to express their fear. Allow them to tell you if they're feeling the need for time away. Don't overdo praise and affection.

**“Wanting to be Wanted”** This child sneaks off and hides or disappears with the motive to get people to look for them in an effort to seek attention. This may occur especially when you're giving your attention to another child. It's important to recognize if the youth tends to be very needy and is stuck in an infantile demand for attention. Look for non-verbal signs the child needs attention and give more one-on-one time to them. You can even try comforting them in a more infant-like way. Be aware that jealousy and envy are triggers for them to run or hide.

**“Running to Street Crime”** This presents the most danger to a youth because they engage in criminal activity to survive and often are using drugs. They may engage in prostitution and drug dealing and are at high risk for becoming victims of human trafficking. This is a tough behavior for foster parents to deal with. If you are aware a youth in your care tends to run in this manner you should be prepared to call the authorities and, if the youth returns, try to get them an evaluation so they can be considered for residential treatment. If detention is deemed necessary and the only option available to protect the life and safety of a minor who has run away from court ordered placement, the PSS will consult with the Assistant Attorney General for a possible *Stay in Placement Order*.

## Reasons for Running

- Searching for Roots
- Running from Rules
- Running from Love and Intimacy
- Wanting to be Wanted
- Running to Street Crimes

## Sex Trafficking and Grooming

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According to the federal Trafficking Victims Protection Act, any child who is induced by force, fraud or coercion to perform a sex act in exchange for something of value – such as money, drugs or a place to stay – is a victim of sex trafficking. Youth in foster care are disproportionately vulnerable to sex trafficking.

Know the warning signs that a youth may be being groomed for trafficking: (From *Runaway Children Ohio Foster, Adoption and Kinship Care*)

- Large amounts of cash, multiple cell phones or hotel keys
- A history of running away
- Tattoos or branding related to money or ownership or that the child may be unwilling to explain
- Signs of current physical abuse and/or multiple sexually transmitted diseases
- Presence of, or communication with, a controlling older boyfriend or girlfriend
- Gang involvement, especially among girls
- Travel to other states or staying at hotels when they run away

Youth may also become targeted after running away. If a youth doesn't have an identified place to go, they can easily find themselves living on the street. Homelessness and living on the streets greatly increases the chances of being targeted for sex trafficking. Traffickers are looking for those who need a place to stay, need money, are looking for drugs, or have mental health issues. All of these factors make easy targets for traffickers to prey upon. Covenant House, one of the largest providers of runaway youth shelter programs, has identified a direct correlation between youth homelessness and human trafficking. Of the thousands of young people who find safety at Covenant House in the U.S. and Canada, nearly 20% are survivors of human trafficking.

Covenant House also states, "Why do human traffickers specifically target youth facing homelessness? Because these young people present a low-risk business proposition and are relatively easy to lure from the streets with promises of love, protection, food, and financial security. Because of their vulnerability, children and teens with no place to call home and no one to care for them make easy prey for traffickers."

Covenant House research shows that 68% of youth who had either been trafficked or engaged in survival sex had done so while homeless. In addition, 22% of youth were approached for paid sex on their first night of homelessness.

For more information about children and youth missing from foster or residential care and its link to trafficking, go to the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children at

<https://www.missingkids.org/theissues/missingfromcare>





## RUNAWAYS AND FOSTER CARE

### Part Three: Prevention and Solutions

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#### Strategies for Prevention and Intervention

If you recognize a youth in your care has the risk factors making them vulnerable to running, are displaying some suspicious behaviors, or if they have threatened to run, sit down with them during a calm moment and have an open and honest discussion. Ask them directly *if* they are thinking about running away. Ask *why* they are considering running and take the opportunity to listen carefully to what is making their situation challenging and discuss ways to fix those challenges. Don't judge or downplay their motivations or desire to run. If they have *threatened* to run you can respond by telling them that running is not going to solve their problems because they're still going to have to take responsibility and face the problem at some point. Suggest ways they can solve the problem. For example, if they were caught cheating on a test and are avoiding the consequences of that, suggest ways they can approach the teacher. If they are rebelling about having to follow a rule, discuss the reason behind the rule and your responsibility to keep them safe.

You should also explain the process you, as a foster parent, and the Office of Children's Services has to follow if they choose to run away. This would be a good opportunity to make sure they have their case worker's contact information in their phone.

Also, discuss your concerns about runaways being targeted for human trafficking and victimization. Don't use this as a threat, but as a point of concern for their safety and well-being.

An important resource for both teens and concerned adults is the National Runaway Safeline [www.1800runaway.org](http://www.1800runaway.org) and 1-800-RUNAWAY. Both phone and online contacts offer 24-hour/7 days a week support. Their website offers ways to chat, email, and text. It also has a forum to ask questions and read a wide variety of topics youth may be experiencing like bullying, domestic abuse, mental and substance abuse, sexual abuse, dating abuse, human trafficking, sexual orientation and gender identity, pregnancy, and suicide. They offer free, confidential services to young people who have limited or no access to money. They also provide support and guidance for *adults* who might be having trouble talking to the youth in their life or when a youth has run away. During your conversation with the youth in



[www.1800runaway.org](http://www.1800runaway.org)

1-800-RUN-AWAY

*Support for Youth and Teens*

*Guidance for Concerned  
Adults*

your care, you are encouraged to discuss this website. Maybe you could check it out together and suggest they add the phone number to their contacts. They might act like they aren't interested but, if they're ever facing a crisis, this might be their way to get help.

