

Runaway and Homeless Youth Training & Technical Assistance Center



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Aftercare

What does the Runaway and Homeless Youth (RHY) Act say about aftercare services and what does the Family and Youth Services Bureau (FYSB) expect grantees to provide to youth accessing RHY Services:

The act defines aftercare services as “the provision of services to runaway or otherwise homeless youth and their families, following the youth’s return home or placement in alternative living arrangements, which assist in alleviating the problems that contributed to his or her running away or being homeless.” (45 CFR 1351.1)

FYSB expects RHY programs to ensure a young person’s ongoing safety by developing a plan to stay in contact with youth after they leave the program. This includes staying connected with youth who live outside the project area. Projects must provide 3 months of follow-up to youth that receives up to 21 days of services from the Basic Center Program. Projects must establish an exit plan with youth within three days of receiving BCP services. The exit plan must include permanent placement planning that will help ensure the youth have the opportunity to make informed decisions about the support and services they need to receive to develop a plan for permanency and identify and achieve their personal goals. https://ami.grantsolutions.gov/files/HHS-2016-ACF-ACYF-CY-1121_0.htm

When should aftercare begin and who should be involved?

Aftercare planning should begin the first day the youth meets program staff. RHY staff should use every opportunity they have to prepare the young person to leave the program. The aftercare planning team should include the youth, anyone the youth has identified as a support person (teacher, parent, coach, family member, friend, etc.), program staff, and community collaborators (health/mental health care providers, housing providers, social service providers, educational institutes, employment agencies, etc.). The youth’s goals and objectives should direct the aftercare plan and determine who is involved and at what level.

Implementing effective aftercare — three key questions

1. Does the young person know what is needed to prepare for transition?
2. Does the youth know how to fulfill needs while preparing to transition and after transitioning?
3. Does the young person know how to use the resources he or she receives (i.e. mentor, counseling, housing, etc.)?

Critical Elements of Aftercare:

Permanent Connections	Collaboration
Youth Involvement	Cultural Competence
Strengths-Based Assessment	Goal Focused
On-Going Case Management	On-Going Support
Regular Assessment of Progress	Education
Employment (if age appropriate)	Housing
Health Care	Mental Health Care
Opportunities to Succeed	Opportunity to Return to the Program if needed

Resources

There are three webinars relating to aftercare available on the RHYTTAC eLearning portal (<http://rhyttac.training.reliaslearning.com/lib/Authenticate.aspx>):

1. RHYCONF2013: Aftercare is Prevention: This is the PPT from a workshop presentation by Abigail Sharp and Dominique Graves from Starry Safe Program, given during the 2013 FYSB RHY Grantee Conference on November 12-14, 2013 in Atlanta, Georgia.
2. RHYTTAC Effective Aftercare Planning and Implementation: This facilitated webinar provides participants an opportunity to examine and discuss the elements of effective aftercare planning. It also discusses aftercare in relation to youth development, and discusses how to incorporate aftercare into daily practice.
3. The Keys to Effective Aftercare: This webinar covers the components of an effective aftercare program, creative ways to maintain healthy connections with aftercare youth, and how to use aftercare to strengthen your entire program.

Staying In Touch After They Leave. FYSB standards require each grantee to also have an aftercare program for youth leaving the system. Available at: <https://rhyclearinghouse.acf.hhs.gov/features/aftercare-staying-touch-youth-after-they-have-left-system/staying-touch-youth-after-they>

Aftercare Checklist: Are You Providing Youth With What They Need? A short checklist to help ensure your program is offering youth the assistance they need after discharge. Available at: <https://rhyclearinghouse.acf.hhs.gov/features/aftercare-staying-touch-youth-after-they-have-left-system/aftercare-checklist-are-you>

Giving Back to the Community: African American Inner-City Teens and Civic Engagement. Author: M. Charles. No. 38 in CIRCLE Working Paper series. 2005. Available at www.civicyouth.org/research/areas/race_gender.htm.

Homeless Young Adults Ages 18–24: Examining Service Delivery Adaptations. Authors: S. Ammerman, et al. 2004. Available at <http://www.nhchc.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/09/101905YoungHomelessAdults.pdf>

Implementation of the Intensive Community-Based Aftercare Program. Authors: R. Wiebush, B. McNulty, and T. Le. 2000. Available from the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, at www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/ojjdp/181464.pdf#.

People Need Affordable Housing (fact sheet). Author: National Coalition for the Homeless. Available at www.nationalhomeless.org.

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