



DIGITAL FRONTLINE

A stylized illustration of a young woman with long brown hair, wearing a green t-shirt, blue shorts, and red boots. She is holding a phone to her ear and looking thoughtful.

Greetings from NRS

Dear Friends,

At the National Runaway Safeline (NRS), we continually strive to educate people about youth homelessness and solutions for addressing this complex issue. During February, we had several opportunities to do exactly that.

Throughout the month, we recognized Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month (TDVAM). Dating violence is more common than you may think: 1 in 3 U.S. teens will experience physical, sexual, or emotional abuse from someone they're in a relationship with before becoming adults. We hear from youth daily about abuse and relationship issues, and through our work as well as awareness-building campaigns like TDVAM, we're trying to help youth learn to express and show healthy love in various ways.

One NRS staff member who knows firsthand how powerful supportive relationships can be is Sharday Hamilton, Prevention & Youth Engagement Coordinator. After struggling in the foster care system and then experiencing housing instability as a young mother, Sharday leaned on caring people who empowered her to succeed. She shares her personal story as part of WTTW-TV's year-long initiative on homelessness. Chicago's PBS station kicked off their coverage on this topic on February 19 by featuring expert talks, including one by Sharday titled, "Finding a Way Home." To hear Sharday's story, visit [WTTW's website](#).

And we're wrapping up February by participating in a Congressional Briefing and National Summit & Hill Day in Washington D.C. Organized by our friends at the National Network for Youth (NN4Y), the Briefing will feature young leaders, including Sharday, who experienced homelessness as youth and service providers, like NRS. The Briefing will focus on how the Runaway and Homeless Youth + Trafficking Prevention Act of 2023 would support young people experiencing homelessness, help prevent human trafficking and provide critical funding for the network of runaway and homeless youth providers. The Summit + Hill Day are packed with events, such as a panel discussion with the NN4Y Youth Advisory Council about their work and how to advance equity by sharing power with young leaders to define a policy agenda and educate various audiences.

We embrace opportunities to contribute our voice and make a difference in the lives of vulnerable youth across the country. To stay informed of our events and activities, be sure to follow us on social media: you can find us on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [TikTok](#), [YouTube](#), and [LinkedIn](#).

With warm regards,

Susan Frankel
Chief Executive Officer

WHAT'S HAPPENING AT NRS

Celebrating the Spirit of Youth 2024 Tickets & Sponsorship Packages Are Now Available

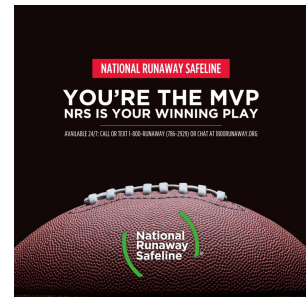


Tickets and sponsorship packages are now available for our annual fundraising event, [Celebrating the Spirit of Youth](#). This year's theme, "One Call Away," highlights the crucial role NRS plays in providing support and validation to young people facing crisis. As youth increasingly turn to NRS for help, the organization remains dedicated to responding without judgment, offering a lifeline to those in need. Celebrating the Spirit of Youth aims to honor the resilience and strength of young people while raising vital funds to continue our critical work.

We're thrilled to announce this year's emcees, Sharday Hamilton, NRS Prevention and Youth Outreach Coordinator, and Mia Sostrin, NRS Youth Advisory Board member and returning co-host. Additionally, we're proud to recognize the contributions of our esteemed honorees: Amea Smith, youth advocate and NRS youth advisory board member, and Kellie Bryson, a dedicated youth advocate. Join us for an unforgettable evening celebrating the power of community and the unwavering support of NRS for young people in need.

[Visit the Celebrating the Spirit of Youth Website](#)

NRS on Social Media





NRS Blog

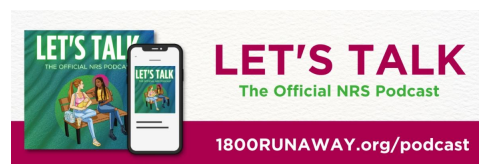


Recognizing her exceptional dedication and compassion, the National Runaway Safeline (NRS) proudly announces Jackie Barron as the January 2024 Volunteer of the Month. Starting her journey during the COVID-19 pandemic in 2021, Jackie's unwavering support has been invaluable to numerous young people facing crises.

Motivated by a meaningful encounter with two teenagers in 2020, she became deeply committed to helping vulnerable youth. As a Crisis Services Volunteer, Jackie offers non-judgmental support on various issues, adapting to changes in chat topics following the pandemic. Beyond her volunteer work, Jackie enjoys exploring artistic interests, cycling, cooking, karaoke, and embodying a spirit of empathy and service that makes her a truly inspiring Volunteer of the Month.

[Read More Here](#)

"Let's Talk" Podcast



Mark your calendars for the return of the "Let's Talk" podcast on February 29th, featuring an enlightening discussion with National Runaway Safeline youth advisory board members, Antonio Davis-Robinson and Amea Smith. In the season 6 premiere episode, Antonio and Amea share their address the mental health stigma they encountered in their upbringing and its intersection with their experiences of homelessness.

Don't miss the opportunity to catch up on the previous five seasons of the "Let's Talk" podcast. Each episode offers perspectives on resilience, challenges, and growth. Dive into the archives and discover the voices and stories that have made "Let's Talk" a must-listen podcast for anyone passionate about understanding and supporting vulnerable youth.

[Listen Here](#)

Chalkbeat

Unaccompanied homeless youth are overlooked. A new book shows what it means to give them support.

Vicki Sokolik, founder of Starting Right, Now, has worked for over sixteen years with unaccompanied homeless youth, aiming to raise awareness and provide essential services. Despite efforts, understanding of their needs remains lacking. Her new book sheds light on their struggles, including trauma, mental health issues, and educational barriers. The organization fills crucial gaps left by schools, offering stable housing, academic support, and mentorship. Sokolik emphasizes trust-building and addressing basic needs while preparing youths for future success. However, navigating racial and socioeconomic divides can be challenging. Increased resources and understanding are needed to effectively support these vulnerable youths.



[Read the Full Article](#)

The1A.org

Listen: Atlanta Homeless Youth Program Helps Students Attend College

If you turned on the TV and saw a news story about homelessness in the U.S., you might expect to see

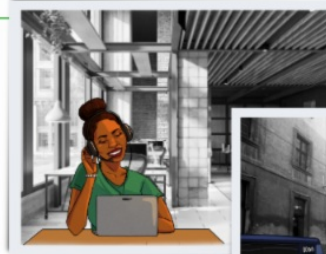


images of adults in big cities. However, homelessness affects various demographics, including young people and families in rural areas, a fact often overlooked. The story of Anthony, a young man in Colorado, highlighted by KUNC's "Unseen but Everywhere" series, sheds light on youth homelessness in unexpected places. The lack of data on youth homelessness makes it challenging to address their needs effectively. As part of 1A's "Remaking America" project, efforts are made to understand and address youth homelessness nationwide, emphasizing the need for more support and resources for these vulnerable individuals.

[Listen to the Full Podcast](#)

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