

**YOUTH INFORMATION FORM:  
DATA FROM RUNAWAY AND  
HOMELESS YOUTH PROGRAMS,  
1987 TO 1990**

**SIB-057**

**Dataset Documentation  
and Instruction Manual**

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**YOUTH INFORMATION FORM:  
DATA FROM RUNAWAY AND HOMELESS  
YOUTH PROGRAMS, 1987 TO 1990**

**DATA COLLECTED BY**

United States Department of Health and Human Services  
Office of Human Development Services  
Administration for Children, Youth, and Families

**DISTRIBUTED BY**

National Data Archive on Child Abuse And Neglect  
Family Life Development Center  
Department of Human Development and Family Studies  
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## **ABSTRACT**

These data were gathered from federally funded runaway and homeless youth shelters during 1988-1990. Data were collected on approximately 87,000 youth who received services from runaway and homeless youth programs. The following types of information are included in the dataset: demographic characteristics, youth and family presenting problems at intake (including history of abuse and neglect), and services provided by the shelter.

## **ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF ASSISTANCE**

All manuscripts which use data made available through the National Data Archive on Child Abuse and Neglect should acknowledge that fact as well as identify the original collector of the data. Users of these data are urged to follow some adaptation of the following statement with the parentheses indicating items to be filled in appropriately or deleted by the individual user.

The data (and tabulations) utilized in this (publication) were made available (in part) by the National Data Archive on Child Abuse and Neglect, Cornell University, Ithaca New York. The data for the YOUTH INFORMATION FORM: DATA FROM RUNAWAY AND HOMELESS YOUTH PROGRAMS were originally collected by United States Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children Youth and Families. Funding support for preparing the data for public distribution was provided by a contract (90-CA-1370) between the National Center on Child Abuse and Neglect and Cornell University. Neither the collector of the original data, funding agency, nor the National Data Archive on Child Abuse and Neglect bears any responsibility for the analyses or interpretations presented here.

## **INFORMATION ABOUT THE USE OF ARCHIVAL RESOURCES**

In order to provide funding agencies with essential information about the use of archival resources and to facilitate the exchange of information about research activities among Archive participants, each user of these facilities is expected to send two copies of each completed manuscript, thesis abstract, or reprint to the National Data Archive on Child Abuse and Neglect, Cornell University, Family Life Development Center, MVR Hall, Ithaca, New York 14853.

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## **I. GENERAL STUDY OVERVIEW**

### **Statement of Purpose**

Runaway and Homeless Youth Programs are a part of a federal initiative (Title III of the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act of 1974) whose purpose is to provide temporary safe shelter and care to runaway or otherwise homeless youth who are in need of shelter, counseling, and aftercare services. There are over 300 such programs across the United States. Services provided by these programs include shelter, crisis intervention, family, individual and group counseling aimed at identifying the best possible solutions for the youth, whether that means returning home and reuniting with one's family, or pursuing other alternatives (e.g., independent living programs). The Youth Information Form (YIF) is routinely used by the Administration for Children, Youth and Families of the Office of Human Development Services to monitor and gather information about those programs which it funds to provide services to runaway and homeless youth and their families.

In addition to demographic data, the YIF records information about the runaway episode and the services provided by the runaway program. The YIF also includes presenting problems, those family and youth situational factors which program staff believe contribute to the youth's current problems and reasons for seeking help. There are several variables in this dataset which assess the youth's history of physical abuse, sexual abuse, and neglect, and domestic violence within the youth's family. Although at one point, all federally funded runaway and homeless youth programs were required to submit the YIF, this is no longer the case. Although submission is voluntary, most of the programs participated in the data collection process.

### **Sampling/Selection Information**

A total of 87,909 YIF were collected by ACYF between April 1987 and November of 1990. The Archive has all 87,909 cases available in one data file. However, in order to facilitate analyses the Archive has created a smaller dataset consisting of 40,000 randomly selected cases. Unless otherwise requested, the you receive will have 40,000 randomly selected cases from all cases for which information was collected between April 1987 and November 1990.

### **Data Collection**

Since 1985, The Department of Health and Human Services has used the Youth Information Form (YIF) as an instrument to monitor and gather information

about the federally funded runaway and homeless youth programs.<sup>1</sup> While using the YIF is voluntary on the part of the programs, HHS estimates that more than three-fourths of their grantees participate in data collection. These shelters represent all states and the District of Columbia. Programs who participate in data collection complete and submit questionnaires on all youth for whom they provide shelter and ongoing services. The following information is recorded on each questionnaire:

- basic demographic data
- primary and contributing problems of the youth and his/her family
- services received during the shelter visit
- services planned for after leaving shelters, and as follow-up
- the destination of the youth at the completion of shelter services.

This information is based on what the youth communicates to shelter staff as well as any additional information the staff have gained from parents, school officials, or others in the course of giving or arranging for services. The database does not indicate whether information is based on the youth's self-reporting or other sources. Periodically, shelters forward the questionnaires to HSS where they are processed and added to the YIF data base.

For reporting purposes each youth is given an identification number. When youth make a return visit to a shelter, another YIF is filled out using the same number.

Runaway and homeless youth programs provide a variety of youth services, and many young people seek help from programs for non-runaway reasons. On the YIF form, staff indicate the status of the youth when he/she sought services from the shelter, that is whether she/he is a runaway, homeless, contemplating running away, or has come for a non-runaway related reason. In the current dataset, approximately 35% of the youth were categorized as runaways, 9% homeless, 7% contemplating running away, and 48% came to the program for a non-runaway related reason.

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<sup>1</sup>Prior to this time, the Department used the ICARE form to gather data about their R&HY programs

## II. DESCRIPTION OF MACHINE-READABLE FILES

The National Data Archive on Child Abuse and Neglect (NDACAN) is able to distribute this data in a variety of ready to use file formats. Each data order comes on your choice of media (e.g., diskette, tape, etc.) with installation instructions. Please refer to the NDACAN order form or call us for more information.

NDACAN distributes one file for: **Youth Information Form: Data from Runaway and Homeless Youth Programs, 1987-1990**. A brief description of the data file is provided below. For information regarding variables, please see the individual codebook that goes with the data file in Appendix B: Codebook Information. Frequencies and summary statistics are also distributed on diskette and can be printed in 10 point courier font from any standard word processor. This data file is a randomly selected subset of the originally collected 87,909 cases. If you would like to work with all 87,909 cases, contact the Archive and we will assist you in making the necessary arrangements for its use.

Data file name: YIF

This file contains 40,000 cases randomly drawn from the original raw data file containing 87,909 cases. The file includes 188 variables with variable names and labels corresponding to the codebook. It is sorted by the DATEIN variable.

## III. REFERENCES

Powers, J., Eckenrode, J., and Jaklitsch, B. (1990) Maltreatment Among Runaway and Homeless Youth. *Child Abuse and Neglect: The International Journal*, 14: 87-98.

Powers, J., Jaklitsch, B., and Eckenrode, J. (1989) Behavioral characteristics of maltreatment among runaway and homeless youth. *Early Child Development and Care*, 42: 127-139.

United States General Accounting Office (1989) Homeless and Runaway Youth Receiving Services at Federally Funded Shelters: A Report to the Honorable Paul, Simon, U.S. Senate (GAO/HRD-90-45).

# **APPENDIX A:**

## **Questionnaire**

# Runaway and Homeless Youth Program

## Youth Information Form

Please read "Instructions for Completing the Youth Information Form" prior to completing this form.

1. Center Number (Enter the number assigned to your center)
2. Youth Number (Enter the sequential five-digit number that was assigned to the youth.) Note: If the youth was previously assigned a number, use the same number.

### Part 1. Intake Section

3. Date of intake Month   Day   Year

### Youth Characteristics

4. ☐ Male ☐ Female
5. Enter the youth's age at intake. (check one)
- |  |  |
|--|--|
| a <input type="checkbox"/> 11 or younger | e <input type="checkbox"/> 15          |
| b <input type="checkbox"/> 12            | f <input type="checkbox"/> 16          |
| c <input type="checkbox"/> 13            | g <input type="checkbox"/> 17          |
| d <input type="checkbox"/> 14            | h <input type="checkbox"/> 18 or older |
6. Race/Ethnic origin. (check one based on youth's perception of himself or herself)
- |   |   |
|---|---|
| a <input type="checkbox"/> American Indian/Alaskan Native     | d <input type="checkbox"/> White-not of Hispanic origin |
| b <input type="checkbox"/> Asian or Pacific Islander          | e <input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic                     |
| c <input type="checkbox"/> Black/Negro-not of Hispanic origin |   |
7. Last school grade completed. (check one)
- |  |   |
|--|---|
| a <input type="checkbox"/> Grade 5 or less | e <input type="checkbox"/> Grade 9          |
| b <input type="checkbox"/> Grade 6         | f <input type="checkbox"/> Grade 10         |
| c <input type="checkbox"/> Grade 7         | g <input type="checkbox"/> Grade 11         |
| d <input type="checkbox"/> Grade 8         | h <input type="checkbox"/> Grade 12 or more |
8. Current school status. (check one)
- |  |
|--|
| a <input type="checkbox"/> Attending school (public or private)            |
| b <input type="checkbox"/> Suspended                                       |
| c <input type="checkbox"/> Expelled  |
| d <input type="checkbox"/> Dropped out                                     |
| e <input type="checkbox"/> Graduated from high school                      |
| f <input type="checkbox"/> Attending alternative school/home bound program |

### Living Situation/Family

9. Indicate the living situation in which the youth spent the most time during the past year. (check one)
- |   |   |
|---|---|
| a <input type="checkbox"/> Home with parent(s) or legal guardian                          | h <input type="checkbox"/> On the run/street  |
| b <input type="checkbox"/> Relative's home  | i <input type="checkbox"/> Runaway/crisis house (other than the reporting center)   |
| c <input type="checkbox"/> Friend's home  | j <input type="checkbox"/> Other institution (e.g. boarding school/mental hospital) |
| d <input type="checkbox"/> Foster home  | k <input type="checkbox"/> Other adult (19 or older)                                |
| e <input type="checkbox"/> Group home   |   |
| f <input type="checkbox"/> Correctional Institution                                       |   |
| g <input type="checkbox"/> Independent living situation (self or other youth(s) under 19) |   |

What is the family structure in the youth's primary household?

