



**Northern California Family Center
Annual Report of Services & Costs for the Runaway Program**

1. Project Title: Runaway & Homeless Youth Program
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4. Project Begin Date: April 1 2011
5. Project End Date: March 2012
6. Period Covered by Report: Year April 2011 to March 2012
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8. Date of Report: May 18, 2012

Annual Report, Runaway and Homeless Youth Programs

1. **Outcomes:**

We set a goal of placing between 60 and 70 youth this year, given full funding. **Placements decreased from 70 youth in April 10 to March 2011 to 60 youth from April 2011 to March 2012. Nevertheless we reached our minimum goal of 60 for the period. Our disposition to stable housing has increased from 95.7% to 100%.** The total number of reported runaway telephone contact incidents to the Northern California Family Center was 240 for this period. We experienced an increase in the rate of placement of total referrals from 21%% last year to 25% this year. In this period, we are operating at 116% of the estimated goal, because funding has been lower than budget expectations for this period.

We increased our bulk mailing to 4,165 pieces for the year. A significant part of this mailing (42%) was necessary to increase our reserves of available host homes. We intend to increase our mailing of Runaway Brochures in the next period to stimulate total contact. We have contacted telephone referral sources to offer presentations.

We tend to credit our referrals as sources of information which led the family or youth to our system. Even though we get direct requests from individual youths or parents, we ask them how they found out about our services. In this respect our "Referral at Entrance" statistics show a lower response for "Self-Referral" or "Parent/Legal Guardian, but a more accurate assessment of the informational source of the referral. Given this distinction, over the last three years our most prevalent referral sources are: **Child Protective Services 18.3%, which is over 2 times the national average of 7.7% and significantly¹ higher than the norm.** We observed of 18.3% our referrals coming from Juvenile Justice and Law Enforcement while the norm is 18.4%; We received **11.6% of our referrals from Mental Hospitals while the norm is 1.2%, which is significantly² more than (over nine times) the national average.** We saw of 8.3% of our referrals coming from Schools while the norm is 8.4%.

The "Living Situation at Exit", which reflects the outcome to intervention, concluded as follows: **in the annual period from April 2011 through March 2012, "Stable Housing" placements were 100%.** Last year about 3.4% of placements went to institutional locations. This year from April 2011 to March

¹ Given the national average, the expected number of youth referred by CPS was 5 while the actually observed number was 11. This generates a Chi-Square of 7.2 and is significant at the $p < .01$ with 1 df. We are at 236% of the national average.

² The expected number of youth referred by Mental Hospitals was 1 while the actually observed number was 7. This generates a Chi-Square of 36.0 and significant at the $p < .001$ with 1 df. We are at 967% of the national average.

2012 (2/60) or 3.3% went to an institutional setting which is lower than expected and is a preferred outcome. The placement for family and extended family was 96.6% and well above to the original goal.

Gender	Living Situation General	Living Situation Type	Count	Percent
Male	To a private residence	Parent/Legal Guardian's Home	14	23.3
Male	To a private residence	Relative or Friend's Home	5	8.3
Female	To a private residence	Parent/Legal Guardian's Home	33	55.0
Female	To a private residence	Relative or Friend's Home	5	8.3
Female	To a private residence	Other Adult's Home	1	1.7
Female	To a residential program	Other Residential Program	1	1.7
Female	To a Mental Hospital		1	1.7
Total			60	100.0

