



# DIGITAL FRONTLINE

An illustration of a young woman with long brown hair, wearing a green t-shirt, blue shorts, and red boots. She is standing and talking on a mobile phone held to her ear.

## Greetings from NRS

Dear Friends,

With the holiday season behind us, we hope that you've had plenty of opportunities to enjoy time with family and friends. For many people, the holidays are filled with warmth, love and joy. But for others, like the young people we hear from daily, this time of year can be lonely and challenging.

At the National Runaway Safeline (NRS), we connect with youth who are struggling to stay safe in abusive homes, living on the streets where they face difficult decisions and bouncing from couch to couch to ensure a roof over their head.

In 2023, we heard from tens of thousands of youth and families needing support and resources to address physical, emotional and financial struggles. In addition to providing crisis intervention services, we played an active role in the extensive network of Runaway and Homeless Youth service providers, participating in meetings, conferences and educational events. And this year, we were proud to launch innovative awareness-building tools, such as a [brief video](#) that gives people a glimpse into what it's like when a young person contacts NRS for help and also a [social media campaign](#) designed to inform youth about NRS's services.

It was a busy year for our team. Until the day comes when we are no longer needed, we will remain committed to ensuring vulnerable youth are supported and heard.

As we kick-off 2024, we wish to express our deepest gratitude for your support of our work. Your generosity has helped us make a significant impact in the lives of youth who are considering running away and those experiencing homelessness.

**If you have already made a donation to NRS in 2023, thank you!** If not, we kindly ask you to consider sending a New Year's gift to the National Runaway Safeline. This time of year is great for reflection and gratitude, and each donation helps us improve the lives of vulnerable youth and families. [Donate Today](#).

On behalf of the National Runaway Safeline's Board of Directors and staff, I wish you a happy, healthy and safe new year.

With warm regards,

Susan Frankel  
Chief Executive Officer

## WHAT'S HAPPENING AT NRS

### November Volunteer of the Month



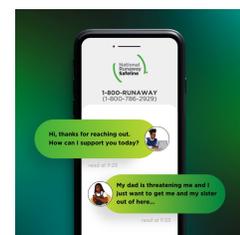
When it comes to giving back through service, Samantha C. (Sam) stands as an example of someone who has selflessly devoted her time to an important cause and integrated her learnings into her academic and professional goals.

Sam began volunteering with NRS at age 16, much younger than the average age of our volunteers. After learning about NRS's volunteer opportunities through her high school, Sam registered for what she calls "an eye-opening" 40-hour training that was so impactful she still uses the training materials to help guide her through difficult chats today. Now, as a student at Washington University in St. Louis, Sam continues to volunteer by talking to young people and concerned adults who reach out to NRS. Sam greatly appreciates the flexibility that NRS offers to individuals like her who want to volunteer but have limited free time.

Sam continually impresses our team, showing herself to be an empathetic, non-judgmental and reliable support for young people, no matter what their need is.

[Visit the NRS Blog](#)

### Top Social Media Posts



## NRS Joins Colleagues to Improve Outcomes for Youth

The National Runaway Safeline's team makes it a priority to collaborate and share key learnings with colleagues in the Runaway and Homeless Youth (RHY) field. We were fortunate to have several opportunities to do this at recent meetings and events.



In late November 2023, we gathered with service providers at the Runaway and Homeless Youth Training and Technical Assistance Center's (RHYTTAC) annual RHY National Grantee Training in Seattle. After three years of virtual trainings, we were thrilled to meet with colleagues in-person again, and enjoyed participating in training sessions, networking events and workshops for RHY grantees and members of the youth services field. We presented two new awards; one recognized Youth Collaboratory for its unwavering support of National Runaway Prevention Month (NRPM) and efforts to highlight the experiences faced by young people, and the NRPM 2023 Youth Engagement Award recognized the Oklahoma Department of Mental Health & Substance Abuse Services and the Oklahoma City Youth Action Board for their commitment to amplifying youth voices throughout NRPM.

A few weeks later, Jessica Jasurda, Director of Crisis Services, and Sam Gillis, Chief Program Officer, represented NRS at the National Youth Serving Hotline Convening in Washington, DC. This event was co-hosted by NRS and the Family and Youth Services Bureau (FYSB) and aimed to build collaboration and share best practices among a network of national hotlines providing services and resources for youth and young adults experiencing crisis.

And finally, NRS CEO Susan Frankel joined Stephanie Piccirilli, CEO of Ignite and Erin Ryan and Tedd Peso with The Night Ministry for an engaging webinar about the Runaway and Homeless Youth Trafficking Prevention Act (RHYTPA) of 2023 (S.3125/H.R.6041) and its importance for youth and young adults. This legislation, if authorized, will make important updates to existing legislation, including an increase in the allowable length of stays in basic centers from 21 to 30+ days, adds an important nondiscrimination clause and works to prevent human trafficking and chronic adult homelessness. The U.S. Senate and House introduced RHYTPA on October 25, 2023 and we encourage you to contact your local members of Congress to express support for RHYTPA. For more information about RHYTPA and how to connect with your legislators please visit the [National Network for Youth](#).

As the webinar moderator, NRS Youth Fellow Sharday Hamilton posed important questions to the panelists. The discussion touched on the importance of incorporating the youth voice, barriers to services, effective communication with youth in crisis, programs that meet unique needs of youth and more. You can watch the webinar video [here](#).

We look forward to many more collaborative opportunities and conversations in 2024.

# YOUTH IN THE NEWS

[storymaps.arcgis.com](https://storymaps.arcgis.com)

## Developing youth leadership to end youth homelessness

"Fifteen Detroit teens and young adults spent this past summer developing communications skills to share their expertise and experiences with decision makers, through a partnership between the Detroit Phoenix Center and the University of Michigan's Poverty Solutions.

The workshops were part of DPC's Summer Leadership Academy and offered various ways for youth to share their perspectives – ranging from poetry to advocacy statements to vision boards and video interviews – so the teens and young adults could engage in a way that felt authentic to them."



[Read the Full Article Here](#)

[WMTV15News.com](https://www.wmtv15.com)

## Youth Homelessness: a problem hidden in plain sight



"MADISON, Wis. (WMTV) - Somewhere right now in southern Wisconsin, there's a child with no place to go after school. They may be sleeping on a friend's couch, in a car, or even outside. Youth homelessness is a hidden but ever-present problem.

"I have had students sleeping down in the library parking lot," said Carrie Kulinski. Kulinski works as the Families in Transition Coordinator for the School District of Janesville. Her job is to identify and then help children within the district experiencing homelessness."

[Watch the Full Segment Here](#)

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