10. Father Figure (check one)
- |  |
|--|
| a <input type="checkbox"/> Natural father    |
| b <input type="checkbox"/> Adopted father    |
| c <input type="checkbox"/> Stepfather        |
| d <input type="checkbox"/> Foster father     |
| e <input type="checkbox"/> Other relative(s) |
| f <input type="checkbox"/> Other adult male  |
| g <input type="checkbox"/> None              |
11. Mother Figure (check one)
- |   |
|---|
| a <input type="checkbox"/> Natural mother     |
| b <input type="checkbox"/> Adopted mother     |
| c <input type="checkbox"/> Stepmother         |
| d <input type="checkbox"/> Foster mother      |
| e <input type="checkbox"/> Other relative(s)  |
| f <input type="checkbox"/> Other adult female |
| g <input type="checkbox"/> None               |

Center Number

Youth Number

In addition to father or mother figure, indicate the number of other unrelated adults as part of the household. (If none indicate zero "0." Answer both questions 12 & 13.)

14. How many siblings were living in the household? (check one)

a ☐ 0 b ☐ 1 c ☐ 2 d ☐ 3 e ☐ 4  
f ☐ 5 g ☐ 6 or more

12. ☐ Male 13. ☐ Female

Type of employment

15. Father Figure (check all that apply)

a ☐ Full time  
b ☐ Part time  
c ☐ Seasonally employed  
d ☐ Unemployed  
e ☐ Retired  
f ☐ Fully disabled  
g ☐ Public assistance  
h ☐ No father figure

16. Mother Figure (check all that apply)

a ☐ Full time  
b ☐ Part time  
c ☐ Seasonally employed  
d ☐ Unemployed  
e ☐ Retired  
f ☐ Fully disabled  
g ☐ Public assistance  
h ☐ No mother figure

#### Runaway and Homeless Status

17. What were the conditions under which the youth came to the project? (check one)

a ☐ Runaway  
b ☐ Homeless  
c ☐ Contemplating running away  
d ☐ Came for a non-runaway related reason

18. Is this youth a throwaway/pushout?

☐ Yes ☐ No

19. If runaway or homeless is checked above, how many days had the youth been away from his or her legal residence when the youth came to the project this time? (check 1 day if 24 hours or less) (check one)

a ☐ 1 day  
b ☐ 2-5 days  
c ☐ 6-10 days

d ☐ 11-20 days  
e ☐ 21-50 days  
f ☐ Over 50 days  
g ☐ Not away from legal residence

20. What is the distance between the youth's living situation and the project? (check one)

a ☐ Less than one mile  
b ☐ 1 to 10 miles  
c ☐ 11 to 50 miles  
d ☐ More than 50 miles

21. The youth's living situation and the project are: (check one)

a ☐ In the same community or county  
b ☐ Elsewhere in the same state  
c ☐ In a different state

22. Indicate the number of times other than the current runaway episode the youth has been away from home at least overnight without the permission of parents or legal guardian. (check one)

a ☐ None b ☐ 1 c ☐ 2 d ☐ 3 e ☐ 4 f ☐ 5 to 10 g ☐ More than 10

23. Indicate the number of times other than the current runaway episode the youth has been in this particular center before. (check one)

a ☐ None b ☐ 1 c ☐ 2 d ☐ 3 e ☐ 4 f ☐ 5 to 10 g ☐ More than 10

Center Number Youth Number 

24. Indicate the number of other runaway shelters the youth has been in before. (check one)

- a
- ☐
- None b
- ☐
- 1 c
- ☐
- 2 d
- ☐
- 3 e
- ☐
- 4 f
- ☐
- 5 or more

**Referral**

25. How was the youth referred to the project? (check one)

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| a <input type="checkbox"/> Self referral                   | h <input type="checkbox"/> Law enforcement                        |
| b <input type="checkbox"/> Parents or legal guardian       | i <input type="checkbox"/> Child welfare/Child protective service |
| c <input type="checkbox"/> Juvenile justice system         | j <input type="checkbox"/> Other public agency                    |
| d <input type="checkbox"/> National Switchboard            | k <input type="checkbox"/> Other private organization             |
| e <input type="checkbox"/> Other regional or local hotline | l <input type="checkbox"/> Other adult or relative                |
| f <input type="checkbox"/> School                          | m <input type="checkbox"/> Media                                  |
| g <input type="checkbox"/> Other runaway shelter           |   |

26. Is a public or private referral agency paying the project directly to provide services to the youth? ☐ Yes ☐ No**Presenting Problems**27. What do the staff cite as the *primary problem*? (check one)

- a ☐ Relationships with parent figure(s) or other adults in the home  
b ☐ Relationships with other children or youth in the home  
c ☐ School  
d ☐ Juvenile justice system  
e ☐ Law enforcement  
f ☐ Family crisis (e.g., violence, divorce, remarriage)  
g ☐ Other personal problem

What do the staff cite as *special contributing problems*? (check as many as apply)

28. Family Situation

- a ☐ Sexual abuse by parent figure  
b ☐ Physical abuse by parent figure  
c ☐ Neglect by parent figure  
d ☐ Parent figure too strict/protective  
e ☐ Parent figure has drug/alcohol problem  
f ☐ Homosexual parent  
g ☐ Parental unemployment  
h ☐ Domestic violence  
i ☐ Physical or sexual abuse by other family member  
j ☐ Family mental health problem  
k ☐ Other emotional conflict at home  
l ☐ Wants to live in household of other parent figure  
m ☐ Physical or sexual abuse by nonfamily member  
n ☐ No parental figure  
o ☐ None of the above

29. Youth Situation

- a ☐ Depressed  
b ☐ Possibly suicidal  
c ☐ Bad grades  
d ☐ School attendance/truancy  
e ☐ Cannot get along with teachers  
f ☐ Learning disability  
g ☐ VD  
h ☐ Pregnant or suspects pregnancy  
i ☐ Alcohol abuse  
j ☐ Drug abuse  
k ☐ Other health problem/handicap  
l ☐ Poor self image  
m ☐ In trouble with justice system  
n ☐ Prostitution  
o ☐ Homosexual/sexual identity issue  
p ☐ Custody change  
q ☐ None of the above

30. Missing persons status. (check all that apply)

- a ☐ An official missing persons report was filed on the youth's behalf.  
b ☐ The youth has been abducted by a parent.  
c ☐ The youth has been abducted by a stranger.  
d ☐ None of the above.

Center Number Youth Number 

31. Staff impression of the level of severity of the youth's problem(s). (check one)

- a ☐ Not severe  
b ☐ Not very severe

- c ☐ Moderately severe  
d ☐ Extremely severe

**Part 2. Service Summary Section**

32. Was the youth provided temporary shelter?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

33. If yes, enter the date the youth left temporary shelter. If no, enter the date the youth began aftercare services.

Month   Day   Year  

34. Indicate services received from the project or by referral. (check all that apply)

- a ☐ Individual counseling  
b ☐ Parent counseling  
c ☐ Family counseling  
d ☐ Transportation  
e ☐ Alternative living  
f ☐ Employment  
g ☐ Family planning  
h ☐ Group Counseling

- i ☐ Job Training  
j ☐ Education  
k ☐ Recreation  
l ☐ Medical  
m ☐ Psychological/Psychiatric  
n ☐ Drug/alcohol treatment  
o ☐ Other (e.g., Legal, Financial)

35. Indicate parent figure(s) that participated in services. (check all that apply)

- a ☐ Mother figure b ☐ Father figure c ☐ None

36. Program services status: (check one)

- a ☐ The youth dropped out of the program against staff advice.  
b ☐ The youth left the program with staff concurrence.  
c ☐ The youth is receiving aftercare services.

