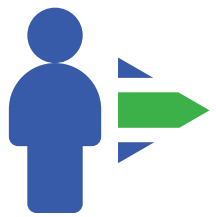


MODULE

16

“let’s talk”

FUTURE LIFE PLANNING



LEARNING GOALS

During this module, participants will:

- Identify life goals they are striving to achieve in the near future (i.e., graduate from high school, work, travel).
- Identify and discuss barriers to and tools for achieving those goals.

DEFINE THE ISSUE

“What will you do when we hang up the phone?”

And thus ends many crisis calls at the National Runaway Safeline. Staff and volunteers are trained to help those who contact NRS walk through an action plan that incorporates everything they’ve discussed, including local resources and informal options. NRS believes that creating a specific plan of action makes it more likely that a person in crisis will follow through.

The same may be true of youth navigating adolescence. With something to look forward to—a plan or goal—young people may be more motivated to move forward.

Granted, countless obstacles may stand in the way of accomplishing a goal. Module 16 helps participants think through specific life goals and consider what things—from personal influences to barriers—may help them or stand in their way.

ICONS

For further details, see the Introduction Module.



MODULE ACTIVITIES



ACTIVITY	TIME	METHODOLOGY
A. Road Map: Got Yours?	45 minutes	Discussion/Activity
B. Action Plan	15 minutes	Activity



Total time required: **60 minutes**

MATERIALS

- Newsprint or chalk/dry-erase board
- Markers or chalk
- Pens or pencils
- Blank paper
- Glue or tape
- Scissors
- “Life Goals” worksheet
- “Traffic Sign Definitions” handout (two pages)
- “Road Map: Got Yours?” worksheet
- “Life Goals Map” worksheet



Consider showing the companion film, *American Street Kid*.



Contact the NRS Prevention & Youth Engagement Coordinator at **773-289-1723** or prevention@1800RUNAWAY.org for support and technical assistance.

ACTIVITY 16A

ROAD MAP: GOT YOURS?



45 minutes

HAND OUT “Life Goals” worksheets, along with pencils.

INTRODUCE “Road Map: Got Yours?”

STATE Think about how old you’ll be in ___ year(s).



Use 1 year for participants younger than 13 years, use up to 5 years for participants 13 and older.

ASK Where do you hope to be at that point in your life? What do you want to achieve? What are your wildest dreams for what you want to create with your life?

STATE In this activity, we are going to create plans and identify steps we can take today to help us achieve these goals. You will create life maps based on personal goals. These goals can be related to anything, such as school, home, family, a job, love, life, or travel. Examples might include graduating from high school, learning a skill, going to college or trade school, meeting career goals, getting married, buying a car, moving out, or owning a home.

First, think of three goals you would like to achieve in the next ___ year(s). As I said earlier, these can be related to school, home, family, a job, love, life, travel, and so on. Be creative, but think of things you really want to achieve.

As you think about your goals, write one goal down per space provided on the worksheet.

ALLOW 3 minutes for participants to fill out their worksheets.

HAND OUT “Traffic Sign Definitions” handouts.

DISCUSS what each sign represents. The handout is presented below/on the next page:



You can read them aloud or ask a participant to read one sign each from the worksheet.

- **Straight Ahead** (Facilitator): Choices that get you directly to your goal.
- **Bridge** (Facilitator): People/Places/Things that help you get from one place in life to another.
- **Detour Ahead** (Facilitator or Barrier): Having to take another route to reach a goal, or an unexpected change of plans. This sign can be perceived positively or negatively, depending on the situation.
- **Yield** (Facilitator or Barrier): A point at which you must allow someone else to take the lead or you must give them the “right-of-way.”
- **Fork** (or “Y”) **Ahead** (Facilitator or Barrier): A situation where you have to make a decision without knowing the consequences of either choice.
- **Baby on Board!** (Facilitator or Barrier): A situation where you have to consider the other people (family, friends, children, etc.) in your life before you make a decision regarding your goals.
- **Road Closed** (Barrier): When you make a choice and find out that you can’t proceed with your decision. You must at this time turn around and choose an alternate route.
- **Stop** (Barrier): People/Actions/Things that temporarily stop you, slow you down, or keep you from achieving your goals.
- **Railroad Crossing** (Facilitator): People/Actions/Things that keep you safe and stop you from being in an accident with a “train.”
- **Curve Ahead** (Facilitator or Barrier): People/Actions/Things that slow you down and make you take on a new perspective.
- **Road Construction Ahead** (Barrier): People/Actions/Things that slow you down or keep you from achieving your goals.
- **Seat Belt** (Facilitator): People/Actions/Things that keep you safe and help support a decision or goal.

