

RUNAWAY PREVENTION TIPS

There are many reasons children run away. Regardless of the reason, the reality of running away presents serious risks the child may not realize or understand. They may be impulsive or believe they would be better off leaving home. They don't have the experience or judgment to always make a sound decision. If you have a child whose behavior is changing or who is becoming withdrawn, take some time and find out what is going on in his or her life. Children do not always disclose what they are uncomfortable talking about right away. They may not know how to reveal what's troubling them, and they may be looking for the right time and circumstance to talk.

Keeping the lines of communication open is vital.

REPORTING MISSING PERSONS

In the case of an emergency Call **911**
or for non-emergency issues
please call **561-688-3400**.

RESOURCES

National Runaway Safeline
1-800-RUNAWAY (786-2929)
www.1800runaway.org

National Center for Missing & Exploited Children
1-800-THE LOST (843-5678)
www.missingkids.org

FDLE Missing Endangered Persons Information
Clearinghouse
1-888-FL-MISSING (356-4774)
<https://www.fdle.state.fl.us/mcicsearch/>

If you cannot read the material, please
contact PBSO at 561-688-3080 to request
an alternate format.



Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office
Ric L. Bradshaw, Sheriff

Pay attention to what may be subtle clues or cues that something is wrong. Has your child demonstrated any of these signs?

- Angry or aggressive outbursts
- Becoming more introverted and withdrawn from family and friends
- Exhibiting depression or increased anxiety.
- Having trouble in school—poor grades, skipping class, behavior issues
- Being secretive about friends or activities; breaking curfew with no explanation
- Having social media accounts you don't know about and spending excessive time online
- Being bullied at school
- Threatening to run away or staying away from home for extended time periods.
- Suspicion of drug or alcohol abuse
- Possessing money or expensive items; lying and stealing
- Lacking concern for themselves; engaging in self-harming behaviors, including cutting and high risk sexual behaviors
- Questioning their sexual identity



If your child has any of these indicators...

- Talk to them and see if he or she will tell you what's bothering them.
- Be honest about changing family dynamics like divorce, financial difficulties, loss of a parent/family member, or a disruptive family environment.
- Instead of lecturing, listen and make every effort to help your child come up with a resolution together.
- Be supportive, and let your child know you love them and running away will not resolve the problem.
- Seek outside resources such as family counseling, therapy, or substance abuse treatment.
- Talk about the importance of protecting their identity both online and offline and selecting friends wisely.
- Get to know the people who are important to your child outside the family circle.
- Put realistic rules in place and openly discuss why they are important.

If your child runs away...

- Contact law enforcement as soon as you determine your child is gone; there is NO waiting period to report a missing child.
- Provide as much information to law enforcement as you know—including clothing, recent photo, known friends/companions, last time and place you saw your child.
- Don't hold back; the more information law enforcement has up front, the better.
- Make all wireless devices and technology available; they may hold valuable information.
- Provide all social media accounts/names and cell telephone numbers.
- Provide information about custody, including issues you may have had.
- Provide information about any changes in family dynamics, specifically behavior changes in your child.
- Let law enforcement know about anyone who might be new in your child's life or may be providing unusual attention or interest in your child.
- Provide law enforcement with any contact you may have with your child, through phone, text, or in person.
- Be proactive and get the word out about your child through fliers, and contacting places/people you know about.
- Stay in touch with law enforcement until your child returns, and notify them when your child comes home.

