



National Runaway Switchboard

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National Runaway Switchboard Crisis Caller Statistical Analysis

An analysis of crisis calls to the National Runaway Switchboard for 2006-2007 and 2000-2007 trend analysis.

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Summary of Key Findings

The National Runaway Switchboard (NRS) is serving more youth who are contemplating running away before they run than in the past (see figure two). The very young (under 12) is the fastest growing group of callers to NRS over the past eight years (see figure four). In addition, NRS is receiving more crisis calls from young (14 and younger) and older (18 and over) youth than in the past. Females are much more likely to call NRS than males, however male calls are rising at a faster rate than female calls, slowly equalizing the gender gap.

Research Methodology

The National Runaway Switchboard (NRS) has analyzed crisis call records for the period 2000-2007 for this trend report. Caller data categories were matched across eight years. Absolute and percentage change across years was calculated. This data was analyzed using Chi Square Statistical Analysis to determine statistical significance using a confidence interval of 95 percent or above. All data is supported at the 95 percent confidence interval unless noted with an asterisk. Data points with one asterisk are not significant for the eight year trend period, data points with two asterisks are not significant for the past year, and data points with three asterisks are not significant for either period. The sample size of these categories varies due to the fact that not all categories are pertinent to providing crisis intervention and therefore will not be answered in every crisis call.

For questions or comments on this research please contact Katy Walsh, Director of Development and Communication at the National Runaway Switchboard at kwalsh@1800RUNAWAY.org, or (773) 289-1727.

Media interested in additional information or to schedule an interview with an NRS spokesperson, please contact Joel Kessel at joel@kesselcommunications.com, or (773) 209-6125.

Youth Crisis Caller Status

The majority of crisis callers to the National Runaway Switchboard (NRS) in 2007 were runaways (see figure 1). However, the number of youth calling NRS before they run (contemplating running away) has increased by over 65 percent in the past eight years (see figure 2). In addition, the number of homeless youth calling NRS, while still a small absolute percentage of total crisis calls in 2007 at five percent, has jumped more than 200 percent over 2000. It is probable that this trend is connected to the increase in calls coming from youth 18 to 21 years old (*NRS defines youth as young people up to 21 years old. Minor youth are considered runaways; youth 18-21 years old are considered homeless*).

Figure 1: Distribution of Youth Crisis Caller Status in 2007

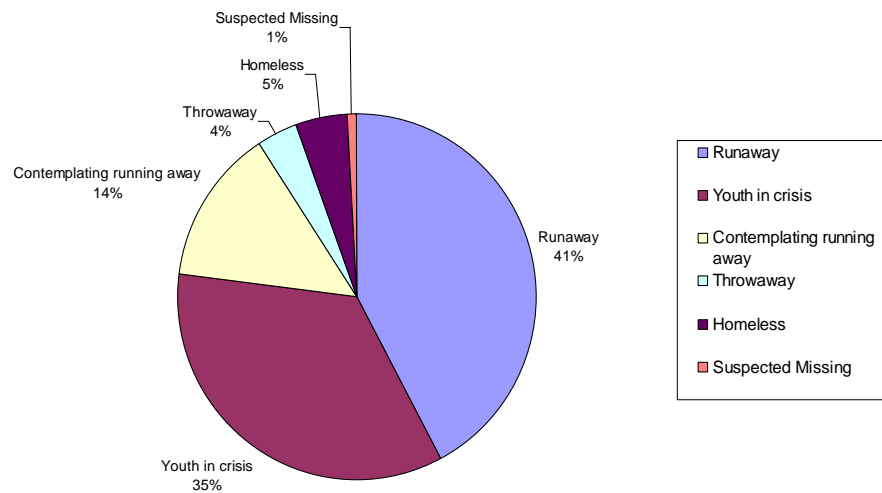
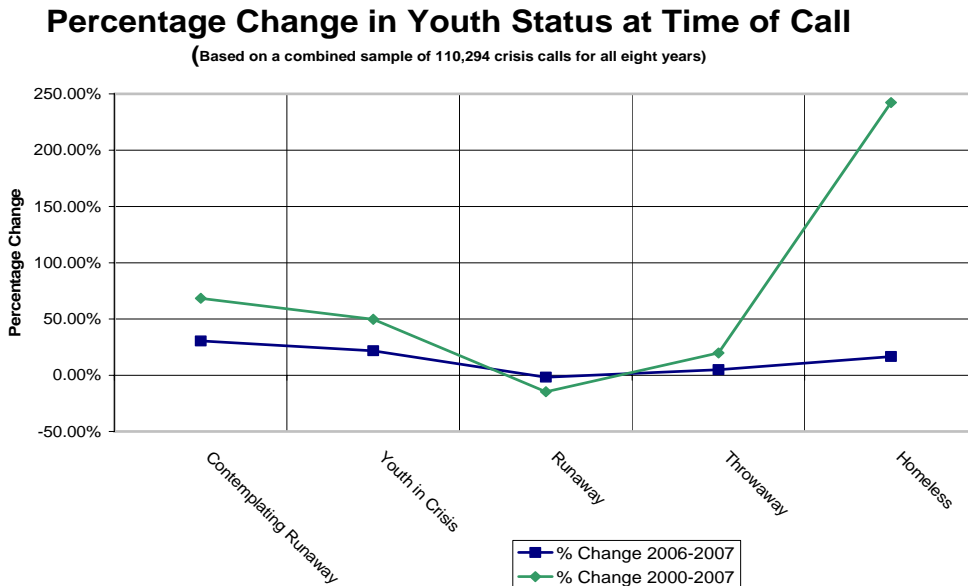


