

NEED HELP GETTING HOME?
WE CAN HELP.



1800RUNAWAY.ORG/HOME-FREE

RESOURCES FOR
INTERNATIONAL YOUTH IN CRISIS



1800RUNAWAY.ORG/BLOG

1-800-RUNAWAY
HERE TO LISTEN

National
Runaway
Safeline

1800RUNAWAY.org
HERE TO HELP

WORLD AUTISM AWARENESS DAY



#WORLDAUTISMMONTH

#LIGHTITUPBLUE

YOUTH ART MONTH

WE ARE INVITING ALL CHILDREN, TEENS, AND YOUNG
ADULTS TO SUBMIT THEIR ARTWORK TO US!

WE WILL BE SHARING ART
& GIVING SHOUT-OUTS
ACROSS OUR SOCIAL MEDIA



10 FAQ BY TEENS
ABOUT DRUGS & ALCOHOL



NIH National Institute on Drug Abuse
Advancing Addiction Science

THE NIH COMPILED 10 FREQUENTLY ASKED
QUESTIONS FROM MORE THAN 118,000 QUERIES
THEY'VE RECEIVED FROM TEENS OVER THE LAST
DECADE TO HELP YOU START A CONVERSATION
ABOUT DRUGS AND HEALTH.

NATIONAL DRUG & ALCOHOL FACT WEEK

LET'S TALK
THE OFFICIAL NRS PODCAST



Listen on
Apple Podcasts

Spotify

SEASON 2 CONTINUES APRIL 27TH

National
Runaway
Safeline

DOES YOUR ORGANIZATION PROVIDE
RESOURCES FOR YOUTH IN CRISIS?

PARTNER WITH US

We refer youth and families in crisis
to appropriate partners listed in our
database and collaborate with many
of the organizations on prevention
and educational programming.

National
Runaway
Safeline

INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR
STREET CHILDREN



GIVING A VOICE TO HOMELESS OR RUNAWAY YOUTH THAT LIVE ON THE STREET
SO THEIR RIGHTS CANNOT BE IGNORED.

National
Runaway
Safeline

Let's Step Forward
Together

2021

ANNUAL REPORT

HERE TO LISTEN.
HERE TO HELP.



WHAT WE DO

The National Runaway Safeline (NRS) works to keep America's runaway, homeless, and at-risk youth safe and off the streets. With support from the Family and Youth Services Bureau (FYSB), Administration for Children and Families (ACF), and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), NRS also serves as the federally supported national communication system for youth ages 12-21 who are contemplating running away, or have run away and are experiencing homelessness.

From our start 50 years ago, our commitment to listening, helping, and empowering young people has never wavered and only grows stronger each day.

CRISIS SERVICES

Each year, NRS makes approximately 125,000 connections with young people and their families through the 1-800-RUNAWAY hotline and digital crisis services at 1800RUNAWAY.org, including live chat, email and an online forum. These free, confidential services are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Trained staff and volunteers provide non-judgmental support, information, and referral services to empower youth and families to develop a plan to address their crises.

PREVENTION AND EDUCATION

Most young people contact NRS for support while still at home, presenting us with an opportunity to prevent runaway or homeless incidents. Our prevention and education programs are available to youth, families, service providers, teachers, and community members nationwide. For example, our Let's Talk: Runaway Prevention Curriculum, a free, evidence-based, interactive tool educates young people about alternatives to running away and helps youth develop problem-solving skills to address their needs before a crisis escalates. In 2021, there were 2,257 launches/downloads from our website of the newly updated Let's Talk curriculum.

PUBLIC AWARENESS

At NRS, one of our ultimate goals is to end youth homelessness. To do so, it is critical that we increase awareness about the issues facing young people and engage the public to take action. Throughout the year, we collaborate with organizations and individuals on awareness-building campaigns, and in November, NRS leads National Runaway Prevention Month (NRPM). This annual public awareness campaign shines a light on the issues impacting runaway, homeless, and at-risk youth and educates the public about the role they can play in ending youth homelessness. In 2021, 130 organizations and 149 individuals in 39 states partnered with NRS to make NRPM a shining success.

“

After running away at age 18, I used NRS' mediated conference call service to safely connect with my mom before returning home. Not all young people get connected to essential resources like I did. They may struggle on their own to cope with challenges at home or on the street. That can be very lonely and difficult.