37. Was the primary crisis associated with the presenting problem (Q27) resolved? ☐ Yes ☐ No

38. What aftercare services were planned for the youth and/or parent(s)/guardian by the project or as a direct result of project referral? (check all that apply)

- a ☐ Individual counseling  
b ☐ Parent counseling  
c ☐ Family counseling  
d ☐ Transportation  
e ☐ Alternative living  
f ☐ Employment  
g ☐ Family planning  
h ☐ Group counseling

- i ☐ Job Training  
j ☐ Education  
k ☐ Recreation  
l ☐ Medical  
m ☐ Psychological/Psychiatric  
n ☐ Drug/alcohol treatment  
o ☐ Other (e.g., Legal, Financial)  
p ☐ None planned

39. Where will the youth be living? (check one for non-residential and residential youth)

- a ☐ Home  
b ☐ Household of other parent figure  
c ☐ Relative's home  
d ☐ Friend's home  
e ☐ Foster home  
f ☐ Group home  
g ☐ Correctional institution

- h ☐ Independent living  
i ☐ On the run/street  
j ☐ Runaway/crisis house  
k ☐ Job Corps  
l ☐ Military  
m ☐ Boarding school/mental hospital/other institution  
n ☐ Do not know

40. In the opinion of the staff, was this a positive placement? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ NA

# **APPENDIX B:**

## **Codebook Information**

## APPENDIX B: Codebook Information

PROJECT	PROJECT ID (Q.1) Alphanumeric  STxxxxA
YOUTH	YOUTH NUMBER (Q.2) Alphanumeric
DATEIN	INTAKE DATE (Q.3) Numeric

NOTE: In the SAS version of the dataset, a date value is stored internally as the number of days between January 1, 1960 and that date. It is recommended that you use the "MMDDYY8." format when writing dates in SAS, so that they will be written in the form MM/DD/YY (e.g. 8/12/87). In the SPSS version of this file, dates are stored internally as a floating-point number representing the number of seconds from midnight, October 14, 1582. They are stored with the MM/DD/YY write format, however, and will automatically be written in that format with no action necessary on the part of the user.

SEX	SEX (Q.4) Numeric
	Value    Label
	1        MALE
	2        FEMALE

AGE	AGE AT INTAKE (Q.5) Numeric
	Value    Label
	1        11 OR YOUNGER
	2        12
	3        13
	4        14
	5        15
	6        16
	7        17
	8        18 OR OLDER

RACE	RACE/ETHNIC ORIGIN (Q.6) Numeric
	Value    Label
	1        AMERICAN/INDIAN/ALASKAN NATIVE
	2        ASIAN OR PACIFIC ISLANDER
	3        BLACK/NEGRO--NOT HISPANIC
	4        WHITE--NOT HISPANIC
	5        HISPANIC

COMPLT      LAST GRADE COMPLETED (Q.7)  
Numeric

Value	Label
1	GRADE 5 OR LESS
2	GRADE 6
3	GRADE 7
4	GRADE 8
5	GRADE 9
6	GRADE 10
7	GRADE 11
8	GRADE 12 OR MORE

SCSTAT      CURRENT SCHOOL STATUS (Q.8)  
Numeric

Value	Label
1	ATTENDING SCHOOL
2	SUSPENDED
3	EXPELLED
4	DROPPED OUT
5	GRADUATED FROM HIGH SCHOOL
6	ATTENDING ALT SCHOOL/HOME BOUND

LIVING      LIVING SITUATION FOR PAST YR (Q.9)  
Numeric

Value	Label
1	HOME WITH PARENTS
2	RELATIVES HOME
3	FRIENDS HOME
4	FOSTER HOME
5	GROUP HOME
6	CORRECTIONAL INSTITUTION
7	INDEPENDENT LIVING
8	ON THE RUN/STREET
9	RUNAWAY/CRISIS HOUSE
10	OTHER INSTITUTIONS
11	OTHER ADULT

DADFIG      FATHER FIGURE (Q.10)  
Numeric

Value	Label
1	NATURAL FATHER
2	ADOPTED FATHER
3	STEPFATHER
4	FOSTER FATHER
5	OTHER RELATIVE
6	OTHER ADULT MALE
7	NONE

MOMFIG	MOTHER FIGURE (Q.11)
	Numeric
	Value    Label
	1        NATURAL MOTHER
	2        ADOPTED MOTHER
	3        STEPMOTHER
	4        FOSTER MOTHER
	5        OTHER RELATIVE
	6        OTHER ADULT FEMALE
	7        NONE
MALLIV	UNRELATED ADULT MALE IN HH (Q.12)
	Numeric
	Value    Label
	0        NONE
FEMPLIV	UNRELATED ADULT FEMALE IN HH (Q.13)
	Numeric
	Value    Label
	0        NONE
CHLDRN	HOW MANY SIBLINGS (Q.14)
	Numeric
	Value    Label
	1        0
	2        1
	3        2
	4        3
	5        4
	6        5
	7        6 OR MORE
DADFUL	FATHER FIGURE EMPLOYED FULL TIME (Q.15.a)
	Numeric
	Value    Label
	0        NO
	1        YES
DADPRT	FATHER FIGURE EMPLOYED PART TIME (Q.15.b)
	Numeric
	Value    Label
	0        NO
	1        YES
DADSEZ	FATHER FIGURE EMPLOYED SEASONALLY (Q.15.c)
	Numeric
	Value    Label
	0        NO
	1        YES

DADUNP	FATHER FIGURE UNEMPLOYED (Q.15.d)
	Numeric
	Value    Label
	0        NO
	1        YES
DADRTD	FATHER FIGURE RETIRED (Q.15.e)
	Numeric
	Value    Label
	0        NO
	1        YES
DADDIS	FATHER FIGURE FULLY DISABLED (Q.15.f)
	Numeric
	Value    Label
	0        NO
	1        YES
DADPUB	FATHER FIGURE ON PUBLIC ASSISTANCE (Q.15.g)
	Numeric
	Value    Label
	0        NO
	1        YES
DADNON	NO FATHER FIGURE (Q.15.h)
	Numeric
	Value    Label
	0        NO
	1        YES
MOMFUL	MOTHER FIGURE EMPLOYED FULL TIME (Q.16.a)
	Numeric
	Value    Label
	0        NO
	1        YES
MOMPRT	MOTHER FIGURE EMPLOYED PART TIME (Q.16.b)
	Numeric
	Value    Label
	0        NO
	1        YES
MOMSEZ	MOTHER FIGURE EMPLOYED SEASONALLY (Q.16.c)
	Numeric
	Value    Label
	0        NO
	1        YES

MOMUNP	MOTHER FIGURE UNEMPLOYED (Q.16.d)
	Numeric
	Value    Label
	0        NO
	1        YES
MOMRTD	MOTHER FIGURE RETIRED (Q.16.e)
	Numeric
	Value    Label
	0        NO
	1        YES
MOMDIS	MOTHER FIGURE FULLY DISABLED (Q.16.f)
	Numeric
	Value    Label
	0        NO
	1        YES
MOMPUB	MOTHER FIGURE ON PUBLIC ASSISTANCE (Q.16.g)
	Numeric
	Value    Label
	0        NO
	1        YES
MOMNON	NO MOTHER FIGURE (Q.16.h)
	Numeric
	Value    Label
	0        NO
	1        YES
TYPE	REASON CAME TO PROJECT (Q.17)
	Numeric
	Value    Label
	1        RUNAWAY
	2        HOMELESS
	3        CONTEMPLATING RUNNING AWAY
	4        CAME FOR NON-RUNAWAY REASON
THRPUS	IS YOUTH THROWAWAY/PUSHOUT (Q.18)
	Numeric
	Value    Label
	0        NO
	1        YES

DURANT            HOW MANY DAYS AWAY FROM RESIDENCE (Q.19)  
Numeric

Value	Label
1	1 DAY
2	2-5 DAYS
3	6-10 DAYS
4	11-20 DAYS
5	21-50 DAYS
6	OVER 50 DAYS
7	NOT AWAY FROM LEGAL RESIDENCE

DISTNC            DISTANCE RAN (Q.20)  
Numeric

Value	Label
1	LESS THAN ONE MILE
2	1 TO 10 MILES
3	11 TO 50 MILES
4	MORE THAN 50 MILES

RESLOC            LOCATION OF RESIDENCE (Q.21)  
Numeric

Value	Label
1	IN THE SAME COMMUNITY OR COUNTY
2	ELSEWHERE IN THE SAME STATE
3	IN A DIFFERENT STATE

PREVEP            NUMBER OF RUNAWAY EPISODES (Q.22)  
Numeric

Value	Label
1	NONE
2	1
3	2
4	3
5	4
6	5 TO 10
7	MORE THAN 10

RETSHL            # OF TIMES RETURNED TO SHELTER (Q.23)  
Numeric

Value	Label
1	NONE
2	1
3	2
4	3
5	4
6	5 TO 10
7	MORE THAN 10

OTSHSL # OF TIMES IN OTHER SHELTERS (Q.24)  
Numeric

Value	Label
1	NONE
2	1
3	2
4	3
5	4
6	5 OR MORE

REFERL HOW WAS YOUTH REFERRED (Q.25)  
Numeric

Value	Label
1	SELF REFERRAL
2	PARENT OR LEGAL GUARDIAN
3	JUVENILE JUSTICE SYSTEM
4	NATIONAL SWITCHBOARD
5	OTHER REGIONAL OR HOTLINES
6	SCHOOLS
7	OTHER RUNAWAY SHELTERS
8	LAW ENFORCEMENT
9	CHILD WELFARE/CHILD PROTECTIVE
10	OTHER PUBLIC AGENCY
11	OTHER PRIVATE AGENCY
12	OTHER ADULT OR RELATIVE
13	MEDIA

