

# RUNNING AWAY?

## Lesson plan

[www.leedsscp.org.uk/runningaway](http://www.leedsscp.org.uk/runningaway)

### PURPOSE OF THE LESSON

1. Explore the factors that lead a young person to consider running away
2. Analyse the risks of running away
3. Signpost to supporting services.

### AUDIENCE

- Young people at risk of running away/ becoming homeless
- All students post 14 to raise awareness of the risks and factors of running away.

### LESSON STRUCTURE

Mixed presentation and discussion as a one-to-one or group session.

### LEARNING OBJECTIVES

For young people to understand that:

- whatever their reason for wanting to running away, that it won't solve their problems and talking to someone they trust often helps
- Communicating with their parents/ carers about their whereabouts prevents unnecessary worry
- Running away can make their problems worse
- There are anonymous helplines available.

Further information can be found on the LSCP website:

[www.leedsscp.org.uk/runningaway](http://www.leedsscp.org.uk/runningaway)

### WARM UP

Ask the young person/ group to list the reasons why some young people decide to run away from home. Points raised could include but not limited to:

- arguments or fighting at home
- feeling ashamed of things they have done
- abuse (violence in the family)
- parents separating or divorcing or the arrival of a new step parent
- death in the family
- birth of a new baby in the family
- family financial worries
- kids or parents drinking alcohol or taking drugs
- problems at school
- peer pressure
- sexuality
- mental health issues
- failing or dropping out of school.

### TEACHER NOTES

If working with one person who is at risk of running away, tailor this discussion to how they feel and what is making them feel the way they do. If a discussion about their circumstances is not possible then keep it abstract and impersonal.

Depending on age and circumstances, some young people will need more guidance in exploring the themes. The use of targeted leading questions should be used to support and identify the young people's knowledge and understanding.

## VIDEO CLIP 1

Watch the first video <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rOeyRZ4Zljg>

and ask the young person/group to answer these questions:

1. What had happened at home to make the young person not want to go home?
2. Where did she go or what did she do?
3. How did her parents feel?
4. What time did the police get called?
5. What are the risks of running away?
6. What should she have done that would have helped the situation?

Answers:

1. Had an argument with mum over not being able to find school shoes. Mum had threatened to ground her.
2. Went to Aameena's house, but didn't text mum as mum doesn't like her other friend Chelsea.
3. Her parents were worried and scared as the young person had not returned home and would normally text.
4. Parents rang the police at 7pm.
5. You could be harmed or hurt, end up cold, wet and hungry, find yourself sleeping rough, in dangerous situations, in a strange place, be at risk of breaking the law and arrested.
6. She should have contacted her parents to tell them where she was and who she was with.

## DISCUSSION

Ask the young person/ group if they have ever been in a situation where they did not want to go home. What made them feel that way and what did they do? How did it end?

The discussion should focus on what to do when they feel this way. Who can they talk to? Sign post to external support: [www.leedsscp.org.uk/runningaway](http://www.leedsscp.org.uk/runningaway)

## VIDEO CLIP 2

Watch the second video <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1rN94-vl83U>

1. What had happened at home to make the young person not want to go home?
2. Where did he go or what did he do?
3. How did the family feel?
4. What should the young person have done that would have helped the situation?

Ask the young person/ group to focus on the similarities between the two clips.

## DISCUSSION

1. What did the two clips have in common?
2. What should they have done to make the situation better?
3. What should the families have done beforehand to help the young people?
4. What would help the families in the future?

The key to this section is to allow the young people to come to the realisation that communication between young people and their parents/ carers is key.

## CLOSING DISCUSSIONS

Ask the young person/ group what is the biggest risk either of the young people faced on the streets? What should they do if they are feeling unhappy at home? Who can they talk to?

Whatever reason someone has for wanting to running away, talking to someone they trust often helps. This could be a family member or a family friend or teacher. Talking to a trusted adult about your problems can help you find possible solutions to what is it that has caused you to feel the need to run away.