- Mia, age 22 -



Dear Friends,

As we turned the calendar to 2021, hoping to leave behind the limitations of the previous year, we slowly realized that youth – as young as 10 years of age – were reaching out to the National Runaway Safeline (NRS) for help with many of the same issues we often hear, but there was a nuanced difference. They were experiencing mental health issues, enduring abuse at home, facing risks on the streets, but in 2021, their struggles were more complex, often more dangerous, and at times, even life threatening.

Despite these struggles, they demonstrated remarkable bravery and resilience.

Youth today have a deeper awareness about their own mental health challenges and the ability to articulate their emotions and needs. They seek help from school counselors, mentors, therapists, and others, but too often encounter flawed and overwhelmed systems that cannot fully meet their needs.

While our Crisis Services staff and volunteers responded to youth in crisis, in 2021, they also heard from a significant number of Runaway and Homeless Youth service providers, school counselors, mental health professionals, law enforcement, and other concerned adults who work each day to support young people.

NRS responded with personalized support, crisis intervention services and resources, educational events, and much more. We are here to help fill the gap left by systems that have been overtaxed since the pandemic began.

We continue to enhance and adapt our services to best meet the needs of young people today. For 2022, this means adding live texting, increasing the role of our National Youth Advisory Board to ensure the youth voice with lived experience is incorporated into all we do, and grow our social media presence to reach young people where they are.

As we bring our 50th anniversary to a close, we reflect on our accomplishments and commit to continued and measurable change in the future. We hope we can count on your support to reach the day when no child feels unsafe, neglected, alone, or unloved. You can make a donation by using the enclosed envelope or by visiting nationalrunawaysafeline.org/donate today.

Thank you for your past contributions, support, and collaboration, and we look forward to continuing to work together.

Warmly,



Susan Frankel

Susan Frankel
Chief Executive Officer

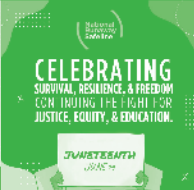


William B. Hineline

Bill Hineline
Chair, Board of Directors



CRISIS SERVICES



CRISIS SERVICES & PREVENTION REPORT

In collaboration with researchers from Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago, we examine information provided voluntarily by crisis contacts. The resulting Crisis Services and Prevention Report highlights characteristics of individuals who contact NRS, reasons for outreach, and services provided, and shares valuable analysis. The data helps us better understand those we serve and how we can best meet their needs and the needs of those who care about them.

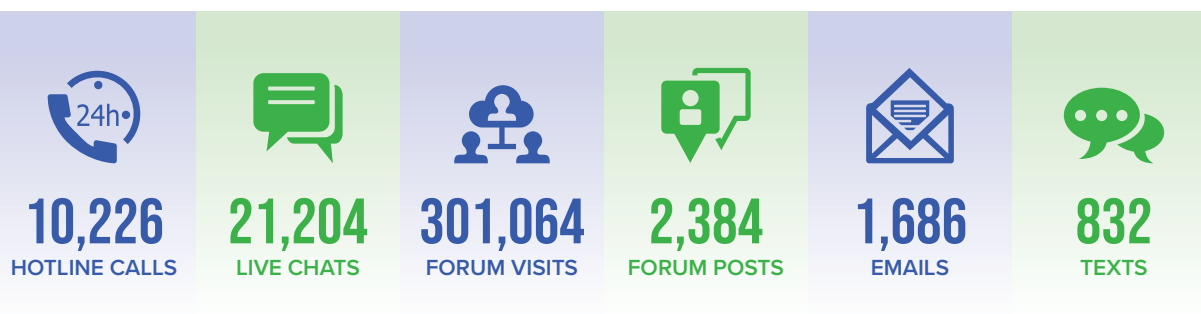
While the 2021 Crisis Services and Prevention Report will be available soon, key findings from the 2020 Crisis Services and Prevention Report significantly influenced our work throughout 2021. Our internal data analysis shows the COVID-19 pandemic continued to impact America's youth:

Crisis contacts were alarmingly young:

- The number of youth contacting NRS under the age of 15 rose 32% from 2019 to 2021
- Outreach by youth under the age of 12 increased 152% from the pre-pandemic year 2019 to 2021.