Figure 2: Trend Analysis of Youth Crisis Caller Status 2000-2007



Crisis Caller Age

The majority of crisis callers to the National Runaway Switchboard (NRS) in 2007 were aged 15-17 at 52 percent (see figure 3). However, the two extremes of very young and over 18 are growing at a faster rate than the middle age group (see figure 4). The number of callers under 12 in 2007 has increased 172 percent over 2000. The age groups of 12, 13, and 14 are also increasing rapidly in 2007 at 93 percent, 81 percent, and 13 percent respectively over 2000. In addition, the category of callers over 18 has increased 37 percent over the past eight years.

Figure 3: Distribution of Age of Crisis Callers in 2007

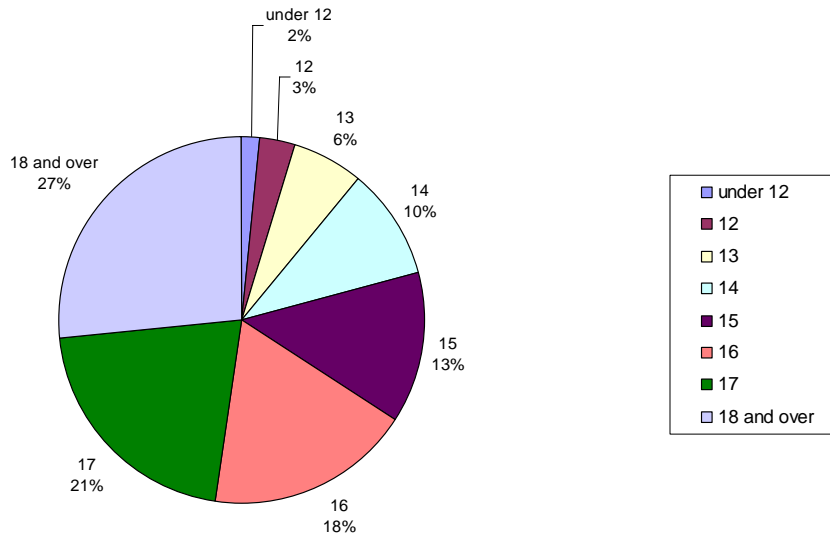
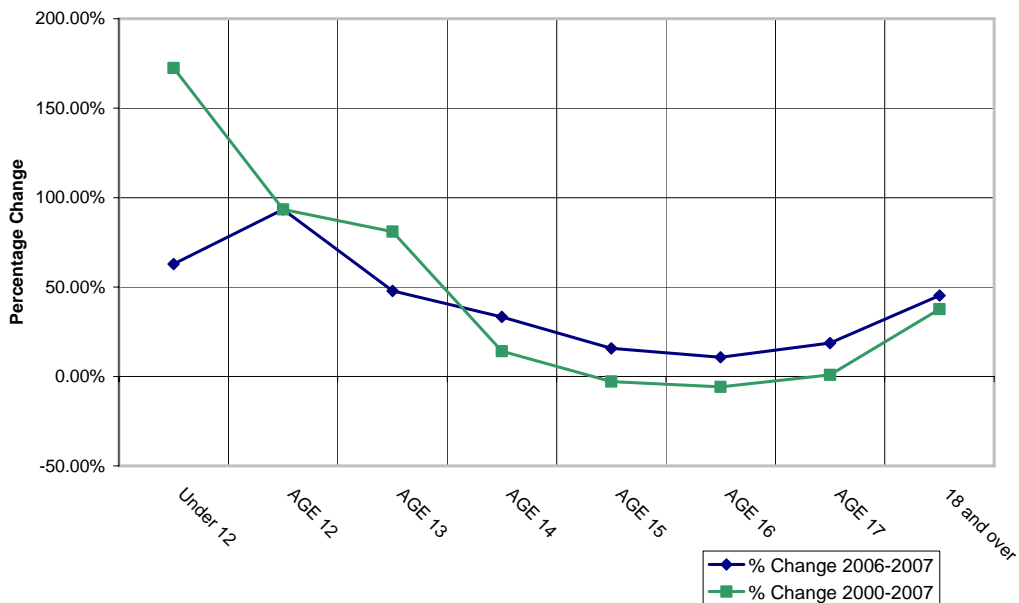


