

# RUNAWAYS IN AMERICA



Homelessness among young people is a serious issue. Homeless youth, sometimes referred to as unaccompanied youth, are individuals who lack parental, foster or institutional care. The National Runaway Switchboard estimates that on any given night there are approximately 1.3 million homeless youth living unsupervised on the streets, in abandoned buildings, with friends or with strangers. Homeless youth are at a higher risk for physical abuse, sexual exploitation, mental health disabilities, substance abuse, and death. It is estimated that 5,000 unaccompanied youth die each year as a result of assault, illness, or suicide.

## Studies Have Shown That:

- One in seven young people between the ages of 10 and 18 will run away>
- Youth age 12 to 17 are more at risk of homelessness than adults
- 75 percent of runaways are female
- Estimates of the number of pregnant homeless girls are between 6 and 22 percent
- Between 20 and 40 percent of homeless youth identify as Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender or Questioning (GLBTQ)
- 46 percent of runaway and homeless youth reported being physically abused, 38 percent reported being emotionally abused and 17 percent reported being forced into unwanted sexual activity by a family or household member
- 75 percent of homeless or runaway youth have dropped out or will drop out of school



[www.1800runaway.org](http://www.1800runaway.org)

WHAT ARE WE DOING ABOUT IT?