Problems that spurred outreach aligned with challenges presented by the pandemic:

- 57% of contacts mentioned family dynamics as a reason for outreach in 2021
- Contacts citing mental health as a reason for outreach grew 39% from 2019 to 2021.



68% STILL AT HOME WHEN CONTACTING NRS

MOST COMMON ISSUES MENTIONED BY CRISIS CONTACTS

FAMILY DYNAMICS Conflict with siblings and family rules, divorce, custody, moving and teen pregnancy

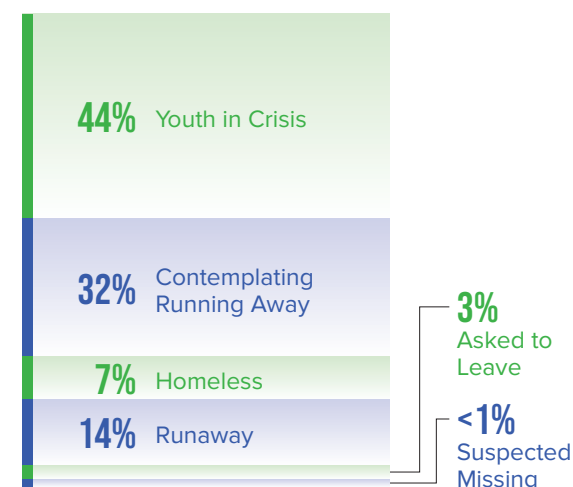
EMOTIONAL/VERBAL ABUSE Insults, verbal threats, statements that make youth feel degraded or ashamed

MENTAL HEALTH Issues including depression and anxiety, suicidal ideation, eating disorders, self-harm and behavioral problems

PEER/SOCIAL ISSUES Bullying, isolation, fights with friends, feeling rejected by friends

PHYSICAL ABUSE/ASSAULT Domestic violence, abuse by significant others, family members, parents

YOUTH STATUS AT THE TIME OF CONTACT



HOME FREE

For more than 25 years, NRS has partnered with Greyhound Lines, Inc. to offer the Home Free program, a unique service that reunites young people with their family or guardian, or transports them to another safe living arrangement. In 2021, Greyhound donated bus tickets valued at \$44,387 to help 237 young people travel to safety through the Home Free program.

The impact of this program cannot be overstated, and we are deeply grateful to Greyhound for their longtime dedication and generosity.



ADRIAN

19-year-old Adrian recently aged out of foster care, but lives in an area where resources are very scarce. He has been accepted into a Transitional Living Program for former foster kids, but it's two states away and he doesn't know how he'll get there. The Transitional Living Program providers encouraged Adrian to contact the National Runaway Safeline for help. He learned about the Home Free program and was able to use a free Greyhound bus ticket to reach his new program and secure long-term, safe and stable housing.

DANIEL

Daniel, age 15, was nervous when he called the National Runaway Safeline. With a history of substance abuse, Daniel was kicked out of his family home by his parents and he'd been couch surfing for a few weeks. He was running out of money and knew he would soon be on the streets. Daniel was ready to "get clean" and go home. An NRS staff member mediated a conference call between Daniel and his parents and established a plan for supporting Daniel through substance abuse treatment. With everyone feeling confident about reuniting, Daniel was provided a Greyhound bus ticket to return home. A few days later, his mother called NRS to confirm her son made it home safely and was doing well and thanked the team.

ALLISON

Allison, 17, frequently argued with her mom and was sent several states away to live with her grandma. Her grandma quickly became difficult to live with, and soon they were arguing almost constantly. Allison ran away to meet up with a friend who promised her a place to stay and a job; however, when Allison arrived, the friend was nowhere to be found and the apartment didn't exist. Since then, Allison has been living on the streets, and now she wants to go home to her mom and work on their relationship. She called the National Runaway Safeline and received a free bus ticket through Home Free. The NRS staff also helped Allison and her mom create a plan and identify local resources to help them strengthen their relationship long-term.

“
[Without]
this program,
I wouldn't have
been able to get
my son back,
and he would
have been very
unsafe or even
dead. I am ever
so thankful
that this program
is in place.

- Ashley -

Names and identities have been changed to protect the privacy of all individuals.

PREVENTION & EDUCATION



Throughout 2021, NRS launched new prevention and education programs and activities to help young people feel supported and learn to cope with challenges in safe and healthy ways.