STATE Some signs represent “barriers,” or people/places/things that may get in the way of achieving our goals. Some represent “facilitators,” or people/places/things that will help us achieve our goals. Other signs are neutral, such as “Detour Ahead” and “Curve Ahead,” but they are still important to think about.

HAND OUT “Road Map: Got Yours?” worksheets.

STATE Of the three goals you wrote down, choose one that you’d like to think about in more detail. Write this goal in the space provided at the top of the “Road Map: Got Yours?” worksheet.

ALLOW 2 minutes for participants to write their goals on the worksheets.

ACTIVITY 16A CONTINUED

STATE So let's think first about facilitators, or people/places/things, that will help in achieving your goals.

For example, "My goal is to go to college." One facilitator of that goal would be to finish high school, so I would write "Graduating from high school" in the box with the "Straight Ahead" sign because getting my high school diploma moves me one step closer to my goal.

Next, think about barriers, or people/places/things that may get in the way of achieving your goals. One barrier to this goal may be failing an important class, not graduating, and retaking the class over the summer. So I would write, "Not pass an important class," in the box with the "Road Construction Ahead" sign because this barrier might keep me from achieving my goal of going to college.

When you fill out neutral signs, such as the "Curve Ahead," circle the one you think it is—barrier or facilitator. For example, if my goal is, "Play professional basketball," volunteering to coach a park district youth basketball team and helping children improve their skills may give me a new perspective on the game, and therefore it would be a tool for achieving your goals.

As you're filling out your signs, consider how this goal will affect others in your life.

ALLOW 15 minutes for participants to fill out at least five signs. See if people have questions and when they seem ready, move on.

STATE Next, you're going to create a visual road map showing where you are currently, what goal you hope to achieve, and what will help or hinder your progress in achieving this goal.

HAND OUT "Life Goals Map" worksheets along with scissors and glue or tape.

STATE I would like for you to cut and paste your goal and the signs related to that goal onto a blank sheet of paper. Your goal should be on one end of the page and the traffic signs should lead up to that goal. It does not matter if you place your goal at the top or bottom of the page.

ALLOW 10 minutes for participants to finish their maps. See if people have questions and whether they seem ready to move on.



If time permits, or if you can devote another class or session to this activity, have participants map out another goal.

ASK Who would like to share their road map?

DISCUSS participants' responses, including their barriers and facilitators. The following questions will also aid in discussing individual road maps:

- When do you need to “share the road” with others and work together on achieving your goal?
- How would using drugs or alcohol impact the goal you want to reach?
- What are some barriers you have control over? Don't have control over?
- How do you feel about the barriers you don't have control over?
- How can you manage your feelings so that you don't allow those barriers to keep you from achieving your dreams?



If you have completed Module 3, “Personal Influences,” continue with the following questions. If you have not completed Module 3, continue after the line.

ASK Remember our “Who's on Your Bus?” activity in Module 3?

What do people on your bus (those close to you) think about your goal? How are they affected?

DISCUSS responses.

ASK Are there people on your bus who can help you achieve the goal you set out for yourself? Who are these people?

DISCUSS responses.

ASK Are there people on your bus that do not or would not support your goal?

DISCUSS responses.

ASK What are ways you can stand up for what you need to achieve your goals?

DISCUSS responses.

ASK Do you have any questions or comments?

DISCUSS responses.

STATE Remember that sometimes, even with a plan, we can't control all life events. We can, however, control how we react to life's situations and the decisions we make. We hope our decisions are positive and healthy for ourselves and for others in our life.

If you'd like to find youth-friendly resources that can guide healthy future life planning, contact the National Runaway Safeline at 1-800-RUNAWAY or 1800RUNAWAY.org.