PAYING PUBLIC OR PRIVATE AGENCY PAYING (Q.26)  
Numeric

Value	Label
0	NO
1	YES

PRMPRB PRIMARY PROBLEM (Q.27)  
Numeric

Value	Label
1	RELAT. WITH PARENT OR OTHER ADULT
2	RELAT. WITH CHILDREN OR YOUTH
3	SCHOOL
4	JUVENILE JUSTICE SYSTEM
5	LAW ENFORCEMENT
6	FAMILY CRISIS
7	OTHER PERSONAL PROBLEMS

PRNSEX SEXUAL ABUSE BY PARENT FIGURE (Q.28.a)  
Numeric

Value	Label
0	NO
1	YES

PRNABU	PHYSICAL ABUSE BY PARENT FIGURE (Q.28.b)
	Numeric
	Value    Label
	0        NO
	1        YES
PRNNGT	NEGLECT BY PARENT FIGURE (Q.28.c)
	Numeric
	Value    Label
	0        NO
	1        YES
PRNSTR	PARENT FIGURE TOO STRICT (Q.28.d)
	Numeric
	Value    Label
	0        NO
	1        YES
PRNDRG	PARENT FIGURE DRUG/ALCOHOL PROBLEM (Q.28.e)
	Numeric
	Value    Label
	0        NO
	1        YES
PRNHMO	HOMOSEXUAL PARENT (Q.28.f)
	Numeric
	Value    Label
	0        NO
	1        YES
PRNEMP	PARENTAL UNEMPLOYMENT (Q.28.g)
	Numeric
	Value    Label
	0        NO
	1        YES
PRNVIL	DOMESTIC VIOLENCE (Q.28.h)
	Numeric
	Value    Label
	0        NO
	1        YES
PRNOFM	PHY/SEX ABUSE BY OTHER FAM MEMBER (Q.28.i)
	Numeric
	Value    Label
	0        NO
	1        YES

PRNMNT	FAMILY MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEM (Q.28.j)
	Numeric
	Value    Label
	0        NO
	1        YES
PRNEMO	OTHER EMOTIONAL CONFLICT AT HOME (Q.28.k)
	Numeric
	Value    Label
	0        NO
	1        YES
PRNLIV	WANTS TO LIVE W/ OTHER PARENT FIGURE (Q.28.l)
	Numeric
	Value    Label
	0        NO
	1        YES
PRNNSX	PHY/SEX ABUSE BY NONFAMILY MEMBER (Q.28.m)
	Numeric
	Value    Label
	0        NO
	1        YES
PRNNON	NO PARENTAL FIGURE (Q.28.n)
	Numeric
	Value    Label
	0        NO
	1        YES
NONABV	NONE OF THE ABOVE (Q.28.o)
	Numeric
	Value    Label
	0        NO
	1        YES
YTHDPR	DEPRESSED (Q.29.a)
	Numeric
	Value    Label
	0        NO
	1        YES
YTHSUI	POSSIBLY SUICIDAL (Q.29.b)
	Numeric
	Value    Label
	0        NO
	1        YES

YTHGRD	BAD GRADES (Q.29.c)
	Numeric
	Value    Label
	0        NO
	1        YES
YTHTRU	SCHOOL ATTENDANCE/TRUANCY (Q.29.d)
	Numeric
	Value    Label
	0        NO
	1        YES
YHTTCH	CAN'T GET ALONG WITH TEACHERS (Q.29.e)
	Numeric
	Value    Label
	0        NO
	1        YES
YTHLRN	LEARNING DISABILITY (Q.29.f)
	Numeric
	Value    Label
	0        NO
	1        YES
YTHVD	VD (Q.29.g)
	Numeric
	Value    Label
	0        NO
	1        YES
YTHPRG	PREGNANT OR SUSPECTED PREGNANCY (Q.29.h)
	Numeric
	Value    Label
	0        NO
	1        YES
YTHALC	ALCOHOL ABUSE (Q.29.i)
	Numeric
	Value    Label
	0        NO
	1        YES
YTHDRG	DRUG ABUSE (Q.29.j)
	Numeric
	Value    Label
	0        NO
	1        YES

YTHHLT	OTHER HEALTH PROBLEMS/HANDICAPPED (Q.29.k)
	Numeric
	Value    Label
	0        NO
	1        YES
YTHSLF	POOR SELF IMAGE (Q.29.l)
	Numeric
	Value    Label
	0        NO
	1        YES
YTHJD	IN TROUBLE W/ JUSTICE SYSTEM (Q.29.m)
	Numeric
	Value    Label
	0        NO
	1        YES
YTHPRS	PROSTITUTION (Q.29.n)
	Numeric
	Value    Label
	0        NO
	1        YES
YTHHMO	SEXUAL IDENTITY ISSUE (Q.29.o)
	Numeric
	Value    Label
	0        NO
	1        YES
YTHCUS	CUSTODY CHANGE (Q.29.p)
	Numeric
	Value    Label
	0        NO
	1        YES
YTHNON	NONE OF THE ABOVE (Q.29.q)
	Numeric
	Value    Label
	0        NO
	1        YES
MISRPT	MISSING PERSONS REPORT FILE (Q.30.a)
	Numeric
	Value    Label
	0        NO
	1        YES

MISPRN	WAS YOUTH EVER ABDUCTED BY PARENT (Q.30.b)
	Numeric
	Value    Label
	0        NO
	1        YES
MISSTR	WAS YOUTH EVER ABDUCTED BY STRANGER (Q.30.c)
	Numeric
	Value    Label
	0        NO
	1        YES
MISNON	NONE OF THE ABOVE (Q.30.d)
	Numeric
	Value    Label
	0        NO
	1        YES
PRBSVR	STAFF IMPRESSION OF SEVERITY (Q.31)
	Numeric
	Value    Label
	1        NOT SEVERE
	2        NOT VERY SEVERE
	3        MODERATELY SEVERE
	4        EXTREMELY SEVERE
SHLTER	TEMPORARY SHELTER PROVIDED (Q.32)
	Numeric
	Value    Label
	0        NO
	1        YES
LEFSHL	DATE LEFT SHELTER (Q.33)
	Numeric

NOTE: In the SAS version of the dataset, a date value is stored internally as the number of days between January 1, 1960 and that date. It is recommended that you use the "MMDDYY8." format when writing dates in SAS, so that they will be written in the form MM/DD/YY (e.g. 8/12/87). In the SPSS version of this file, dates are stored internally as a floating-point number representing the number of seconds from midnight, October 14, 1582. They are stored with the MM/DD/YY write format, however, and will automatically be written in that format with no action necessary on the part of the user.

COUNSL	INDIVIDUAL COUNSELING (Q.34.a)
	Numeric
	Value    Label
	0        NO
	1        YES

PRCOUN	PARENT COUNSELING (Q.34.b)
	Numeric
	Value Label
	0 NO
	1 YES
FMCOUN	FAMILY COUNSELING (Q.34.c)
	Numeric
	Value Label
	0 NO
	1 YES
TRANSN	TRANSPORTATION (Q.34.d)
	Numeric
	Value Label
	0 NO
	1 YES
LIVARR	ALTERNATE LIVING ARRANGEMENTS (Q.34.e)
	Numeric
	Value Label
	0 NO
	1 YES
EMPLOY	EMPLOYMENT (Q.34.f)
	Numeric
	Value Label
	0 NO
	1 YES
FAMPLN	FAMILY PLANNING (Q.34.g)
	Numeric
	Value Label
	0 NO
	1 YES
GRCOUN	GROUP COUNSELING(Q.34.h)
	Numeric
	Value Label
	0 NO
	1 YES
JOBTRN	JOB TRAINING (Q.34.i)
	Numeric
	Value Label
	0 NO
	1 YES

EDUCAT	EDUCATION (Q.34.j) Numeric
	Value    Label
	0        NO
	1        YES
RECRTN	RECREATION (Q.34.k) Numeric
	Value    Label
	0        NO
	1        YES
MEDSVS	MEDICAL (Q.34.l) Numeric
	Value    Label
	0        NO
	1        YES
PSYCHS	PSYCHOLOGICAL/PSYCHIATRIC (Q.34.m) Numeric
	Value    Label
	0        NO
	1        YES
DRGALC	DRUG/ALCOHOL TREATMENT (Q.34.n) Numeric
	Value    Label
	0        NO
	1        YES
OTHTRT	OTHER TREATMENT (Q.34.o) Numeric
	Value    Label
	0        NO
	1        YES
MOMPTC	MOTHER FIGURE (Q.35.a) Numeric
	Value    Label
	0        NO
	1        YES
DADPTC	FATHER FIGURE (Q.35.b) Numeric
	Value    Label
	0        NO
	1        YES