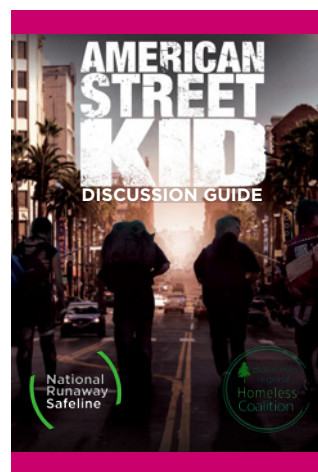
LET'S TALK PODCAST



The “Let’s Talk” podcast series was launched in November 2021 as part of National Runaway Prevention Month (NRPM). NRS staff interviewed youth with lived experience, focusing on the intersection of youth homelessness and such topics as addiction, disability, indigenous identity, mental health, and domestic violence. The series continues in 2022 with a new season highlighting conversations with leaders from non-profit and governmental organizations that are supporting runaway and homeless youth across the country. We invite you to listen by visiting www.1800RUNAWAY.org/podcast, or by downloading episodes on Spotify, Apple Podcasts, and Google Podcasts.

DOCUMENTARY PARTNERSHIP

To provide authentic, new content to our stakeholders, NRS strengthened its partnership with the producers of the documentary, *American Street Kid*. This powerful film follows youth experiencing homelessness in Los Angeles, struggling to survive and get off the streets.



A producer and a youth participant in the film conducted a virtual film screening and Q&A session for NRS supporters. The conversation was honest and enlightening, and presented an opportunity to create personal connections with a young person who has experienced homelessness.

Following this event, and through a collaboration with passionate leaders from the Black Hills Regional Homeless Coalition in Rapid City, SD, we developed the “American Street Kid Discussion Guide.” This document, which is currently being used by the *American Street Kid* filmmakers, includes discussion topics and questions to facilitate conversations with youth on key takeaways from the film and steps they can take to make a difference in their communities.

PANELS & WEBINARS

NRS hosted a series of important events, partnering with the Family and Youth Services Bureau and other leading organizations, to share insights with partners in the runaway and homeless youth field as well as supporters.

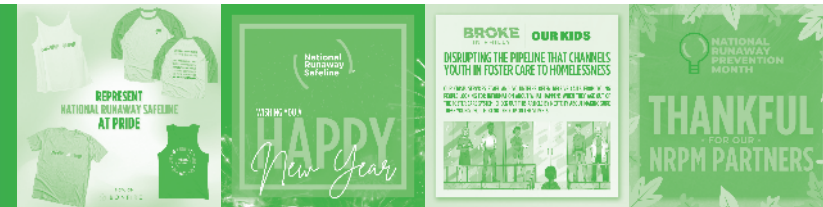
During the “COVID-19 & Crisis Hotlines: Lessons Learned and Beyond” panel conversation hosted by FYSB, leaders from NRS, the National Domestic Violence Hotline, and the National Human Trafficking Hotline discussed their organizations’ challenges and responses to ensure effective service throughout the pandemic.

The “Youth Voices Panel: Lived Experience, Services & Positive Outcomes” panel discussion featured NRS Youth Advisory Board members who shared their personal experiences and the services and prevention strategies that have helped them through their journeys.

A diverse group of experts in the runaway and homeless youth field offered their perspectives on strategies to meet the needs of vulnerable youth during the “Runaway Prevention Roundtable: Research & Practical Strategies” panel discussion.

NRS hosted a Lunch & Learn series during National Runaway Prevention Month. During the first event, titled, “Youth in Crisis: What the Data is Telling Us,” participants revealed key findings from the 2020 Crisis Services and Prevention Report and discussed the implications on prevention and intervention strategies. The second event, “The Role of Schools in Runaway Prevention and Response,” featured a conversation with the executive director of SchoolHouse Connection about national trends, best practices, and connecting to school-based supports.

PUBLIC AWARENESS & EVENTS



NATIONAL RUNAWAY PREVENTION MONTH



Every November during National Runaway Prevention Month, hundreds of organizations and individuals unite to shine a light on the issues facing runaway and homeless youth and provide a source of hope and support for these young people.

Partner organizations and youth execute fun and interesting activities within their local communities and online. NRS offers Partner and Youth Ambassador Toolkits, complete with event ideas, sharable graphics, statistics and messages, and social media resources.

