

CASA GUIDE TO WORKING WITH AWOL YOUTH

DOs

Contact the Youth's CSW, Attorney and relevant members of their team to let them know of the Youth's AWOL, if they don't already

Establish communication with the Youth, if possible, through phone or email

If you do establish contact, prior to meeting up, let the youth know the rules for visits are different while the Youth is not in placement

1. You can only meet in a public place for a check-in
2. You cannot transport the Youth other than back to placement

If the Youth is willing, meet in a safe public location for a visit to check on the safety and health of the Youth

Listen to the Youth's issues and try to co-develop a safety plan for the Youth while they're AWOL

If appropriate, let the Youth know you will only visit while the youth is in placement

If the situation seems safe, and you are willing, you may transport the Youth back to placement with pick up from a public location (after consulting in your Case Supervisor/Program Staff)

Be aware of signs of Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (CSEC)

If the Youth is in danger, call 911 and/or report it to the CPS Emergency Response Hotline 916-875-KIDS

Discuss the AWOL situation and your role with your Case Supervisor before taking action. Note that there are many situations that need to be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

If appropriate to the situation, provide the Youth with the contact information for The Source a 24/7 support resource for foster youth (916-Support)

Use your good sense and seek advice/guidance from your Case Supervisor

DON'Ts

Do not enable the Youth's AWOL in any way, such as giving the Youth money, transporting the Youth to a location of their choice or having a FUN visit

Do not transport the Youth to anywhere other than an approved placement

Do not place yourself in unfamiliar, or unsafe, circumstances such as showing up at an unknown residential address

Do not drive long distances to transport your Youth

Do not feel bad you have to enforce different rules and employ tough love

Do not act as the emergency responder, that is the role of CPS or law enforcement