**Table of Living Situation at Disposition
Living Situation at Exit April 2011 through March 2012**

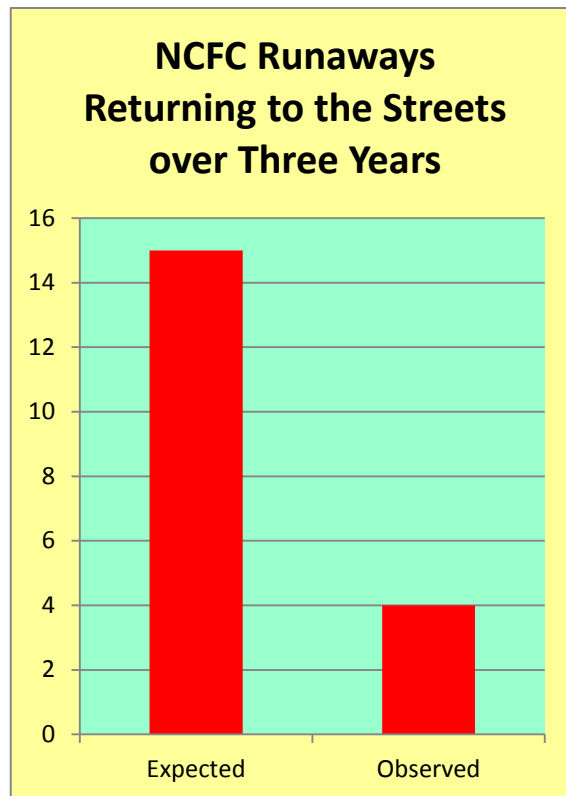
Exit Living Situation for Runaways April 11 to March 12		
	Count	Percent
Unstable Living	0	0%
Stable Living	60	100.0%
	60	100.0%

Disposition to Stable Living on Exit from April 2011 through March 2012

In the last year we have had zero cases where a child ran back to the streets. In the last three years we had only 4 cases out of 210 in which the youths returned to the streets. This means that our average of 1.9% is significantly³ lower than the national average of 7% for youth under 18 years. When we graph the observed number of youths running compared to the expected national average we see a rate of running that is less than one third the national rate. This performance is in line with results going back as far as 2007. It does raise the question, "Are these children able to sustain stable housing after they have left our program?" To this end we will seek to track their living arrangements for 30 days and 60 days after the case has ended.

2. Trends:

Referrals were not as high as expected, despite the high un-employment rates and an expected increase in the number of runaway and homeless youth which would result from this problem. We believe that this long-term paradoxical drop in referrals is the result of a large reduction in the key individuals who have historically made referrals to our program. Two years ago 100 CPS workers



³ The difference between the observed 4 runaways and the expected national average of 15, runaways works out to a Chi-Square value of 8.1 which is significant <.01 with 1 df.

(45%) were laid off by county government. Similar layoffs occurred in the schools, mental health services, etc. There has been no replacement of these positions.

This year we experienced a lower level of funding for the program, than the \$220,000 which was projected in the original budget in 2010. From April to March period, we expended \$189,611, or 86% of the originally estimated cash needed for the program.

We anticipate the likelihood of private cash contributions in the next financial period. We also have a number of private foundation applications pending.

Since November 10th, 2010, we transferred our runaway placement cases directly to the foster homes. There was an increase in **average bed-night placements** for a youth from 1.5 in the last two years to 3.78 from April 2011 to March 2012; this is a 152% increase in the average bed-nights. **Presently we have some youth stay in a foster home for up to 21 days.** We have planned for this by increasing the number of dollars to be paid for foster placement in the budget. Our real concern was that we would see an increase in the number and percent of youth who go back out onto the streets. In the present period we have seen **no youth go back out onto the street.** This is 0% for the entire year. Only 3.3 % of our clients went to institutional placement.

3. Youth Development

We continue to advertise for youth who feel support for the program (from our questionnaires) as a pool of support for youth outreach. We continue to engage youth outreach workers to assist in producing outreach mail-outs, brochures, etc. **Facebook** gives our information for any potential volunteers, and volunteer opportunities. Our **Facebook** also has direct links to future foster care parent trainings so that potential foster parents can RSVP online.

Currently we work with a group of students from **Mount Diablo High School's Digital Safari** program. They are working on revamping our current media sources, gearing our materials toward the general public. Recently they completed a video interview with our foster families, asking the foster parents to reflect on their most positive experiences with youth in their care. This video is now part of our **Facebook** presentation and is on our website. We are presently looking for more support in improving our website, training videos, and commercials. Our contact with youth in training consisted of weekly meetings in person or via Skype, in addition to email correspondence throughout the week. This process reached a high-point in March. We are presently reducing our contact for the summer, since we are short on available staff to manage the activity.