Creativity shined bright (and green!) all month. Buildings and monuments were illuminated in green, staff at many partner organizations dressed head-to-toe in the official color of NRPM on Wear Green Day, and organizations distributed green mementos for display throughout their communities. These efforts sparked meaningful conversations both offline and online.

Also, social media platforms were lit up with statistics, images, and supportive messages for the runaway and homeless youth community. The #NRPM2021 hashtag reached 1.4 million people on social media and the Twitter Chat hashtag had more than 330,000 followers.

Our website, 1800RUNAWAY.org, served as a resource for NRPM partners and the general public and was accessed more than 35,000 times throughout November.

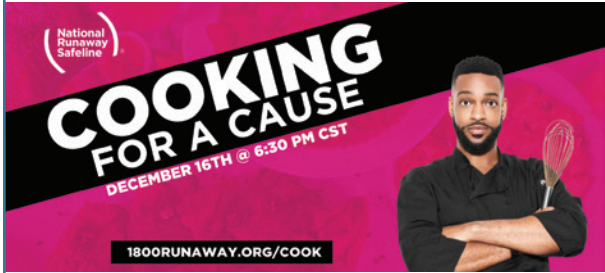
New in 2021, we recognized the top performing partners during the NRPM Awards Ceremony and Celebration, co-hosted with FYSB. Awards such as the Greenest Team (winner: Midwest Youth Services) recognized the partner who executed the most unique green activities, while the Youth Ambassador Award was presented to 12-year-old Lenny Marchese for his street outreach efforts.

The top prize – the Shine a Light Award – recognized the partner that implemented the most comprehensive NRPM campaign. The award was bestowed upon Fenix Youth Project on Maryland’s Eastern Shore. They secured a proclamation from local government officials, had several buildings lit green, engaged the Mayor’s office on Wear Green Day, hosted a Sleep Out, conducted a TV interview with the local ABC station, and consistently posted NRPM content on social media.



ASSOCIATE BOARD

The NRS Associate Board is a group of young professionals that plans fundraising events and helps increase awareness about NRS’s mission. In 2021, they organized a series of successful events, from Trivia Night to Sip and Strokes, reaching new audiences and raising significant funds.



THANKSGIVING DINNER WITH CUBS CHARITIES

Each year, NRS and Cubs Charities co-host a Thanksgiving feast for homeless youth. The pandemic forced us to alter plans in 2020, instead distributing boxed Thanksgiving meals, hygiene kits, and personal notes of support to shelters throughout Chicagoland. Recognizing the success of the 2020 effort, NRS and Cubs Charities coordinated a similar effort in November 2021. Donations of food, kits, and notes were provided to 26 shelters, transitional living facilities, community centers, and other locations. We are grateful that we could help make Thanksgiving special for 491 homeless youth and 132 adults in need.



Chicago Cubs infielder Nico Hoerner helped assemble Thanksgiving kits at Smoke Daddy in Chicago.

LET’S MAKE A DIFFERENCE TOGETHER



NRS brought our community together through a series of virtual, at-home events that benefitted our End Youth Homelessness Campaign. In February, supporters “shared the love” over pizza from the famous Lou Malnati’s; in March, we enjoyed spirits from Journeyman Distillery; and at the April event, guests helped us “meet” our fundraising goals as they dined on Gibson’s meats.

YOUTH ADVISORY BOARD

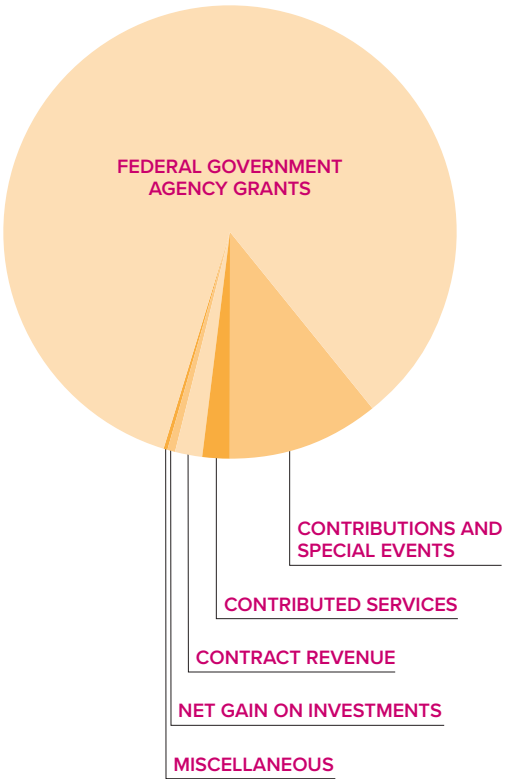
Incorporating the youth voice into our work is critical. Through the Youth Advisory Board, we gain valuable insights from individuals with lived experience that influence our programs, services, and communication strategies. The NRS Youth Advisory Board grew from four to 14 members by the end of 2021, as the group contributed to important organizational conversations as well as national panels that reached thousands of service providers, federal officials, and supporters across the United States throughout the year.