Figure 4: Trend Analysis of Age of Crisis Caller 2000-2007

Percentage Change in Youth Age at Time of Call

(Based on a combined sample of 42,174 crisis calls for all eight years)



Crisis Caller Means of Survival

The majority of crisis callers to the National Runaway Switchboard (NRS) in 2007 were surviving through friends and relatives at 51 percent (see figure 5). There has been a 50 percent drop in the number of youth calling from detention or police over the past eight years (see figure 6). More crisis callers in 2007 are turning to panhandling, a 51 percent increase, prostitution, a 29 percent increase, and selling drugs, a 59 percent increase, to survive than in 2000.

Figure 5: Distribution of Crisis Caller Means of Survival in 2007

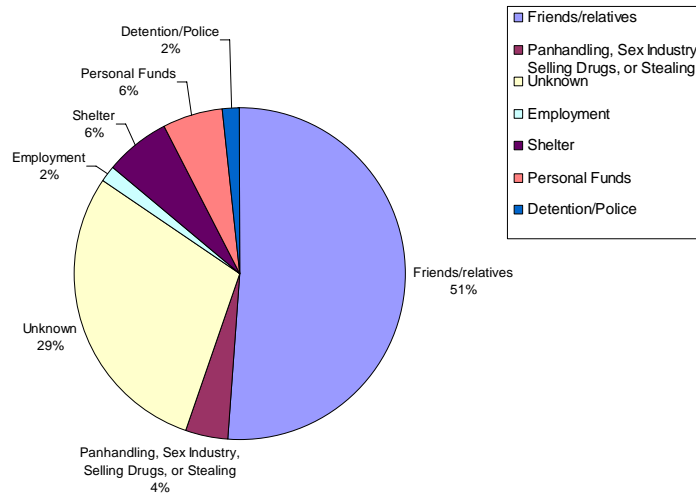
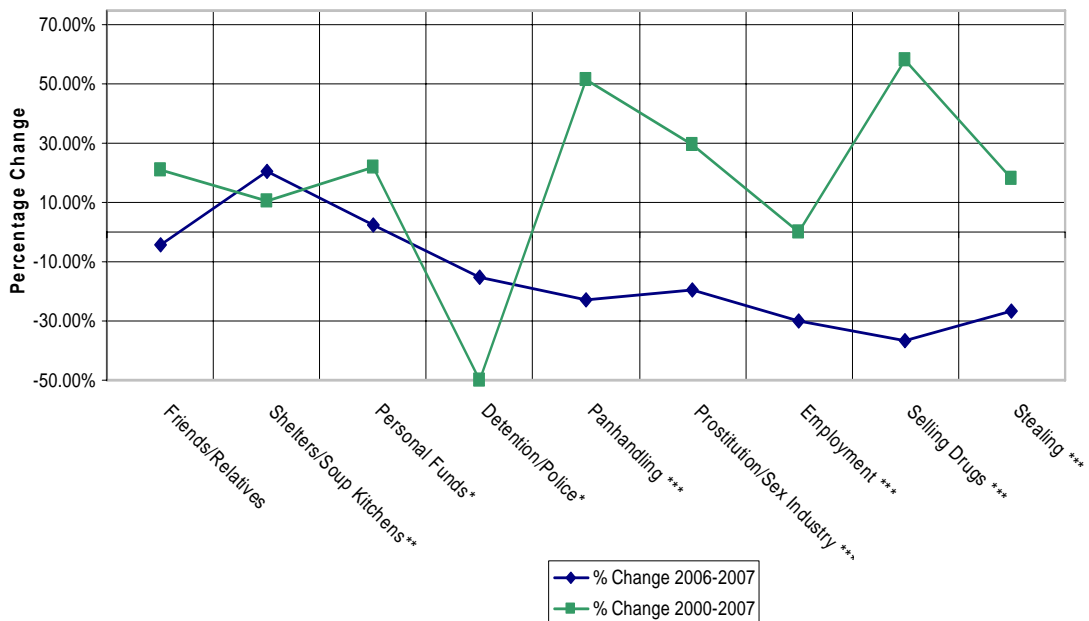


Figure 6: Trend Analysis of Crisis Caller Means of Survival 2000-2007

Percentage Change in Means of Survival

(Based on a combined sample of 26,893 crisis callers for all three years)



Crisis Caller Time on the Street

The largest proportion of crisis callers to the National Runaway Switchboard (NRS) in 2007 had been on the street for one to three days at 41 percent (see figure 7). However, there has been a large increase in the number of crisis callers to NRS who have been on the street one to four weeks, a 93 percent increase, or two to six months, a 110 percent increase, over the past eight years (see figure 8).

