

## CHECKLIST FOR YOUTH WHO ARE MISSING or WHO HAVE A HISTORY OF RUNAWAY BEHAVIORS

**Missing youth** are defined as youth missing from home, missing from out-of-home care, or those considered to be of a "critical missing" status. Youth are considered to be missing when they are unaccounted for 8 hours or more and their absence cannot be reasonably justified by the youth's age, maturity or emotional capacity and when efforts to locate the youth have been unsuccessful.

**"Critically Missing Youth"** are defined as all children ages 12 and under, any youth with significant cognitive, psychological, emotional or physical or medical needs, or any youth who is suspected to be involved in high risk situations (inappropriate sexual behaviors, victimization, abuse, weapons, etc.) who is missing from home or out of home care.

### **At enrollment, or when the Child and Family Team becomes aware of runaway behaviors:**

\_\_\_\_\_ Care Coordinator should provide youth and family with the Resource Folder for Youth with a Runaway History and explained what will occur when a youth is missing: *Things to Think about, Information from the National Runaway Safeline, What Will Happen if My Child is Missing, Information for Youth with a Runaway History, etc.* Folder will be provided at enrollment for those with runaway behaviors that were identified in the screening process.

\_\_\_\_\_ Care Coordinator initiates the *Information for Youth with a Runaway History or Youth Who are Missing Worksheet* with the child and family prior to the first Plan of Care Team Meeting. (Some of this worksheet will need to be completed at the time of the youth's absence.) As appropriate, team members should receive a copy of this form.

\_\_\_\_\_ Care Coordinator discusses *Things to Think About Before I Run Away* with the youth and brings information to the initial Plan of Care Team Meeting so that it can be incorporated into strategies in the Crisis Plan and Plan of Care.

\_\_\_\_\_ During the Team Meeting, Care Coordinator facilitates a team discussion about when and who should be notified if youth is missing. This information is also incorporated into the Crisis Plan.

### **When the youth is missing:**

\_\_\_\_\_ If parent becomes aware of absence of youth first, parent immediately notifies Care Coordinator. If child is residing in an out of home placement, placement providers immediately notify parent/guardian and Care Coordinator. Placement provider should also file a Missing Person Report in the county where the placement is located.

\_\_\_\_\_ Care Coordinator then notifies supervisor, and all other team members to make them aware. If on a court order, Care Coordinator then notifies DMCPs worker and/or Human Services Worker. They work together to determine when and what notice they will give to law enforcement and the court. If the designated worker cannot be reached, Care Coordinator should reach out to the assigned coverage worker or supervisor as needed.

\_\_\_\_\_ If the youth is missing from home, Care Coordinator or designated team member assists parent/guardian in filing a Missing Person Report with the local police on the same day the child is reported missing. The resource folder can provide information to aid in this report and parent can also contact the National Runaway Safeline at 1-800-RUNAWAY for additional assistance.

\_\_\_\_\_ If the youth is believed to be "Critically Missing", Care Coordinator notifies Sensitive Crimes at 935-7405.

\_\_\_\_\_ Care Coordinator assists parent, if needed, in contacting the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children at 1-800-THELOST (843-5678). If the parent does not have custody (legal placement of the child) then the designated system partner (DMCPS worker and/or Human Service worker) or local law enforcement must report the youth as missing to the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children at 1-800-THELOST (843-5678).

\_\_\_\_\_ Care Coordinator should work to document all contacts and follow-up within progress notes as soon as possible, and file a Temporary Change of Placement according to the policy.

\_\_\_\_\_ Care Coordinator connects with Missing Youth Coordinator Jenna Reetz within 24 hours for further problem-solving, after consulting with their agency supervisor. If high risk events are involved, Care Coordinator may also need to speak with Clinical Program Manager Steve Gilbertson.

\_\_\_\_\_ Care Coordinator schedules an emergency team meeting within 24 hours. The Child and Family Team explores contact information for those people the youth may seek out when missing. Those contacts could be team members, friends, boyfriends/girlfriends, relatives, former caregivers, biological family members, teachers, community contacts, etc. The team also discusses social media the youth may use, such as Facebook, Twitter, MySpace, Tumbler, etc. The parent/guardian or person designated by the parent/guardian can be encouraged to monitor these activities through the youth's friends, as well as try to connect with the young person.

\_\_\_\_\_ Care Coordinator contacts the parent/guardian twice weekly in person and by phone regarding the whereabouts of the youth, more often if the situation is critical. Care Coordinator requests that their Supervisor become involved if parent/guardian is not communicating with the team members. Supervisor then attempts phone contacts and home visits with the parent/guardian. If that is unsuccessful, Families United or other support staff should be involved to try to open lines of communication with the family.

\_\_\_\_\_ Care Coordinator continues to contact all team members at least once weekly in an attempt to locate that youth. During contacts, Care Coordinator encourages team members to reach out to youth if possible to encourage them to return, and discuss options. Supervisor assists with this process as needed.