



**The Timothy Montoya Task Force To Prevent Children From
Running Away From Out-Of-Home Placement | Meeting 19**

June 12, 2024

Intervention Subcommittee

Members: See Appendix A

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| <p>Intervention Subcommittee</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Doris Tolliver welcomed the subcommittee and explained the topic; education on safety planning. She explained that there are guests to speak on this topic. She asked Bryan to explain the resources. • Bryan Kelley said that he spoke with National Runaway Safeline with a more general perspective; they have helpful educational resources. He said that the person he spoke with is not able to join the meeting today but he is going to share her thoughts. He said that they offer courses on running prevention. He electronically shared the links for the trainings as well as the resources. He explained their training; it is available for free to the public. He electronically displayed the goals of the curriculum. He explained that it was created in 1974 in response to federal law and funded with federal grants. He said that the big takeaway is that they also do a lot of data collection about youth who run away; they learn a lot about motivation behind a run and family dynamic and emotional abuse come up as common causes so the training focuses on these areas. He explained that the training is trauma informed and focuses on building trust as well as talking to trusted adults. He said that since it is widely available; they are not sure who is using it but they have data on some usage details. He said that someone can download the modules as well as a kit with notes, worksheets and other tools to deliver the curriculum. He electronically displayed the topics, each of which with its own module. He said that the organization also offers services to connect youth with professionals with phone lines, online chats, emails, texting (most popular), and a message board. He said that they also offer a message service that will send a message from a child to another person to communicate without direct contact. He said that they also offer third party mediation in communication between the child and another party. He also said that they have a service with Greyhound buses to return home for free. He continued with statistics from the organization, specific to Colorado; this document is available to task force members. He continued that the dream policy recommendation that he heard from his conversation with the organization was, investing early on in building up families since family dynamics was the number one reason for running; this included provided families with resources to be successful as well as to prevent situations that prompt a run. He asked for questions; there were none. Doris thanked him. • Doris asked if the subcommittee was familiar with this service and training model. Anna Cole said she has never heard of it. Doris thanked her. Lynette Overmeyer said that she also has not heard of it but she dose direct children to a safe text service. Doris thanked her and said that this might be an underused resource. Beth McNalley said that she had heard of it but not prior to her current role; they are trying to be listed as a trusted service. She asked how long the training is and how many children are using it. Bryan said that |
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since it is freely available, it is hard to track but they know it is being used by organizations so the number of contacts from youth probably come from these interactions. Beth thanked him. Doris said that individual youth can use it, this might not be common but the facilitator guides allow for facilitating the content for young people in out of home placement given their higher risk factors; this could be an opportunity to systematize a tool like this. Doris asked for other questions.

- Lynette asked if these are used in residential facilities; Bryan said there was not much data on this. He said that there are special presentations for particular audiences and they have tracked this in the past however that data is outdated. Doris thanked them and asked for more questions; there were none.
- Doris asked if there is potential value in uplifting this resource for youth as well as an educational opportunity for facilities and other out of home placements. She noted that there were many subcommittee members nodding in agreement. Bryan said that he can share the link to the modules. Norma Augilar Dave said that would be helpful. Doris said that it could be helpful to walk through the module as well as share the link.
- Bryan began to walk through one of the training modules; this is a facilitated training rather than a self-paced training. He showed that it includes contacts for services as well as an overview of the training which includes activities and discussions. Doris said that this is not a guided online training; it is a curricula that people can download and it is designed to be a live training. Bryan agreed and continued on the instructions of the module. Doris thanked him and said that this is geared towards preventing runs; the policy conversation included suggestions on educating caregivers about familial conflict as a motivation to run. She asked if this training is geared towards caregivers. Bryan said that there are contacts for concerned adults to learn more about the different methods to prevent runs; there might not be specific training models but there are services for them. He continued that the training has an FAQ for parents as well as tips. Doris thanked him and said that this is a really good resource. She asked if there are any questions.
- Norma said that this would be a good resource for foster parents and residential settings when a child first comes in; she said that it should be individual learning rather than a group setting; it could also be revisited with children who have a higher risk. She said that these resources never hurt, which is a good thing. Doris thanked her and asked for more comments.
- Bryan said that he also wanted to share the organization's podcast. He electronically shared the link. Doris thanked him and asked for any other reflections; she said that it sounds like a rich resource that is probably under utilized. She asked Bryan to share the other resources; he said that they were all shared. Doris thanked him and asked for any further thoughts.
- Beth said that they could implement this training on the front end to keep youth safe; she brought up tailoring a specific training. Jenelle Goodrich asked if this could be good for a JACK service. Beth said that when a youth comes in through JACK, handing off a piece of paper might not land but there could be partnerships between organizations. Jordan asked more about Jenelle's point about methodology. Jenelle said that is her focus; making sure



that children know that this resource is there can be a creative safety planning for if and when they run; it would be an array of best practices. She said that there can be a list of training to best address the situation. Jordan asked which these would be. Jenelle said a text would be good but they don't have phones all the time; she said a piece of paper might not work but a sticker could work. She said that a video could work but it could be one of the options. Doris thanked her.