LIFE GOALS

In this activity, you will identify **three goals** you would like to **achieve** in the **near future**. Think of three goals related to school, home, family, a job, life, or travel—basically anything you have dreamed of achieving.

Goal #1

Goal #2

Goal #3

TRAFFIC SIGN DEFINITIONS (PAGE 1)

Below are the definitions for the traffic signs that you'll be using for your own personal road map.

	Straight Ahead (Facilitator)	Choices that get you directly to your goal.
	Bridge (Facilitator)	People/Places/Things that help you get from one place in life to another.
	Detour Ahead (Facilitator or Barrier)	Having to take another route to reach a goal, or any unexpected change of plans. This sign can be perceived positively or negatively, depending on the situation.
	Yield (Facilitator or Barrier)	A point at which you must allow someone else to take the lead or give them the "right-of-way."
	Fork (or "Y") Ahead (Facilitator or Barrier)	A situation where you have to make a decision without knowing the consequences of either choice.
	Baby on Board! (Facilitator or Barrier)	A situation where you have to consider the other people (family, friends, children, etc.) in your life before you make a decision regarding your goals.













TRAFFIC SIGN DEFINITIONS (PAGE 2)

	Road Closed (Barrier)	When you make a choice and find out you can't proceed with your decision. You must at this time turn around and choose an alternate route.
	Stop (Barrier)	People/Actions/Things that temporarily stop you, slow you down, or keep you from achieving your goals.
	Railroad Crossing (Facilitator or Barrier)	People/Actions/Things that keep you safe and stop you from being in an accident with a "train."
	Curve Ahead (Facilitator or Barrier)	People/Actions/Things that slow you down and make you take on a new perspective.
	Road Construction Ahead (Barrier)	People/Actions/Things that slow you down or keep you from achieving your goals.
	Seat Belt (Facilitator)	People/Actions/Things that keep you safe and help support a decision or goal.

ROAD MAP: GOT YOURS? (PAGE 1)













In this activity, you will identify **three goals** you would like to **achieve** in the **near future**. Think of three goals related to school, home, family, a job, life, or travel—basically anything you have dreamed of achieving. After writing down your three goals, think about **barriers**, or people/ places/ things, that may get in the way of achieving your goals. Also, think about your **influential others**, or important people/groups, and what role they will play in helping you achieve your goals.

Use the labels below and spaces underneath to explain the various barriers and influential others you may encounter on your way to achieving your goals.

					
Facilitator	Barrier	Facilitator or Barrier	Barrier	Facilitator	Facilitator or Barrier
					
Facilitator or Barrier	Barrier	Facilitator or Barrier	Facilitator or Barrier	Facilitator or Barrier	Seat Belt (Facilitator)













Goal #1: _____

ROAD MAP: GOT YOURS? (PAGE 2)

 <p>Facilitator</p>	 <p>Barrier</p>	 <p>Facilitator or Barrier</p>	 <p>Barrier</p>	 <p>Facilitator</p>	 <p>Facilitator or Barrier</p>
 <p>Facilitator or Barrier</p>	 <p>Barrier</p>	 <p>Facilitator or Barrier</p>	 <p>Facilitator or Barrier</p>	 <p>Facilitator or Barrier</p>	 <p>Seat Belt (Facilitator)</p>

Goal #2: _____

ROAD MAP: GOT YOURS? (PAGE 3)

					
Facilitator	Barrier	Facilitator or Barrier	Barrier	Facilitator	Facilitator or Barrier
					
Facilitator or Barrier	Barrier	Facilitator or Barrier	Facilitator or Barrier	Facilitator or Barrier	Seat Belt (Facilitator)

Goal #3: _____

After completing the above activity, take the blank sheet of paper titled “Life Goals Map” and begin mapping out a path to your goals that includes each of the road signs. Be creative in putting together your map!

LIFE GOALS MAP

GOAL

The diagram illustrates a winding road with dashed yellow lines and solid grey borders, set against a green background. The road starts at a yellow arrow pointing right at the bottom left and winds upwards and to the right. There are five blue dots on the road, each connected by a blue line to a white rectangular box with a blue border. There are also four red dots on the road, each connected by a red line to a white rectangular box with a red border. The boxes are arranged in a zig-zag pattern along the road. The top-most box is labeled 'GOAL' in a red box.