NONPTC	NONE (Q.35.c) Numeric
	Value    Label
	0        NO
	1        YES
TEMSVS	PROGRAM SVC TERMINATED BECAUSE (Q.36) Numeric
	Value    Label
	1        YOUTH LEFT SHELTER WITHOUT PERMISSION
	2        YOUTH LEFT NON-RESIDENT WITHOUT PERMSN
	3        YOUTH LEFT SHELTER WITH PERMISSION
	4        YOUTH LEFT NON-RESIDENT WITH PERMSN
PRMSLV	PRIMARY PRESENTING PROBLEM RESOLVED (Q.37) Numeric
	Value    Label
	0        NO
	1        YES
AFTCON	INDIVIDUAL COUNSELING (Q.38.a) Numeric
	Value    Label
	0        NO
	1        YES
AFTPRN	PARENT COUNSELING (Q.38.b) Numeric
	Value    Label
	0        NO
	1        YES
AFTFAM	FAMILY COUNSELING (Q.38.c) Numeric
	Value    Label
	0        NO
	1        YES
AFTTRAN	TRANSPORTATION (Q.38.d) Numeric
	Value    Label
	0        NO
	1        YES
AFTLIV	ALTERNATE LIVING ARRANGEMENTS (Q.38.e) Numeric
	Value    Label
	0        NO
	1        YES

AFTEMP	EMPLOYMENT (Q.38.f)
	Numeric
	Value    Label
	0        NO
	1        YES
AFTPLN	FAMILY PLANNING (Q.38.g)
	Numeric
	Value    Label
	0        NO
	1        YES
AFTGRP	GROUP COUNSELING (Q.38.i)
	Numeric
	Value    Label
	0        NO
	1        YES
AFTTRN	JOB TRAINING (Q.38.j)
	Numeric
	Value    Label
	0        NO
	1        YES
AFTEDU	EDUCATION (Q.38.k)
	Numeric
	Value    Label
	0        NO
	1        YES
AFTREC	RECREATION (Q.38.l)
	Numeric
	Value    Label
	0        NO
	1        YES
AFTMED	MED/PSYCHOLOGICAL/PSYCHIATRIC (Q.38.m)
	Numeric
	Value    Label
	0        NO
	1        YES
AFTPSY	PSYCHOLOGICAL/PSYCHIATRIC (Q.38.n)
	Numeric
	Value    Label
	0        NO
	1        YES

AFTDRA DRUG/ALCOHOL TREATMENT (Q.38.o)  
Numeric

Value	Label
0	NO
1	YES

AFTOTH OTHER (E.G. LEGAL/FINANCIAL) (Q.38.p)  
Numeric

Value	Label
0	NO
1	YES

AFTNON NONE PLANNED (Q.38.q)  
Numeric

Value	Label
0	NO
1	YES

PLNLIV WHERE WILL THE YOUTH LIVE (Q.39)  
Numeric

Value	Label
1	HOME WITH PARENTS
2	HOUSEHOLD OF OTHER PARENT
3	RELATIVES HOME
4	FRIENDS HOME
5	FOSTER HOME
6	GROUP HOME
7	CORRECTIONAL INSTITUTION
8	INDEPENDENT LIVING
9	ON THE RUN/STREET
10	RUNAWAY/CRISIS HOUSE
11	MILITARY
12	JOB CORPS
13	BOARDING SCH/MENT HSPT/OTH INSTIT
14	NONE PLANNED

POSPLC WAS THIS A POSITIVE PLACEMENT? (Q.40)  
Numeric

Value	Label
0	NO
1	YES
missing	NOT APPLICABLE

## **APPENDIX C:**

**Article Published from the Dataset**

## MALTREATMENT AMONG RUNAWAY AND HOMELESS YOUTH

JANE LEVINE POWERS, JOHN ECKENRODE, AND BARBARA JAKLITSCH

Cornell University

**Abstract**—A sample of 223 adolescents who sought services from runaway and homeless youth programs in New York State during 1986-1987 was identified as having a history of maltreatment. A demographic profile is presented and the nature of their maltreatment described. The majority of these youth were female and between 15-16 years of age. Less than 25% came from intact families and one-third were born to single mothers. Of the sample, 60% had allegedly experienced physical abuse, 42% emotional abuse, 48% neglect, and 21% sexual abuse. Over one-third were "pushed out" of their homes by their families. Biological mothers were the most frequently cited perpetrators of maltreatment (63%), followed by biological fathers (45%). The sample of maltreated runaways is compared to both statewide and national samples of runaway and homeless youth with regard to their demographic characteristics and the problems they present to staff at intake (e.g., depression, substance abuse, etc.). Youth in the maltreated sample were more likely to be female and were more likely to have engaged in suicidal behavior. Otherwise, the maltreated runaways were not readily distinguished from the runaway and homeless youth population at large.

**Key Words**—Runaways, Homeless youth, Child abuse and neglect, Adolescence

### INTRODUCTION

THE ABUSE AND NEGLECT OF ADOLESCENTS is frequently not recognized, not reported, and not treated. Maltreatment among this population can be difficult to identify because it is masked by other problems, such as delinquency, self-destructive behaviors, school dysfunction, and running away from home (Berdie & Wexler, 1980; Fisher, Berdie, Cook, & Day 1980). Although maltreated youth engage in "acting out" behaviors that bring them to the attention of the courts, police, school authorities, and emergency rooms, the maltreatment frequently remains hidden, and appropriate services are rarely provided. Entering the services system as a status offender or delinquent, as opposed to an abused youth, not only stigmatizes the young person (often escalating the antisocial behaviors which are already manifest), but also determines how a youth is treated and what services she/he receives (Farber & Joseph, 1985; Garbarino, Schellenback & Sebes, 1986). Proper identification and treatment of adolescents who have been abused and neglected may prevent such revictimization.

Adolescents often try to escape maltreatment by running away from home. Research has demonstrated an alarming incidence of abuse and neglect among today's runaway and homeless youth population (Garbarino et al., 1986; Janus, McCormack, Burgess, & Hartman, 1987;

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Shaffer & Caton, 1984; Young, Godfrey, Mathews, & Adams, 1983). Several studies have shown that a much higher rate of childhood sexual abuse has been found among runaways than among the general population (Adams-Tucker, 1982; Burgess, Janus, McCormack, & Wood, 1986). Farber and his colleagues (1984) found that 75% of the 199 runaway youth in their sample had been subjected to severe maltreatment in the year prior to running. They concluded that violence in the home significantly contributed to the youths' runaway behavior. A recent survey conducted by the National Network of Runaway and Youth Services (1988) reported that 61% of all runaways in the nation have been maltreated.

Maltreated young people may remove themselves from harm at home by running away, but they also expose themselves to other risks. Given the lack of legitimate economic roles for adolescents, increasing numbers of street youth are pushed into prostitution, the drug trade, and other forms of criminal activity in order to survive (Garbarino et al., 1986; Silbert & Pines, 1981). Being homeless or on the streets in contemporary society can have lethal risks for young people: AIDS, suicide, murder, and drug overdose.

Chronic runners often find themselves involved in the juvenile and criminal justice systems. These systems are typically overwhelmed and risk exposing victimized youth to those involved in more serious criminal behavior. Although federal and state legislation have attempted to address this issue by instituting policies that separate minors from adult criminals, many youth continue to be inappropriately served. If maltreatment can be identified and appropriate intervention services can be provided quickly, these troubled young people may receive more effective treatment and consequently have a better chance for healthier growth through adolescence and transition to adulthood.

In this context, it becomes essential for researchers as well as child welfare, juvenile justice, educational, medical and other youth and family service professionals to acquire a better understanding of maltreatment among runaway and homeless youth. The goals of this study were (1) to describe the nature of maltreatment among adolescents served by runaway and homeless youth programs; (2) to provide a profile of their family and demographic characteristics; and (3) to examine whether maltreated runaway and homeless youth differ from the runaway and homeless youth population at large vis-a-vis their family and demographic characteristics and the problems they present to staff at program intake.

## METHOD

### *Design and Sample*

The data for this research were derived from the STAR project (Statewide Teamwork for Abused Runaways), a federal research and demonstration project designed to strengthen services to runaway and homeless youth and their families. The sample included 223 youth who sought services from 9 runaway and homeless youth (R&HY) programs in New York State during 1986-1987. These subjects were selected with the assistance of R&HY program staff who identified runaway and homeless youth with a history of either physical abuse, sexual abuse, or neglect. Information about the maltreatment came primarily from the youth's self-disclosure, although in some cases staff were informed by other sources, such as schools or child welfare agencies.

Although these data were collected at R&HY programs, not all the youth had run away or were homeless. R&HY programs provide a variety of youth services, and many young people seek help from programs for non-runaway reasons. In the STAR sample, 49% of the youth were classified as runaways, 17% homeless, 13% were contemplating running, and 21% were in crisis but not on the run.

### *Measures and Procedures*

Trained R&HY staff used two instruments to collect data. First, a semistructured questionnaire, the STAR Maltreatment Questionnaire, was developed by the STAR project to gather a detailed description of the nature of maltreatment (e.g., types of abuse and neglect, patterns, age of onset, alleged perpetrators, etc.) experienced by the subject population and information about the youth's history with child protective services. Staff were instructed to follow the New York State guidelines for defining maltreatment. They provided written descriptions of the maltreatment which enabled their determinations to be validated.