- Norma said that it could be done within 24 hours of coming into the program. She said that it is seldom the case that a child runs without any staff inclination that it might happen; she brought up having these inclinations prompt follow up training sessions prior to a crisis situation. She said that even if a child is not thinking about running, revisiting the training won't do harm. Jordan thanked her.
- Doris mentioned three buckets of considerations; a broad campaign about resources available for youth who run away (poster with tags), ensure that those working with youth know what resources are available, a targeted approach with higher risk youth to prevent a future run. She said that these resources could mitigate risks and reduce future runs; a resource like this would be helpful for all of this. She asked about a recommendation to address all these focus areas.
- Jenelle asked about what the campaign would look like and if it could look like placing resources in areas that children on the run are likely to visit. Doris said that is exactly what she was thinking about. She mentioned having it in facilities as well, not to prompt runs but to provide resources for children who are running. Jenelle agreed. Doris said that there was limited knowledge of this resource so this task force could spread awareness.
- Beth suggested a resource guide of all the resources as well as their limitations in a database. She mentioned annual updates to the list. She said that the list can be widely available to facilities, parents and caseworkers. Doris asked about the messaging for the updated information. Beth said that, to get this to families, this information can be on a card when a child comes in. She also brought this to service providers and worked it into the training. She also mentioned keeping it up to date with annual updates. Doris thanked her and brought up an electronic chat from Lynette about laminated cards with the text safe number; this could be a similar approach to reach youth and caregivers. She also said that she likes Beth's idea of incorporating this into the annual training; this could be in a recommendation. She also brought up Bryan's electronic chat about customized training; she asked about the cost of this. Bryan said that he is not sure but he thinks that there might not be a cost. Doris thanked him and said that this could be something to learn more about. Bryan said that one of the trainings is about youth running from care so there might already be training for this audience; it might just need to be updated. Doris asked when it was updated; Bryan said it was maybe 5-7 years ago. Doris thanked him and asked how long the training is; Bryan was not sure.
- Danielle Gauthier said that there is a resource that she uses that sounds similar to Beth's; it is called findhelp.org to help find resources. She explained that it uses a zip code to pull services in the area. She mentioned this as



something to consider; QR codes might work better than a piece of paper. Doris thanked her.

- Bryan electronically shared social media graphics that National Runaway Safeline developed. Doris thanked him.
- Doris said that two things came up as an interest; leveraging resources that already exist to have in a usable format for youth and a resource guide to be updated annually (with resources dedicated to making sure this happens) that provides services in the area. Doris thanked Bryan for sharing this information and she invited Mallory Zala and Danielle to share their thoughts; she introduced them.
- Mallory introduced herself; she said that she used to be a social case worker but she works with Beth's RONI team now. She said that there is an intake team and an outreach time. She said that the outreach team takes runaway calls from DPD and provides resources as well as working as a part of a multidisciplinary team to further provide support. She explained that much of their work is safety planning and harm reduction. She said that there is a high case load but the plans are individualized. She continued that there are guides to safety planning for working with the youth in the field; youth can take this guide with them. A common situation is human trafficking, domestic violence, mental health, suicide ideation, substance abuse, and more. She electronically displayed an example of the guide and explained it. She said that they focus on immediate concerns first including substance abuse needs or a need for law enforcement. She said that when engaging with youth, they talk to them about what safety means for them; she suggested using the word uncomfortable rather than unsafe. She said that if they cannot return to the situation, the focus turns to next steps like finding them a place to go and have their daily needs met; the the child wants to return to the unsafe situation, they focus on harm reduction like calling someone when they start to feel uncomfortable and building out support networks. She said that an exit plan can look like concrete resources to know where to go. She continued that they work with the child for long term support and they provide resources for that; they also have a much larger resource list. She also said that they are working on a larger list to provide to children. She said that they continue to have open conversations about running like talking about triggers and what happens when they do run; they are able to provide resources to them on the run like hygiene and transportation. She electronically displayed the guide for suicidal ideation; if a child meets the criteria for an M1 hold, then they need to call 911. She said that they also focus on identifying triggers and enhancing coping skills as well as grounding techniques. She said that they always focus on who they can reach out to in a time of need and ask them what they enjoy; she emphasized concrete resources on the guide. She said that they emphasize where walkin centers are and what a child can expect for any of these resources. She mentioned talking to youth about what is important to them and makes them want to stay alive. She finally turned to the substance abuse safety planning guide. She said that there are fentanyl testing strips and narcan for harm reduction techniques. She mentioned education with them about the harm reduction as well as what an overdose looks like. She also emphasizes open conversations to see if the child is comfortable with



