

Interview Guide for Runaway and Truant Children

The following guide provides suggestions for questions to gather information from children who have been on the run, absent from home or truant. This guide is intended to assist in gathering information for comprehensive assessments; and assist in determining whether the behaviors are potentially linked to more serious concerns, such as abuse/neglect, human trafficking, etc. See PPM 2115.

Runaway/Absent from home

Suggested Question for Family	Suggested Questions for the Child
What was the child doing while on the run?	Tell me about what you have been doing.
What happened to the child while on the run?	Tell me about being on the run. What has been happening? Tell me about what happened while you were out on the street. Tell me about being on the street.
Who was the child with?	Tell me about who you met/ or who you have been with?
Who did the child meet?	Who have you been with?
Who was the child depending on?	Tell me who you have been depending on since you have been away from home?
Where did the child go?	Tell me about where you stayed.
Where did the child stay?	Tell me about the places you stayed in. Tell me about the places you saw when you were gone.
How did the child survive while being away from home?	Tell me about surviving since you have been away from home?
How did the child pay for things?	Tell me how you have been getting by?
Where did the child get food?	How did you pay for things?
Was the child working? Who was the child working for? What were they doing for work?	Tell me about eating since you have been away from home? Were you working? Tell me about your work.

Truant

Suggested Questions for Family	Suggested Questions for the Child
What was the child doing when not in school? What does the child do during the day? What does the child do at night?	Tell me about what you have been doing. Tell me about what you do when you're not in school. What has been happening? Tell me about what happened while you were out on the street. Tell me about being on the street.
Who is the child with when not in school? Has the child met anyone while not in school? Who does the child hang out with when not going to school? Does the child have a boy/girlfriend? If yes, how old is the person? What is their name? What does the child call this person? (boyfriend/girlfriend or something else?)	Have you met anyone while you are not in school? Tell me about who you hang out with when you are not going to school. Do you have a boy/girlfriend? If yes, how old are they? What is their name? (Make note of how the child refers to this person- boyfriend/girlfriend or are they using street terms such as "pimp/controller/manager/daddy"). Do not use these terms unless the child does first.
Where does the child go during the day when not in school?	Tell me about where you stay during the day. Tell me about the places you go instead of going to school.
Was the child working? Who was the child working for? What were they doing for work?	Are you working? Tell me about your work.