

research in brief

Runaways

It's estimated that 750,000 teens run away from home each year. These youngsters, aged 10-17, are absent from home at least overnight without parental permission. Many of them are subjected to physical violence, prostitution, drug addiction, and other traumas. The Cooperative Extension Service of Washington State University recently released two outstanding bulletins based on Nye's research conducted at the Boys Town Center for the Study of Youth Development.

Bulletin 0743, *Runaways: A Report for Parents*, includes sections on the general characteristics of today's runaway, reasons for running away, the length of the runaway's journey, an overview of experiences the teen runaway may face, and parental response to runaways. Most importantly, the publication

contains very sound information to help parents cope with runaway behavior.

Bulletin 0744, *Runaways: Some Critical Issues for Professionals and Society*, includes more extensive information on the characteristics of the runaways, characteristics of the runaway experience, seven types of runaways, and parental response to running away. The section entitled "Issues for Society" presents valuable insight into parental relationships, the role of the school, the delinquent peer group, alternative living arrangements, social research, and social responsibility.

Nye's reports are based on data from over 150 publications on runaways. It's must reading for Extension staff. Most importantly, teens need what 4-H has to offer—companionship, belonging, and positive personal development.

Runaways: A Report for Parents. Bulletin 0743. F. Ivan Nye. Boys Town, Nebraska: Boys Town Center for the Study of Youth Development, November, 1980.

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