The second instrument, the Youth Information Form (YIF), is routinely used by the federal government to gather information and monitor the R&HY programs which it funds. In addition to demographic data, the YIF records information about the runaway episode and the services provided by the program. The YIF also includes presenting problems, those family and youth situational factors which staff believe contribute to the youth's current problems, and reasons for seeking help. Using the YIF enabled the STAR sample of maltreated runaway and homeless youth to be compared with the runaway and homeless youth population at-large. From the Administration for Children, Youth, and Families, we gained access to two YIF data sets that were gathered during the same time period as our study. (Although at one point, all federally funded R&HY programs were required to submit Youth Information Forms, this is no longer the case. Submission is voluntary; however, the majority of the programs continue to complete the forms.) In several of the analyses below, we compared the STAR sample ( $N = 223$ ) with YIF data drawn from New York State ( $N = 2,026$ ) and national YIF data representing youth served by all federally funded R&HY programs throughout the United States ( $N = 39,817$ ). These data provide an opportunity to examine whether a sample of runaway and homeless youth who have been identified as being maltreated differ from the runaway and homeless youth population at both the state and federal levels.

The two instruments used in this research were completed by the same staff person, but at different times: the YIF was normally completed at intake, while the STAR Maltreatment Questionnaire was completed at the youth's discharge from the program. Length of stay at a program varied from 24 hours to several months. Generally, staff did not directly interview the young people with these instruments, but were able to complete the forms using the knowledge gained during their normal course of service provision and interaction. In a few cases, however, staff had to elicit the information directly from the young people. All the information collected in this study was strictly confidential; the names of the clients were never shared with the investigators.

## RESULTS

### *Characteristics of the Youth*

Nearly three-fourths of the youth in our sample were between 15-17 years of age (the mean age was 15.6) when they sought services from the R&HY program. This finding is consistent with several previous studies of this population (Farber et al., 1984; Shaffer & Caton, 1984; U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 1982) and with both statewide and national YIF data for 1987.

Figure 1 presents the maltreated STAR data in contrast to statewide and national YIF data and shows that there was a higher percentage of girls across all three data sets. The gender difference was greatest for the maltreatment sample, where 61% of the sample was female. Given that 1980 NYS census data showed that boys slightly outnumbered girls in the 12-18 age group, the gender difference observed in the maltreated sample was not a reflection of

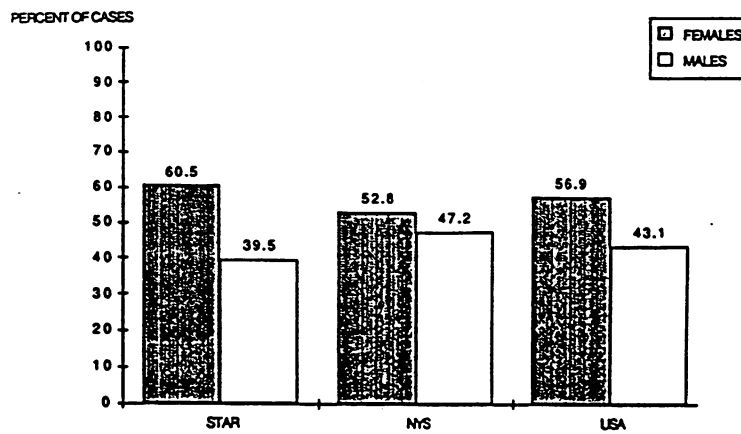


Figure 1. Comparison of STAR, NYS, and USA samples: Gender distribution.

differences in the overall population. This finding is consistent with previous research on adolescent maltreatment in which official reports indicate that adolescent girls are the predominant victims (Powers and Eckenrode, 1988).

We examined the relationship between age and gender and found that, except at age 15, males and females followed a very similar pattern. The majority of girls sought services between the ages 15-17, while boys primarily sought services between the ages 16-17. This observed trend was also visible in the statewide and national YIF data which reflected a higher percentage of younger girls seeking services than younger boys.

In contrast to the national YIF sample, the maltreated STAR sample had a higher percentage of youth who were classified as runaways or homeless: 66% versus 48%. The national sample also had over twice as many youth seeking services for non-runaway reasons (that is, youth not classified as runaways or homeless) than the maltreated sample (44.3% versus 21%). Across all three data sets, girls were more likely to be identified as runaways while boys were more likely to be identified as homeless.

Of the youth who were classified as either runaway or homeless in the maltreated STAR sample, 35% had no prior runaway episodes; of the youth who were contemplating running or in crisis, 73% had no prior history of running away. Approximately 25% of the overall sample had run at least three times previously. Other studies have shown that chronic runaways suffer from greater psychological and long-term adjustment problems (Olson, Liebow, Mannino, & Shore, 1980) and are more likely to become involved with the criminal justice system as offenders (Burgess et al., 1986; Garbarino et al., 1986), making intervention at the initial runaway episode particularly critical.

### *The Families*

Over three-fourths of the STAR sample had run away from the home of their parents or legal guardians. The majority (67%) of the young people lived with their biological mothers, and 41% lived with their biological fathers; 25% had no identified father figure, while less than 10% had no identified mother figure. These findings were consistent with both the statewide and national YIF data, suggesting that maltreated youth may not be readily distinguished from the nonmaltreated youth served by R&HY programs with regard to family structure.

Figure 2 illustrates the actual family structure of the youths' primary household, contrasting the STAR and national YIF data. In order to compare the sample of runaways with a nonclini-

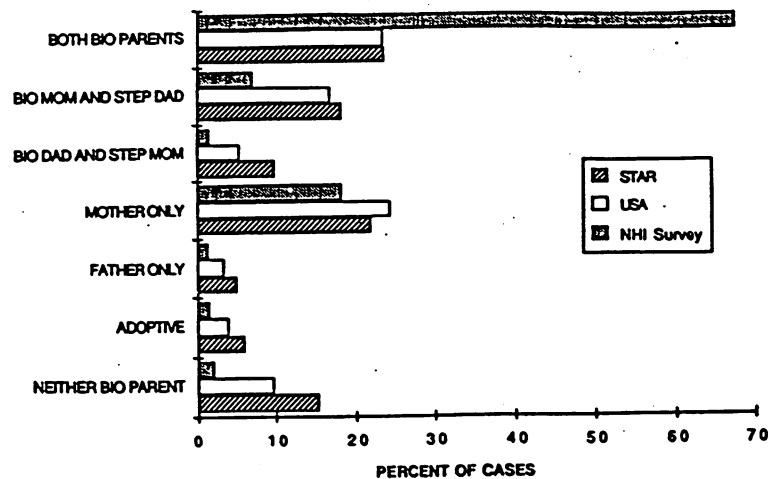


Figure 2. Comparison of STAR, USA, and National Health Interview Survey: Family structure.

cal or "normal" population, we have also included in the figure data from the 1981 Child Health Supplement to the National Health Interview Survey (Bianchi & Seltzer, 1986), a representative national sample of over 15,000 American children. Most striking was the fact that less than 25% of the runaway and homeless youth in the maltreated STAR and national YIF samples came from "intact families" (that is lived with both biological parents), while the National Health Interview Survey reports that 68% of children nationwide lived with both biological parents. The maltreated STAR data also indicated that one-third of the sample were born into single parent households. This finding is consistent with other studies showing that a high percentage of runaways come from divorced or broken families (Burgess et al., 1986; Kufeldt & Nimmo, 1987; Shaffer & Caton, 1984). Figure 2 also demonstrates that a higher percentage of the maltreated STAR sample came from reconstituted families (that is lived with a biological parent and a step-parent) than reflected in either the national YIF or NHI data. More runaway and homeless youth live without either biological parent (15.4%) than children nationwide (2.3%).

#### *Presenting Problems: Youth Situation*

Table 1 lists the youth-related problems which young people present to R&HY program staff at intake. Across all three data sets depression and poor self-image are the most frequently identified problems. School problems (particularly truancy, but including bad grades) also have a relatively high frequency (approximately 33%). Additionally, trouble with the justice system, and alcohol and drug abuse are fairly common problems.

The findings also demonstrate an incidence of depression (58.4%) in the maltreated STAR sample which is 20% higher than the national sample (37.7%) and 8% higher than the statewide sample (50.4%). Chi-square analyses revealed these differences to be statistically significant for the national, but not the statewide samples ( $\chi^2 = 39.4$ ,  $df = 1$ ,  $p < .005$ ;  $\chi^2 = 4.7$ ,  $df = 1$ , NS, respectively). The second most frequently identified youth problem was poor self-image, appearing in 54.2% of the maltreated sample, which is 10% higher than the national sample (44.4%), but nearly equivalent to the statewide sample (53.8%). Once again, these differences were significant for the national ( $\chi^2 = 8.4$ ,  $df = 1$ ,  $p < .005$ ), but not the statewide samples. For these two presenting problems, we cannot conclude that maltreated youth served by R&HY programs differ from the total runaway and homeless youth population since the differences we observed may reflect regional effects.

