

PREVENTION TIPS FOR CAREGIVERS

Caregivers must follow procedures outlined in Washington Administrative Code 388-148-1425. This WAC explains:

- When to report children missing from care
- Who you contact when children are missing from care
 - ➔ Assigned Children's Administration social worker
 - ➔ Local law enforcement
 - ➔ National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC) 1-800-843-5678
- What information to provide when filing a report

Youth on the run

It's important to know youth run from or to something. Data shows most youth run to friends, family or the streets. Therefore, it's important to know who and how to contact their friends or family. It's also important to know the youth's hangouts. If these are known, please provide this information to the youth's social worker.

If youth contacts you, encourage them to return and provide them with resource information, hotline numbers, and encourage them to be safe. Be sure to inform the social worker of any information you receive.

What to do when a youth returns from a run

Engaging a youth is important when they return. Youth need to feel welcome, supported and cared about. His or her immediate needs should be met. Please talk with the youth about the run episode. The main focus is to determine if the youth is OK and gather enough information to develop a plan to help the youth not want to run from care. Remember to focus on solutions and be nurturing.

Some questions to ask during the debriefing:

- Are you OK?
- Do you need any support, services and/or medical attention?
- What do you need right now to feel safe?
- Who should I contact to let them know you are safe?
- Is there anything I can do to make it easier to stay?
- Was there anything that would have changed your mind?
- What did you hope would happen when you left?
- Did you have a plan on how to take care of yourself and did it work out? This can help lead to:
 - ➔ Where they went
 - ➔ What they did
 - ➔ Who they contacted
 - ➔ What happened to them while on the run
- What made you decide to return?
- What are your plans for the near future?
- What do you want to see happen in next three months?