

STEP-BY-STEP INSTRUCTIONS FOR PROJECT SAFE PLACE

Call the Youth Services Bureau of Monroe County/Youth Shelter at (812) 349-2507 if you have any questions. Shelter staff and on-call counselors are available 24 hours per day. YSB is located at 515 S. Adams in Bloomington.

A youth may be looking for help by asking: "Is this a Safe Place?" "Can you help me?" or "What does that sign mean?" Or, a youth may not ask for help immediately, but instead just stand around. S/he may be waiting for you to speak first. In that case, ask if the youngster came in because the store, restaurant, etc. is a "Safe Place."

Step 1. Get a general idea of what the problem is. Don't try to go into details about the problem. Tell the youth that you're glad s/he came in for help. Tell him/her that you're going to call the Youth Shelter and have them send a volunteer for him/her to talk with. Show the youth where s/he can sit and wait.

Step 2. Call the Youth Shelter at (812) 349-2507. Tell the person answering the phone that you're calling the "Safe Place". Identify the "Safe Place" location and address. Give your name and a description of the youngster. The shelter staff person will contact a volunteer and relay the information.

Step 3. The shelter staff person will call you back and tell you the name of the volunteer who will be arriving. The shelter staff should be able to tell you how soon the volunteer will be there. Tell the youngster that the volunteer's on their way, and give the youngster an idea of how long it will be before help arrives. Remind the youth to wait in the area you have suggested. Offer him/her coke, coffee, etc., if you like.

Step 4. Make an effort to check the youngster every few minutes by saying something like, "How are you doing?" or "Are you holding up okay?" Again, don't try to get involved in the problem. While the youth is waiting, make sure s/he isn't vulnerable to someone who might try to talk him/her out of getting help. Be sure the youth waits inside the building, in the area designated during the Safe Place orientation (such as an employee's lounge, office, etc.) The youth should not be in the way of your normal business procedures, but should be in an area where you can easily check on him/her.

Step 5. When the volunteer arrives, s/he will show you his/her driver's license or Safe Place identification card before you introduce the Safe Place volunteer. Do not allow the youngster to go with a volunteer who has not been identified. After the volunteer has escorted the youngster from the "Safe Place", you should record the volunteer's name, your name, the date and time on the back of this paper or another convenient location for safekeeping.

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS

If the youngster is seriously hurt (i.e. wounded or bleeding, victim of rape, losing consciousness, etc.), tell him/her that you would like to call emergency medical services. Call EMS at 911.

Give the EMS the pertinent information, and tell them you are calling from a "Safe Place" location. After you call the EMS, call the Youth Shelter: (812)349-2507. If the youngster refuses help with the EMS, don't insist on calling. Call the Shelter and explain the situation. Let the youth talk directly with shelter staff. If the youth mentions suicide, relate this information to the Youth Shelter immediately: (812)349-2507. Encourage the youth to talk with a counselor on the telephone immediately.

Only in a situation where you or the youth are being threatened should the police be contacted at 911 for immediate services.