Table 1. Frequency of Presenting Youth Problems (%)

Youth Problem	USA	NYS	STAR
Depressed	37.7	50.4	58.4
Possibly suicidal	10.5	10.9	20.1
Bad grades	24.5	18.6	23.4
Truancy	29.4	31.4	31.8
Can't get along w/teachers	8.6	5.6	3.7
Learning disability	5.8	6.1	8.4
VD	.5	.2	0.0
Preg or suspects pregnancy	3.6	5.1	7.5
Alcohol abuse	12.5	11.9	8.9
Drug abuse	12.7	14.9	11.6
Other health prob/handicap	3.4	4.0	4.2
Poor self image	44.4	53.8	54.2
In trouble w/justice system	15.7	14.8	11.2
Prostitution	1.0	1.8	1.9
Sexual identity issue	1.7	2.5	1.9
Custody change	5.3	3.1	4.2

Suicidal behavior appeared to be the only presenting problem which truly distinguished the maltreated STAR sample from the national and statewide samples: 20.1% of the maltreated STAR sample were identified by staff as being possibly suicidal, as opposed to 10.5% of the national and 10.9% of the statewide samples. Both these observed differences were statistically significant ( $\chi^2 = 21$ ,  $df = 1$ ,  $p < .005$ ;  $\chi^2 = 15.9$ ,  $df = 1$ ,  $p < .005$ , respectively). The link between suicidal behavior and maltreatment is consistent with previous research with run-aways (Janus et al., 1987; McCormack, Janus, & Burgess, 1986; Shaffer & Caton, 1984). The remaining presenting youth problems do not appear to distinguish the maltreated STAR sample from either the national or statewide data sets.

#### *Presenting Problems: Family Situation*

For the purpose of this discussion, we focus on three specific family-related problems which staff identified on the YIF as contributing to the youth situation at the time of intake into the program: parental sexual abuse, parental physical abuse, and parental neglect. Several other family-related problems (e.g., parent's unemployment, emotional conflicts, custody disputes, etc.) were identified by staff but were not directly relevant to the current discussion.

Table 2 demonstrates that New York State's R&HY programs are quite similar to the national programs with regard to the incidence of the three types of maltreatment: About 5% of the youth in both samples had been identified as sexually abused, 18% as physically abused, and approximately 20% as neglected. As expected, these numbers differed significantly from the STAR sample which indicated a much higher incidence of maltreatment across all three categories (12.6%, 42.1%, and 42.5%, respectively).

Chi-square analyses performed on the STAR YIF data revealed significant gender differ-

Table 2. Frequency of Maltreatment Documented on the Youth Information Form (%)

Type of Problem	USA	NYS	STAR
Parent sexual abuse	5.6	4.9	12.6
Parent physical abuse	18.0	18.9	42.1
Parent neglect	19.3	23.6	42.5

Table 3. Gender Differences in Maltreatment (%)

Family Problem	USA		NYS		STAR	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Parent sexual abuse	1.9	8.4	2.2	7.4	7.1	16.3
Parent physical abuse	16.0	19.5	15.6	21.9	43.5	41.1
Parent neglect	20.8	18.1	25.3	22.1	52.9	35.6

ences: Girls were more likely to be identified as sexually abused ( $\chi^2 = 3.95$ ,  $df = 1$ ,  $p < .05$ ) while boys were more likely to be identified as neglected ( $\chi^2 = 6.26$ ,  $df = 1$ ,  $p < .01$ ). As evidenced in Table 3, the statewide and national YIF data also demonstrate a higher incidence of sexual abuse among girls. Both these data sets show girls as slightly more likely to be identified as physically abused, while boys as somewhat more likely to be identified as neglected.

#### *A Description of the Maltreatment: The STAR Sample*

As previously mentioned, for the STAR sample we were able to gather a much more detailed description of the nature of maltreatment experienced by runaway and homeless youth than available through the YIF data since we administered a second questionnaire focussing on this area. It is worth noting that the maltreatment data reported below, collected by means of the STAR Maltreatment Questionnaire, showed a higher incidence of both sexual abuse and physical abuse than what appeared in the STAR YIF data. This discrepancy may be explained by the fact that the YIF was completed at intake, while the STAR Maltreatment Questionnaire was completed at discharge, suggesting that over the course of contact with the youth, disclosures occurred, and more information pertaining to the maltreatment emerged. Using both questionnaires to measure maltreatment, we discovered a significant level of underreporting to the federal government regarding the prevalence of abuse and neglect among runaway and homeless youth: In the STAR sample, 58 youth (26%) were not identified as maltreated on the YIF.

According to the R&HY staff, the most common form of maltreatment observed among the youth in the STAR sample was physical abuse, occurring in 60% of the cases (in contrast to 42% as recorded on the YIF). This typically involved long and severe beatings with objects (e.g., extension cords, chains, belt buckles, broom sticks), being kicked, slapped, punched, and generally beaten up. Although other researchers have found that runaways come from highly violent families (Burgess et al., 1986; Farber et al., 1984), we found this statistic particularly striking because in New York State, less than 10% of all cases of maltreatment reported to child protective services involve physical abuse (New York State Department of Social Services, 1986). It is important to recognize that in this study, physical abuse was defined by shelter staff and may not coincide with state legal definitions, which may be more narrow and restrictive. The fact that staff believed that these young people had been physically abused is nevertheless significant: Violence in the homes of these youth may be an important contributing factor to their decision to run away and seek help.

Neglect, observed in almost half of the cases (48.2%), typically involved inadequate guardianship, abandonment, lack of supervision, or failure to provide adequate food, clothing, and medical care. A particular form of neglect, being "pushed out," was common in the STAR sample. Pushouts, also called "throwaways," are young people who do not willingly choose to leave home but are forced to leave by their parents with the intention that they not return. In the STAR sample, 35% of the youth were considered to be pushouts in contrast to 16% of the national and 26% of the statewide YIF samples.

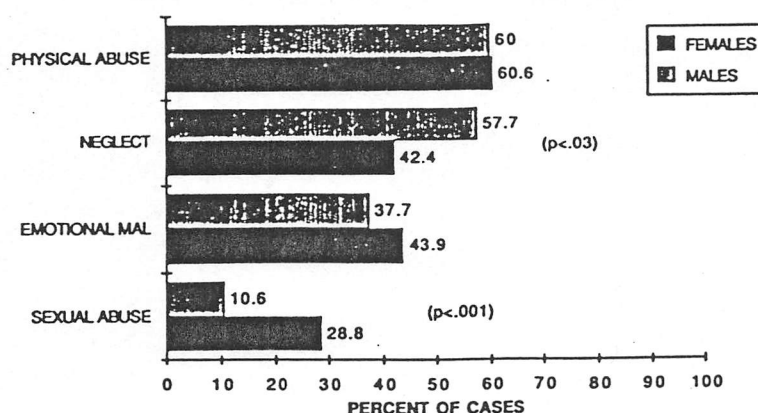


Figure 3. STAR sample: Type of maltreatment by gender.

Nearly 25% of the sample were reported to have been sexually abused (twice as many as recorded in the YIF, 12.6%), which again is much higher than the officially reported incidence of sexual abuse in New York State (approximately 8% of all cases) (Eckenrode, Powers, Doris, Munsch, & Bolger, 1988). This finding is consistent with other research showing a higher incidence of sexual abuse among runaway and homeless youth than in the population at large (Burgess et al., 1986). In the STAR sample, we observed that the youth who were contemplating running, or who were in crisis but came to the program for a non-runaway reason, were significantly more likely to have experienced sexual abuse than youth labeled runaway/homeless ( $\chi^2 = 7.5$ ,  $df = 1$ ,  $p < .01$ ). Likewise, youth who were pushed out were also significantly less likely to have experienced sexual abuse ( $\chi^2 = 5.8$ ,  $df = 1$ ,  $p < .01$ ).

In addition to physical abuse, neglect, and sexual abuse, staff identified emotional maltreatment among 41% of the youth in this sample. This entailed extreme verbal abuse, name calling, derogatory remarks, constant yelling, blaming, scapegoating, and rejection. Service providers who work with abused youth claim that although emotional maltreatment is one of the most pervasive forms of maltreatment, it is rarely reported to CPS because it is so difficult to define and prove (Berdie & Wexler, 1980). Indeed, emotional maltreatment is not included as a presenting problem on the YIF intake forms.

As illustrated in Figure 3, although we found no significant gender differences for physical abuse or emotional maltreatment, we did find that females were more likely to be identified as victims of sexual abuse ( $\chi^2 = 10.1$ ,  $df = 1$ ,  $p < .001$ ), which is consistent with other research (American Association for Protecting Children, 1987; Finkelhor, 1980). We also found that males were significantly more likely to have been identified as victims of neglect ( $\chi^2 = 4.8$ ,  $df = 1$ ,  $p < .03$ ). Both these results corroborate the previously mentioned gender differences observed in the STAR YIF data. Further analyses revealed that boys were significantly more likely to be pushouts ( $\chi^2 = 8$ ,  $df = 1$ ,  $p < .01$ ), a pattern also visible in the national and statewide YIF data. This helps to explain why neglect is more likely to involve males, given that boys are more likely to be pushouts, and being pushed out is a consequence or form of neglect.

#### *Details of the Maltreatment*

The estimated mean age of onset as reported by staff for each type of maltreatment was between 11-13 years. Since the mean age at intake of the youth in this sample was 15.6, it appears that many of these youth had been maltreated for a substantial period of time.

