

Children Missing from Home and Care Practice Guidance



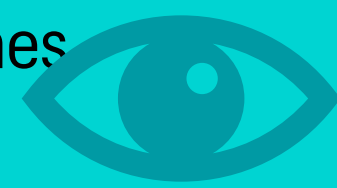
Problems at home

- Family break-up
- Conflict with parents
- Domestic abuse
- Parent use of drugs / alcohol
- Sense of unfair treatment
- Rejection
- Abuse and neglect*
- Mental health problems
- Bullying

To be near friends or family (especially if in care and family time not planned)

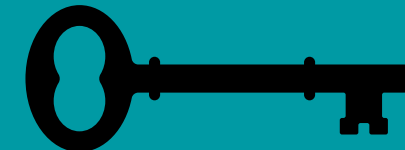
Grooming for potential exploitation, look out for:

- New clothes
- Phone
- Money
- Being met or collected



Missing more than 1 night or frequently indicates risk of

- Exploitation - sexual and/or criminal
- Radicalisation
- Trafficking
- Labour exploitation



Every return home interview (RHI) can be the key to knowing the reason(s) behind a missing episode

Children in Care - strategies to prevent running away / going missing

- Reduce the instances of inappropriate placements
- Distance from home, family and friends should be considered as a risk factor
- Provide advice about independent advocate - and take child's views in account
- Use of small children's homes, which have strong leadership and positive culture
- Complete pre-incident risk assessment



What might increase risk of going missing

- Previous missing
- Coming home after agreed curfew
- Regularly truant from school
- Saying they want to move / different type of placement
- Changes in behaviour - excessive texts; secretive; change in mood
- Stopped letting carer / staff know whereabouts or refuses to provide address when 'staying with friends'
- Doesn't answer calls or turns phone off



Don't miss an opportunity to speak to the young person when they return

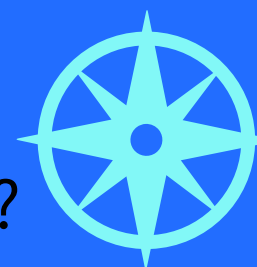
RHI to be offered within 24hrs

Update pre-incident risk assessment. Update plans - anything need to change? Balance risk management with young person's wishes - later curfew; time with family or friends; placement type; consider maturity and planning for independence



If missing - parents / carers / professional to call Police (101)

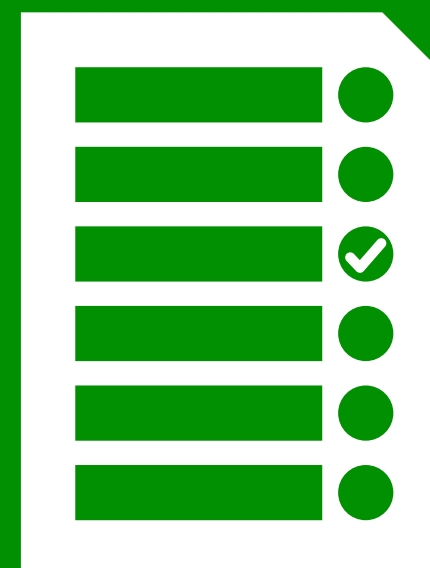
Where and when last seen. What happened before?



Describe young person and what wearing



- ✓ Complete Mosaic work-step for every missing episode; noting triggers and RHI information
- ✓ If young person goes missing again ensure that the further work step is completed
- ✓ Seek out patterns and themes!
- ✓ Work with the child/young person and parent / carers to plan against risks and triggers



Listen to the child / young person's reasons

Consider if any changes can be made to - curfew hours; time to talk or spend with family and friends; change in placement type or location



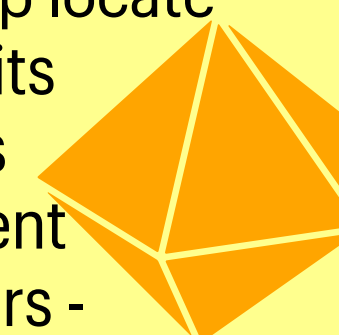
Allocated to a social worker and missing for 24hrs

Complete Senior Leadership Alert



Work with the network to make a plan for finding the child / young person

- Family - knowledge of peers or possible locations; trust adults could help locate
- Police - tracing and location visits
- Education - knowledge of peers
- Health - to inform risk assessment
- Contextual safeguarding workers - engagement, peer / location knowledge



Hold strategy meeting within 3 working days

Plan further attempts to find young person
Consider publicity
Contact Missing Persons
Consider recovery order