



Public Library Education and Partnership Development Project

COMMUNITY RESOURCE GUIDE OF SERVICES & PROGRAMS FOR AT-RISK & TROUBLED YOUTH

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COMMUNITY RESOURCE GUIDE SERVICES & PROGRAMS FOR AT-RISK & TROUBLED YOUTH

*A Project of the Florida Network of Children & Family Services
In Partnership with the Florida Juvenile Justice Foundation*

INTRODUCTION

Prevention and early intervention programs help provide front-end services for at-risk and ungovernable youth in order to reduce the potential for juvenile crime and to protect the public. The Florida Network of Youth and Family Services, Inc. is a not-for-profit statewide association representing agencies which serve homeless, runaway and troubled youth ages 10 to 17 and their families. Services include: advocacy for youth, public policy development, public education, data collection and research, program certification and training and technical assistance. The local agency providers that make up the Network, including 29 residential shelters, and non-residential services throughout the state, work diligently everyday to ensure that the nearly 22,000 youth and families' services have access to the help that they need. The Network is committed to promoting policies and practices that hold our member agencies accountable for preventing juvenile delinquency and child abuse through the strengthening of youth and families.

The Florida Juvenile Justice Foundation serves to change lives of students, the lives of their parents, the lives of the citizens in each community by promoting delinquency prevention, intervention and educational opportunities for youth.

This Resource Guide is a result of a partnership between the Florida Network of Youth & Family Services and the Florida Juvenile Justice Foundation to provide information to assist Florida's Public Libraries and their staff in addressing issues presented by at-risk and troubled youth at their facility.

It is the hope of the Network and the Foundation that the information and resources listed in this guide will provide public library staff and volunteers with resources that will help guide them in making informed decisions about where to go for help when dealing with ungovernable, disruptive, or problematic youth in their facilities.

HOW TO USE THIS RESOURCE GUIDE

This Resource Guide is designed to provide public libraries with information about at-risk and troubled youth, as well as programs and services available locally, statewide and nationally that can assist in addressing issues presented by these youth. This guide contains a listing of some of the useful resources that can be used to reinforce policies and procedures in place within your current library system.

Through this guide, you should be able to identify at-risk behavior and locate appropriate programs and services. The information contained in this guide is intended to be shared with library staff and volunteers, as determine appropriate by the library administration.

The list of resources is not intended to be indicative of all the programs and services available within the state, but we are hopeful that it will assist you in making informed decisions when working with problematic youth.

GUIDELINES FOR RECOGNIZING YOUTH WITH BEHAVIORAL PROBLEMS

Frequently, a single event or a series of crisis may occur within the family unit that will have a direct impact on the children. The resulting, adolescent behavior may be observed as “acting out” with aggression, disobedience or defiance. It may include skipping school, running away or threatening to run away. Often the family crisis has escalated to the point where the rebellious actions exhibited by the juvenile have gone beyond the point of parental control.

Warning Signs of Adolescent Risky Behavior

As noted above, many of the warning signs of family crisis include:

- Running away from home or threatening to run away
- Habitually truant, skipping school or expulsion
- Withdraws from family and exhibits dramatic change in demeanor and personality

Common Causes of Adolescent Risky Behavior

- Lockouts or homelessness-adolescents who have left home or have no home to which they can return
- Lack of parental supervision due to work schedule, personal crisis, health or job situations
- Problems at home with the parent, step-parent or legal guardian
- Negative association with peer group

WHAT INTERVENTION SERVICES ARE AVAILABLE?

What is CINS/FINS?

The Florida Legislature passed a law (Chapter 984, F.S.) that provides assistance to families and children who need intervention services to help improve the overall, family situation and environment. The law defines and mandates services to children and families in need of services (CINS/FINS), and Chapter 1003.27, F.S. establishes services to habitually truant children. The statutes provide for round-the-clock counseling and shelter for runaway, ungovernable, homeless, troubled and/or habitually truant children (ages 10-17) and their families.

The law describes the services to fall under two categories: Families in Need of Services (FINS) and Children in Need of Services (CINS). FINS is defined as a family that has a child for whom there is no pending investigation of abuse, neglect or abandonment, nor court-ordered supervision by the Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) or the Department of Children & Family Services (DCF). Typically, the family is in a crisis situation with a child who is running away or threatening to run away, habitually truant or generally acting in a fashion beyond normal parental control.

CINS is defined as a status offense (ungovernable, runaway or truant) and similar to the guidelines for FINS (no pending investigation for child abuse, neglect or abandonment, no pending referral alleging that the child is delinquent and under supervision by DJJ or DCF for adjudication of dependency or delinquency.)

Most of the time, families and children can receive the necessary services without going through the court system. But, in some cases, and only as a last resort, the families and/or children will be required to go through the court process in order to ensure that the appropriate help is provided to the child and/or family.

Community outreach and education, case management, youth and family counseling and crisis shelter for teens are the four core services provided by the Florida Network of Children & Family Services and its local provider agencies. Information about programs located in the various counties throughout Florida can be accessed at the Florida Network's website:

www.floridanetwork.org

WHAT ARE THE INTERVENTIONS STEPS INVOLVED WITH A CINS/FINS?