specific situations that can come up when they decide to use. She said that they also provide education on overdose prevention and sobriety. She said that they are working on recovery resources to provide to them in the field. She finished by saying that these are what the guides look like. She continued that there are agreements for the youth to fill out and take with them; they summarize what the guides are. She electronically displayed the agreements. She explained that there are resources listed on these agreements as well. Doris thanked her.

- Danielle introduced herself; she is the lead caseworker on the sex abuse intervention team at Denver Human Services. She explained that they take part in MDT and specialize in sex abuse and trafficking. She said that they like to take a holistic approach with the whole family and they work with a lot of different entities. She said that they are more limited than RONI which is why they work with them. She said that when there is a child on their caseload, they need to figure out the situation when they are notified somehow of a run. She said that they ask questions to understand more about the run. She said that they ensure that it is reported to law enforcement and NICMIC; they send the information to professionals on the case, DPS or pretrials. She said that the juvenile justice system can help sometimes but they want to avoid children picking up charges on the run. She said that they try to stay in touch with children on the run; children do not want to tell the department but they can tell other trusted adults that can reach out to the child and know if they are okay. She said that they can use the relationships to encourage a child to turn themselves in. She said that if a child returns without any justice system involvement, they do a safety assessment and return the child to their family; they also report to NICMIC. She said that they use the HRV tool in their assessment; she does not use a paper version since that usually won't land with a child so she uses a more organic approach. She said that it can be hard to get the information needed so they lean on RONI and other community entities. She said that many of the children come from families that do not trust the system so they have to be creative in how they talk to children; this is a more harm reduction approach around topics like substance abuse and safe sex. She also mentioned engaging the family about safety planning; it is more informal but informs them to notify law enforcement, providing children with phone numbers, and assessing how they are getting their needs met while on the run. She emphasize encouraging children to let people know that they are safe and checking in with them in a variety of ways.
- Doris asked how children come to be on Danielle's case load. Danielle said that children usually are brought through MDT, but without a hotline referral they usually won't get the case. She also said that many of the cases come through the juvenile justice system; her team takes sex abuse and human trafficking. Doris thanked her and ask Mallory about ehr case load. Mallory said that they get cases through RONI if the case is determined to be high risk or it is referred through the MDT which are from community organizations, DHS or the high risk victimization tool. Doris thanked her
- Doris mentioned a statewide approach since not all counties will have the resources to devote to this. Danielle said that the HRV tool is widely used by



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| | <p>her team and highlights that children do not know where to go all the time. She said that transportation is important as well as generally speaking about what running looks like in reality; there can be a romanticized view of running. She said that this leads to education about how to meet their needs without running and that running can be very dangerous. Doris thanked her. Mallory said that building rapport with a child is very important as is knowing about the resources in a community. She said that building up a support system is also really important. She said that they refer out to community resources to see how to meet needs in that way. Doris thanked her.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Doris said that she likes the agreement that includes parts of the assessment tool but is written in an accessible way; this seems like something to be implemented in places with less resources. She asked the extent to which virtual resources can be leveraged as another way to serve under-resourced areas. Daneille said that she really liked this idea and she would love to provide this to children and allow them to self protect in some ways. Doris thanked her. • Doris asked for comments from the subcommittee. Byran asked what happens with the forms that are filled out and how they are stored. Mallory said that the guides are more for the team to use and the safety agreements are for the youth to fill out in the field. She said that if it is safe for a youth to take the agreement home with them then they encourage them to do that. She recounted a child that she is working with who is using an agreement to mediate her suicidal ideation. She said that they upload the safety agreement to CIVICORP where it is saved; they also track how many times a safety plan is created as well as how many times the safety plan is utilized. Bryan thanked her. • Doris asked about training requirements for safety planning professionals. Lynette said that it is a need. • Doris thanked the subcommittee for the discussion; she offered for members to send more thoughts to the facilitation team to possibly be incorporated into a recommendation. |
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- Appendix A:**
 Beth McNalley
 Anna Cole
 Lynette Overmeyer
 Becky Miller Updike
 Michelle Bradley
 Jenelle Goodrich
 Jana Zinser