The financial information below reflects donations made directly to NRS between October 1, 2020 and September 30, 2021 and does not represent the full set of audited financial statements for the National Runaway Safeline. Please visit NRS’s website, <http://www.nationalrunawaysafeline.org/financials> for more information, or email jsstern@1800runaway.org for our Fiscal Year 2021 audit.

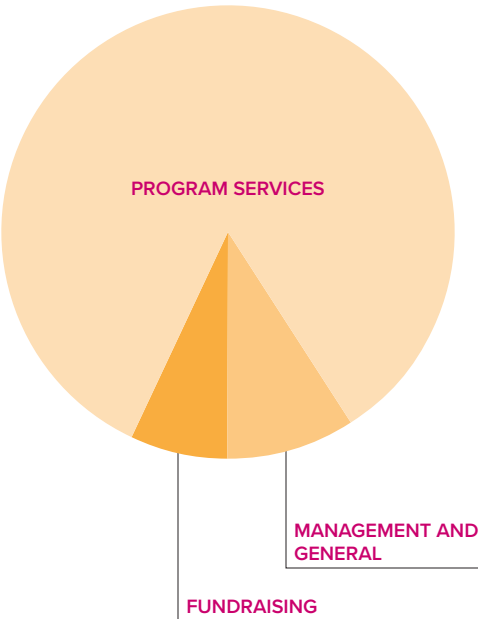
REVENUE

Federal government agency grants	\$1,992,994
Contributions and special events	\$255,901
Contributed services	\$45,115
Contract revenue	\$46,350
Net gain on investments	\$16,275
Miscellaneous	\$1,197
TOTAL	\$2,357,832



EXPENSES

Program services	\$2,182,660
Management and general	\$235,030
Fundraising	\$179,267
Total Expenses	\$2,596,957
Net Income	(\$16,102)
End Net Assets	\$219,204



OUR SUPPORTERS



We are grateful for our generous donor community who has helped propel NRS into our next 50 years of service and supported our mission and programs.

The following list includes only gifts made directly to the National Runaway Safeline between October 1, 2020 and September 30, 2021. If we have inadvertently omitted or misspelled your name, please help us correct our records by contacting Jeff Stern at jstern@1800runaway.org or 773-289-1732.

GOVERNMENT

Administration on Children,
Youth & Families
Family & Youth Services
Bureau
U.S. Department of Health &
Human Services

Wolfort Family Foundation
Fidelity Charitable -
Barry-Meinhardt
Charitable Trust

INDIVIDUALS

Adam Acker
Maureen & Peter Acker
Paul Acker
Sabrina Acker
Abby Adler
Alaina Africano
Bianca Alcantar
Alise Alptekin
Karen Anagnost
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Marianna Choldin
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Marion Chorvat
Robert Chorvat
Susan Chorvat
Jodi Cohen &
David Schwartz
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Beth & Simon Goldberg
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Darlene Golden
Trudy Goldstein
Griffin Gordon
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Joli Guenther
Lori & Joel Haberman
Jack Hagedorn
Kiesha Halliburton
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Joseph Hapac
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Debra A. Hill
James Hill
Janine Hill
Melanie Hill

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America's Best Local
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Brokerage Charitable
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Sulzer Family Foundation
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Scott Caplan
Jennifer Cardellino

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“ SEXUAL ASSAULT AWARENESS MONTH ”



I wish I could tell my sister that she's not dirty and that she should not feel any shame for something that she literally was not responsible for.

- VIOLA DAVIS



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