4. **Best Practices:** Our Board of Directors have endorsed using three criteria in the assessment of services for runaways:

A. **Assessment of the cost of shelter services in terms of Per Capita Costs per year.** The total cost of the program/number sheltered = annual per capita cost. In the original 2010 proposal, our estimated cash expense for per capita cost was $\$220,000/60 = \$3,667$ **The original per capita cash expense was estimated to be \$3,667, while the actual cash per capita expense this year was \$3,160. This means that we are now operating at 86% of the original cash budget estimates.** We are compensating for this cash shortfall by providing in-kind Intake and Program Coordination services. Since we placed 60 youth we are operating above our minimum estimation of services. Adjusting for the lower –than-estimated need for cash, we are operating at 116% of capacity.

B. **Assess the outcome of shelter services by identifying whether the youth goes to stable housing after services are provided.** In the last October to March period we **obtained stable housing** for (30/30) 100% children went to stable housing. In the last year, for every \$100,000 we spend, we bring 32 children into shelter and 32 of these into some sort of more stable housing.

C. **Use Safe Place Youth Outreach** efforts to continue circulating flyers and business cards regarding our intervention services. **In the last year we circulated Safe Place information and Runaway Brochures to 66**



Churches, 35 Libraries and 100 Community Based Agencies. We have submitted monthly reports to Safe Place regarding Safe Place contacts with clients. We have conferred in more detail with the Safe Place staff. We have an **NCFC Safe Place Agreement 2011**. The agreement comprises a plan for community contact. In it we specify several Safe Place outreach tasks with specific individual staff for their execution. We have sent contact letters to the largest Safe Place venues: the **Contra Costa Fire District** and the **County Connection** bus lines requesting more involved training in the coming year. We have revised our bulk-mailings to request presentations and materials for the Safe Place program. These have been sent out to over 1,000 contacts: 280 schools and 730 individuals or organizations which have had runaway related referrals or services with us in the past. Presently Giovanni Ibanez is designated to manage community presentations

- ! We maintained contact with the **YMCA** and with the **Contra Costa County Connection** bus line to act as Safe Place sites.
- ! We provided continuing contact with **Child Protective Services: Screening and Emergency Response**. We have a CPS Emergency Response worker sitting on our Board of Directors.
- ! We maintain and have updated our website: www.ncfc.us which provides information on Youth Development, contact with the County Connection, the Department of Health and Human Services, etc.

5. Barriers: The local community does not seem to take the needs of runaways under 18 years of age very seriously. We have been persistent in advocating for funding for runaways. We continue to make a case for the cities to support intervening with runaways, before they become wards of the court. **WE BELIEVE THAT THE SIGNIFICANT DECLINE IN TOTAL REFERRALS IS THE RESULT OF A DRAMATIC REDUCTION – BECAUSE OF GOVERNMENT LAYOFFS – IN OUR REFERRAL NETWORK, ESPECIALLY CPS, SCHOOLS, ETC.** We are presently scrambling to connect with those who have been placed into the position of making referrals of runaways to the general community.

6. Training And Technical Assistance Needs:

As we mentioned in previous reports, we are interested in any videotaped or DVD trainings that are used by FYSB members that address issues related to foster care, crisis work with runaways, etc. We are now using the RHYTTAC resource and we are seeking to include it in the training material for our Foster Families. We have begun to use our own video- taped presentations in our training of potential foster parents. We have a one-hour tape now used in the foster orientation training process. We are now developing a training video for Telephone Intakes and On-site Intakes with the Mt. Diablo Digital Safari. We have coordinated with our local Rainbow Coalition and now Shaunna Murtha L.C.S.W. is licensed to perform Family Acceptance Project (FAP) to assess risk and to support LGBTQI youth. We plan to work with the Rainbow Coalition to provide additional training for our Social Work Staff and foster parents. We expect to increase our training materials in the next six months.

We have identified a number of areas in which we will seek Training and Technical Assistance. We are considering how to better organize our Coordination and Service Linkage, Case Management, Activities and Daily Living operations (especially with referral and documentation as clients are leaving the program); some assistance with Staffing and Staff Development.

7. Requests For Contact: None

8. Youth Success Stories: As we have maintained the range of placement up to twenty-one days we have been able to manage some cases which show much more demanding needs. One of these cases involved extensive teamwork with Child Protective Services in December. We were able to finally secure stable living for this youngster by transitioning her to continuing placement with the family which originally sheltered her. Incidentally, **we have been able to increase the total number of Certified Families which provides us more flexibility to manage cases.**