ACTIVITY 16B

ACTION PLAN



15 minutes

INTRODUCE “Action Plan Activity”

STATE In the previous activity we explored what goals we want to accomplish within the next _ years.



Use 1 year for participants younger than 13 years, use up to 5 years for participants 13 and older.

ASK Now that we have ideas, goals, and a vision, there are two critical steps to making them become a reality. What do you think they are?

ALLOW responses.

STATE In this activity, we are going to identify the steps we need to take to accomplish our goals. Without planning and identifying what we need to do to make our dreams a reality, we might never achieve them. Once we identify the necessary steps to accomplish our goals, we have to commit and follow through.

HAND OUT “Action Plan Worksheet” worksheets, along with pencils.

STATE In the first column, write your identified goals into the broken down categories of “having” (things you would like to have, such as a savings account or a driver’s license), “being” (dream career, health goals, personality traits you want to adopt) and “doing” (traveling, volunteering). In the second column write what how much each item in the first item may cost, and the cost type (for example a owning a car might cost \$10,000 in long term savings or payments, but learning another language might cost you the course of a class, and the cost type would be immediate payment, and your time). In the third column, identify what steps you need to do today to be on track to accomplish these goals. The first step for many is researching what programs and opportunities exist.

ALLOW 10 minutes for participants to fill out their worksheets.

ASK Do you have any questions or comments?

DISCUSS responses.

ACTION PLAN ACTIVITY

<div>Having</div> <div></div>	<div>Cost/Cost Type</div> <div></div>	<div>Steps Today</div> <div></div>
<div>Being</div> <div></div>		<div>Steps Tomorrow</div> <div></div>
<div>Doing</div> <div></div>		<div>Steps This Month</div> <div></div>

ACTIVITY 16

SUMMARY

- STATE**
- Our goals are important parts of our lives, giving people something to be motivated by and to strive for.
 - We identified where you hope to be at this point in your life, things you'd like to achieve, and what dreams you have for your life.
 - Identify potential barriers and challenges to achieving your goals, and how to plan ahead for road bumps.
 - Planning and identifying are essential steps in making our dreams become a reality.

HANDOUTS AND WORKSHEETS

- A. Life Goals
- B. Traffic Sign Definitions (2 pages)
- C. Road Map: Got Yours?
- D. Life Goals Map

REFERENCES

Doll, M., Neubauer, L.C., Robles-Schrader, G.M., Gehle, J.L., & Harper, G.W. (2004). *Teen talk: A repeat pregnancy prevention and parenting skills intervention for female adolescents*. Project Vida and Access Community Health Network.

National Runaway Switchboard. (2001). *Runaway prevention curriculum for classroom and community educators*. Chicago, IL: NRS.

RESOURCES

The Coalition for Juvenile Justice (CJJ) envisions a nation where fewer children are at risk of delinquency and where, if they are at risk or involved with the justice system, they and their families receive every possible opportunity to live safe, healthy, and fulfilling lives (<http://www.juvjustice.org/>).

Mapping Your Future's vision is to be the leading public-service, collaborative provider of free information and services for schools as well as for students and families as they consider college, financial aid, careers, and financial literacy options (<http://mappingyourfuture.org>).

Myfuture.com is a service presented by the U.S. Department of Defense. The site helps students understand the opportunities available to them after graduation in order to better prepare them for the choices and challenges they have ahead (<http://myfuture.com>).

The National Dropout Prevention Center/Network offers effective dropout prevention strategies (<http://www.dropoutprevention.org/effective-strategies>).

National Runaway Safeline (NRS) works to keep America's runaway, homeless, and at-risk youth safe and off the streets. NRS operates the 1-800-RUNAWAY hotline and 1800RUNAWAY.org online services, including live chat, email and forums. NRS provides youth and families in crisis with support and access to resources 24 hours a day, 365 days a year (<http://www.1800RUNAWAY.org>).

NextStepU.com is a personalized resource for students, parents, and counselors to find information about college and career planning as well as scholarships (<http://www.nextstepu.com>).

The U.S. Department of Education offers a website designed to provide students and their families with easy access to information and resources from the U.S. government—all the info needed, in one place, from all parts of the government (<http://www2.ed.gov/students/landing.jhtml>).