## What Keeps Youth From Running?

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Interviews with runaway foster youth have suggested three things that would be helpful in keeping them from running.

**1) More opportunities to see their family and friends and stay connected to their neighborhoods.** This would fit the category of "Searching for Roots" previously mentioned. Some ways you could promote staying connected would be:

- Ensure family and friend visits are regular. Many youths worry about their parents or siblings. If parental contact has been going well, you could let the caseworker know and maybe the frequency or duration of visits could be increased.
- You also could offer that the youth invite their friends over and allow the youth to visit their friends. Allow them to attend events happening in their neighborhood. Maybe there are some sporting or other special events that their friends will also be attending. Take these opportunities to get to know their friends and social circles.
- Ensure they are well-connected to multiple people who can provide support, encouragement, and increase their confidence. You might identify other community opportunities for the youth to feel connected such as volunteering. Decrease boredom by helping them identify interests and activities they enjoy.

**2) Be able to talk to someone who will listen to them, get to know them, and help them work through difficulties.** Many teens felt they couldn't talk to their foster parents. Research shows the relationship the youth has with their primary caregiver is an important factor in whether a youth runs away. Youth who have been in multiple placements may not have had an opportunity to develop a stable, secure relationship with a caregiver, so recognize the importance of making a connection with them.

- Frequently make a point to reassure them you *are* available to listen and *want* them to feel safe in sharing their thoughts and feelings. Try to encourage them to express their concerns about their birth families, without giving any judgmental feedback. Listening is the first step in effective communication. Once you've listened and heard what your foster child is *truly* saying, you'll be able to respond in a way that is meaningful to them. If they aren't comfortable talking to *you* offer to help them find a counselor or ask *them* for ideas of who they *would* be willing to talk to. Again, this would be an opportunity to explain or show them the 1800runaway.org website and give them the 1-800-runaway phone number.
- Recognize the youth may have experienced a disruption in medical or counseling services so try to get them connected or reconnected to services they might need.

**3) More support from their caseworkers, including more frequent visits where caseworkers spend time listening to hear how they are *really* doing.** Runaway youth who were unhappy with their placements have stated they felt a move would have helped prevent them from running away.

- Ask the youth if they would like to have more time with their caseworker. If so, contact the caseworker and express your concerns. If that proves difficult, contacting the GAL (Guardian ad Litem) or CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocate) might be the next best thing.

## When School is a Challenge

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One of the reasons youth return home is so they can attend school, either because they value their education or want to spend time with their friends; however, *most* runaways are experiencing problems with school so it's really important to learn what particular challenges they're having.

- If they're behind academically, getting tutoring help is important. Maybe going as far as finding a home-based tutor to eliminate the youth's sense of embarrassment or shame. (Friends of Alaska's Children in Care <https://www.friendsofalaskascc.org/> )
- Ensure bullying and abuse are not occurring.
- Allow and encourage the youth to participate in school events and extracurricular activities because that can promote positive peer relationships and can motivate them to be engaged.
- Allow them to be active participants in reviewing their educational options and making decisions about their future. For example, choosing which classes they want to take and discussing their academic goals as well as voicing their life goals and hopes. This will increase their commitment and sense of responsibility for their actions.
- Recruit mentors who will encourage and help the youth define and reach their educational goals. This could include their family members (with permission from your caseworker), your family members, or somebody you know that the youth looks up to.

## In the Heat of The Moment

### *Some Strategies to Try*

Here are some strategies to try if you find yourself in a situation where the youth is about to run away.

- First, if they are storming out because of an argument or some type of confrontation, **try to get them to calm down.** Ask them to just take a five-minute break. Don't send them to their room because they may climb out the window, but ask them to sit on the couch or at the dining table. If they *are* willing to sit down, tell them you'll give them some space during this time so they can de-stress and then you can leave the area by just going to another room.
- If the time-out worked or you see it isn't going to work, **ask them the question, "What's going on?"** or "What did you see that made you want to leave?" Don't ask them, "How are you feeling?" or "Why are you upset?" Youth often deny they're feeling anything or they can't put words to their feelings. They're more capable of answering the question, "What's going on?"
- **Next, use persuasive language.** If they tell you what is happening, reassure them that they're okay. Tell them you know they can handle the situation because they've done so before. Give some examples of how they solved previous problems or reassure them that other kids their age have had to deal with this kind of problem too. You're trying to get them to see that **they have the ability to solve a problem in a different way rather than running.**
- **Having positive relationships** with caregivers is one of the motivations expressed by youth for not running. It's important to remain calm when they make mistakes and when a youth returns after running away. Allow them to express their feelings and reasons for running without fear of punishment or negative consequences. As the foster parent, your knee-jerk reaction may be that you don't want to take them back. You may think they should be moved to another living situation or need to be punished in some way. But another consideration is that maybe the youth is testing you to see if they really can depend on you. As part of creating a secure attachment, **they need to experience you as a source of protection and safety.** If you can look at the event as another kind of behavior to help them deal with and teach them about coping strategies, this will be the biggest benefit for them.
- All members who are involved with the youth (caseworker, GAL, birth parents, and foster parents) should be on the same page about how to address a runaway event in a way that will prevent the youth from running again, *while at the same time*, **having the youth feel their needs are being heard and responded to.**

# TEST