Referrals for CINS/FINS services are received in the form of reports or complaints, and sometimes even as self-referrals. Referrals may be made by a variety of sources, including:

- Law enforcement
- DJJ or DCF staff
- School
- Family or extended family members
- Legal guardian or custodian of child
- Court
- Mental health or social service agency
- Churches or other faith program

The person making the referral contacts the CINS/FINS provider to make the referral. A staff member at the CINS/FINS agency will complete a screening form to determine if the youth and family are eligible for services. If the youth is eligible for services, a case manager will then be assigned to complete an assessment of the situation and assist the family with resolution options to include counseling, case manager or crisis shelter services, depending on the needs of the youth and family. A specific plan will be developed for the child or family with the intent to target the particular needs that have been identified in the assessment. The child and family will agree upon the plan recommendations.

If the youth is not eligible for CINS/FINS services then the local CINS/FINS provider will make the appropriate referrals to ensure that the youth and family access the services they require and/or need.

WHAT SERVICES ARE OFFERED BY CINS/FINS PROVIDERS & WHERE DO I FIND THEM?

Each case plan is unique to the circumstances of the child or family. Some of the services that may be made available include:

- Crisis intervention services
- Shelter services
- Case Management
- Individual or family counseling
- Parenting classes
- Mental health and/or substance abuse treatment services (via referral)
- Referrals to local prevention or diversion programs
- Other applicable services provided by social service agencies

WHAT OTHER SERVICES ARE AVAILABLE?

The following list of state and national resources may assist you with locating children or family services providers. The information provided is not meant to be comprehensive of all national or statewide services, but may allow the reader to link to local providers within your area. Also, in many communities statewide, the local phonebook(s) will have information about community services for youth.

Statewide CINS/FINS Agencies – 1-888-922-4234 <http://www.floridanetwork.org>

Hotlines

Runaway Hotline	1-800-RUNAWAY	1-800-786-2929
Child Abuse Hotline	1-800-96-ABUSE	1-800-962-2873
Missing Children Info Clearinghouse		1-888-FLMISSING

State Agency Websites

Florida Network of Youth & Family Services	http://www.floridanetwork.org
Florida Department of Juvenile Justice	http://www.djj.state.fl.us
Florida Department of Children & Families	http://www.dcf.state.fl.us
Florida Library Association	http://www.flalib.org
Florida Juvenile Justice Foundation	http://www.djjfoundation.org
Florida Department of Education	http://www.fldoe.org

Department of Children & Families-Community-Based Care Providers

www.dcf.state.fl.us/programs.shtml

Prevention & Diversion Programs

PACE Center for Girls	http://www.pacecenter.org
Big Brothers/Big Sisters	http://www.bbbs.org
Florida Sheriff's Youth Ranches	http://www.youthranches.org
Keep Kids Drug Free Foundation	http://www.kkdf.com
Boys & Girls Clubs of America	http://www.bgca.org
Teen Line	http://teenlineonline.org
Outward Bound Discovery	http://outwardbounddiscovery.org
Florida Youth Challenge	http://www.ngycp.org
Devereux Florida	http://www.devereux.org
Boys Town	http://www.boystown.org/home.asp
Police Athletic Leagues of Fl.	http://www.nationalpal.org

Family Resources

Florida Coalition against Domestic Violence	http://www.fcadv.org
Grandparents Support in Florida	http://www.parentagain.com
The Parent Help Line	http://www.parenthelpline.org
Family Network on Disabilities of Florida	http://www.fndfl.org
Florida Gang Investigation Association	http://www.fgia.com
Florida Kid Care	http://www.doh.state.fl.us/kidscare
FL Missing Children Info Clearinghouse	http://www.fdle.state.fl.us/misc
Informed Families	http://informedfamilies.org
Florida Homeless Coalition	http://www.fchonline.org

Law Enforcement Agencies

Florida Sheriff's Association

<http://www.flsheriffs.org>

Florida Police Chief's Association

<http://www.fpca.org>

Florida Department of Law Enforcement

<http://www.fdle.state.fl.us>

Florida Office of Drug Control

http://www.fl.gov.com/drug_control

WHAT STEPS SHOULD I TAKE TO GET HELP?

When problems arise with juveniles in a public facility, it is best to first and foremost refer to the policies that govern public use and behavior in your facility. Often, simply reminding the juvenile (s) that inappropriate behavior will not be tolerated is enough to stop problems before they get out of hand. But, in the event that a behavior pattern has developed that causes concern, or a reprimand does not stop the problem, the following steps may be taken depending on the individual circumstances and policies of the facility:

- If you believe the situation is a potential life-threatening emergency you should contact 9-1-1.
- Go to the Florida Network for Children & Family Services (www.floridanetwork.org) and click on the "find help" link for a state map. Click on your county to determine the CINS/FINS provider in your area.
- If a homeless or runaway situation appears to be involved, call 1-800-Runaway and you will be referred to the agency in your area.
- Call your local law enforcement (see links), Department of Juvenile Justice (see link) or Truancy Center