We also examined the pattern of maltreatment, that is, whether it was a single incident, a few incidents which occurred over time, or a chronic problem. Emotional maltreatment had the most chronic pattern (82% of the cases), but a significant proportion of the other forms of maltreatment were also chronic: in 55% of the neglect, 48% of the sexual abuse, and 42% of the cases involving physical abuse.

In over 80% of the cases involving emotional maltreatment or neglect, the maltreatment was currently happening at the time the youth sought services from the program. Physical abuse was reported to be currently happening in 66% of the cases, in contrast to 37% of the sexual abuse. The fact that relatively few youth disclosed sexual abuse as a current problem may partly reflect the social stigma attached to this form of maltreatment, which poses special problems for adolescents who are dealing with their new found sexuality. Adolescents may tend to deny, retract, or minimize sexual abuse in order to distance themselves from it emotionally. The alleged perpetrators cited most frequently by staff were biological mothers, biological fathers, and stepfathers (63%, 45%, and 17% of the cases, respectively). In over one-third of the cases, both mothers and fathers were cited as co-perpetrators.

Of the 223 subjects in the STAR sample, 76% had been reported to protective services and close to 90% of these reported cases were known to be accepted for investigation. Those cases which were not reported to CPS tended to involve maltreatment incidents which had occurred many years prior to the program's contact with the young person. In spite of the fact that at the time these data were collected a significant number of cases (29%) were still under investigation, 42% of the sample had been substantiated by CPS. Only 20% were known to be unfounded, meaning there was not enough evidence to substantiate the report. Ten percent of the cases had unknown determinations. The substantiation rate observed in this sample is higher than the New York State rate for the year in which these data were collected, which is 34% (New York State Department of Social Services, 1986). Since staff at R&HY programs are mandated reporters, we would expect them to have a higher substantiation rate. Recent data from a study conducted in New York State show that maltreatment reports from mandated sources involving adolescents are substantiated at a rate close to 40%, which is consistent with the findings of this research (Powers & Eckenrode, 1988).

## DISCUSSION

One of the goals of this research was to determine whether maltreated runaway and homeless youth differed from the runaway and homeless youth population at large. Although our findings indicate that the STAR sample is similar to other samples of runaways in terms of age, we observed a somewhat higher representation of females than other studies of runaways which report a more equal gender distribution (Janus et al., 1987; Shaffer & Caton, 1984; US Department of Health and Human Services, 1982). This may reflect the fact that our sample consisted of maltreated runaway and homeless youth, with female adolescents more likely to be identified as having been maltreated (Powers & Eckenrode, 1988). There may be less maltreatment among adolescent males, or boys may be less likely to be identified as maltreated. Boys may be more unwilling to disclose maltreatment for fear of appearing unmanly, vulnerable, or weak. From our conversations with workers in the field, we have heard that boys are also less likely to be believed by some service providers. An attitudinal bias with regard to who is at risk for maltreatment seems to exist: Girls are perceived to be in greater danger and need of protection: staff may therefore be more likely to suspect abuse and neglect among females. Thus, agency personnel need to be particularly sensitive to screening adolescent males for possible maltreatment.

The maltreated STAR sample had a higher percentage of youth who were classified as run-

away or homeless. We suggest that this phenomenon is related to the maltreatment: Youth who are abused may be more motivated to escape the situation. Likewise, youth who have been pushed out often face homelessness. It is important, however, to point out that not all youth who seek services from R&HY programs are homeless or have run away. In the national YIF sample, over 50% were contemplating running or in crisis, but not running; while in the STAR sample, 34% were in this situation. In view of the risks of street life, these programs are supplying not only critical intervention services, but also valuable preventive services.

An interesting gender difference was observed in all three data sets: Girls were more likely to run, while boys were more likely to be homeless. This supports the findings of Young and his colleagues (1983) who suggest that girls run in response to restrictive environments, whereas boys more often deal with detached and rejecting families, which are more apt to create the pushed out or throwaway youth. Our data provide additional corroborating evidence regarding pushouts: Boys are significantly more likely to be pushouts than girls—again, across all three data sets. Perhaps this phenomenon reflects the implicit double standard held by people in our society who feel a greater sense of responsibility to girls rather than boys. Boys may be perceived as being better able to fend for themselves, while girls must be protected since they appear to be more vulnerable to sexual exploitation.

Clearly the household structure of runaway and homeless youth is quite different from the national experience for all children. Less than 25% in all three samples of the runaway and homeless youth population lived with both biological parents, in contrast to 68% of children nationwide. Compared to the R&HY population at large and the nonclinical population of youth, the maltreated STAR sample had the highest percentage of reconstituted families. Having to deal with a step-parent may pose more problems and conflicts for a young person, who resents, is jealous of, or grieves for a particular parent, leading to dissatisfaction and a desire to escape the situation. Stepfathers were in fact the third most frequently cited perpetrator in the STAR sample.

For many of the youth in the STAR sample, abuse and neglect were severe and chronic. Maltreatment was the primary reason why the majority of these youth sought help from the R&HY program. Over one-third of the sample had been pushed out of their homes, thrown away by their parents. We find this to be an alarming and dangerous statistic in view of the lethal risks these young people face on the street. Sixty percent of the sample were physically abused or had been punished in so violent a manner that program staff believed this to be maltreatment. The higher incidence of physical abuse in the STAR sample is consistent with Farber and his colleagues (1985), who found that violence in the home was a significant contributing factor in the youth's decision to run. Other researchers have documented our finding that sexual abuse has a higher incidence among runaway and homeless youth than what is reported for the population at large (Adams-Tucker, 1982; Burgess et al., 1986). The fact that youth who were not pushed out or thrown away experienced more sexual abuse is not surprising: These young people may have a special role in the family and fulfill a special need, however pathological it may be. Of interest, however, is the finding that those youth who were either contemplating running or were in crisis but not on the run (that is, not classified as runaway or homeless) were more likely to be sexually abused. This contradicts the commonly held beliefs that youth who are sexually abused run away. It is possible that although these youth are in turmoil and seek help, they nevertheless may experience some secondary gains which may preclude their leaving home.

Young people who seek services from R&HY programs manifest a variety of presenting problems: depression, poor self-image, alcohol and drug dependence, academic dysfunction, and suicidal behavior. The data presented in this study are limited insofar as we cannot specify whether these behaviors are more prevalent among runaway and homeless youth than among all troubled youth. All of these problem behaviors, however, could easily channel young people into service systems where the maltreatment could remain hidden and never be identified.

We are unable to distinguish between the maltreated STAR sample and the R&HY population at large vis-a-vis the presenting problems, except for suicidal behavior, which appears to be more prevalent among maltreated youth. This finding is consistent with other research showing a higher incidence of suicidal behavior among maltreated youth in general (Anderson, 1981) and among maltreated runaways, particularly those who have experienced sexual abuse (Janus et al., 1987; McCormack et al., 1986; Shaffer & Caton, 1984). Overall, our data suggest that there are no clear and unambiguous behavioral markers of maltreatment among these youth that would be visible to caseworkers upon intake to these programs.

The discrepancy between the results of the YIF and the STAR Maltreatment Questionnaire regarding the prevalence of maltreatment also suggests that abuse and neglect among these adolescents is not readily assessed. Sexual abuse and physical abuse were reported at significantly lower rates on the YIF (the form completed at intake), while the prevalence of neglect was comparable on both instruments. Neglect may be more noticeable at intake, while sexual abuse and physical abuse may require a longer period of time for identification or disclosure. Thus, in order to obtain more accurate prevalence data for maltreatment, information should be gathered after a period of time which enables a relationship to be established with a young person. This finding also has policy and program implications by demonstrating that maltreatment among the runaway and homeless youth population is being underreported to the federal government. Abuse and neglect among runaway and homeless youth appear to be far more pervasive problems in our society than the national data reveal.

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**Résumé**—Un collectif de 223 adolescents fugueurs et sans domicile fixe a été réuni dans l'Etat de New York en 1986-87. Ces individus avaient requis de l'aide des services sociaux spécialisés; ils avaient tous subi une forme ou une autre de mauvais traitements. Les auteurs de l'étude définissent la nature des mauvais traitements subis (type de violence ou de négligence, scénario type d'agresseur etc.) ainsi que les caractéristiques démographiques et familiales les concernant. Ils font également une comparaison de leurs observations avec des données récoltées ailleurs dans l'Etat et dans le Pays, notamment en ce qui concerne la démographie et les problèmes que ces adolescents présentent lors de la prise en charge (p.ex. dépression, comportement suicidaire, etc.).

**Resumen**—Una muestra de 223 adolescentes que buscó ayuda de los servicios de ayuda a los jóvenes fugitivos y sin hogar del Estado de Nueva York durante 1986-1987 fué identificada como sufriendo de una historia de maltrato. Esta investigación describe la naturaleza del maltrato (tipos de abuso/negligencia, configuraciones, perpetradores, etc.) experimentado por estos jóvenes y provee un perfil de su familia y sus características demográficas. Esta muestra de fugitivos maltrados es comparada con nuestras estatales y nacionales de jóvenes fugitivos y sin hogar con respecto a sus características demográficas y los problemas que ellos presentan al personal durante su admisión (v.g., depresión, conducta suicidal, etc.).