Figure 7: Distribution of Time on the Street for Crisis Callers in 2007

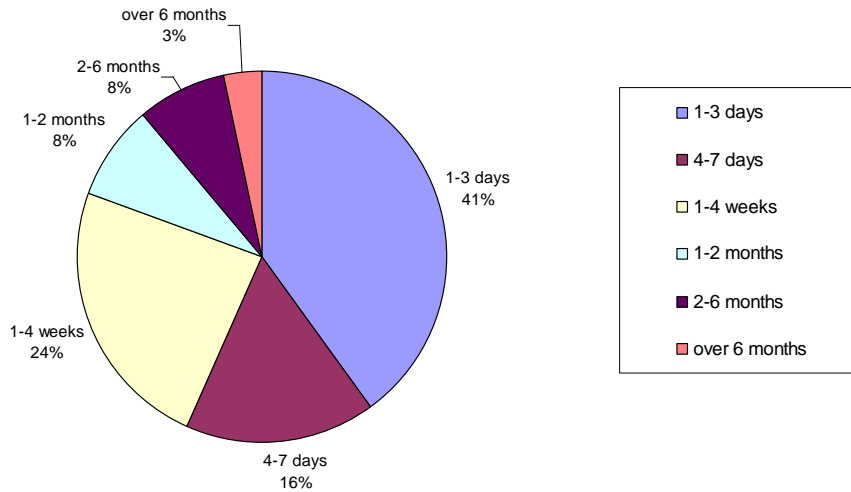
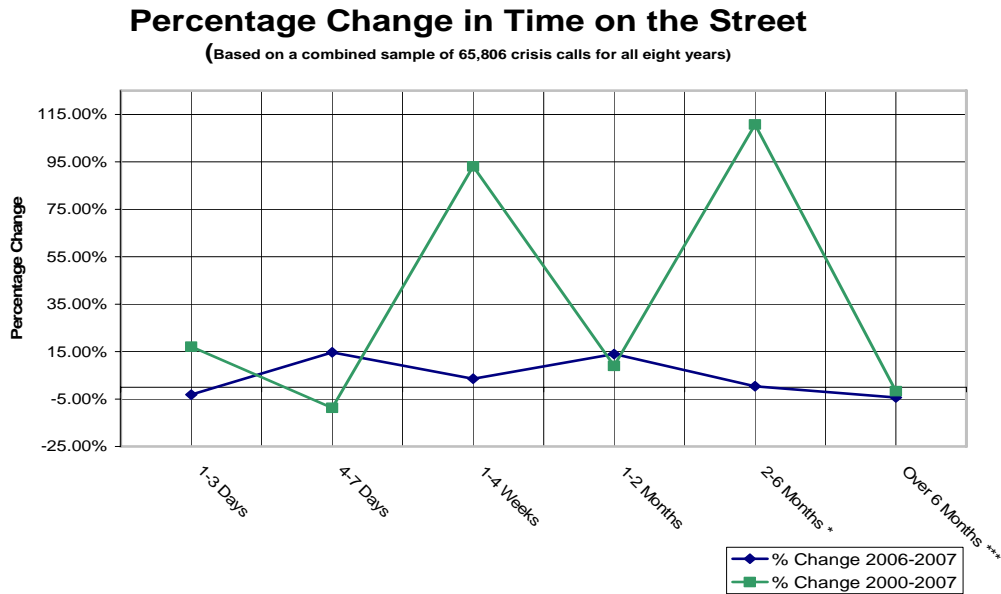


Figure 8: Trend Analysis of Crisis Caller Time on the Street 2000-2007



Crisis Caller Whereabouts at Time of Call

The largest proportion of crisis callers to the National Runaway Switchboard (NRS) in 2007 were calling from home (see figure 9). The number of youth calling from home has also increased 67 percent in the past eight years. This reinforces the conclusion that NRS is reaching more youth before they run away from home. Conversely, there has been a decrease in the number of youth calling from police/detention of 47 percent over the past eight years. This parallels the finding that the number of crisis callers surviving by police/detention is down 50 percent from 2000 (see figure 6).

Figure 9: Distribution of Crisis Caller Whereabouts in 2007

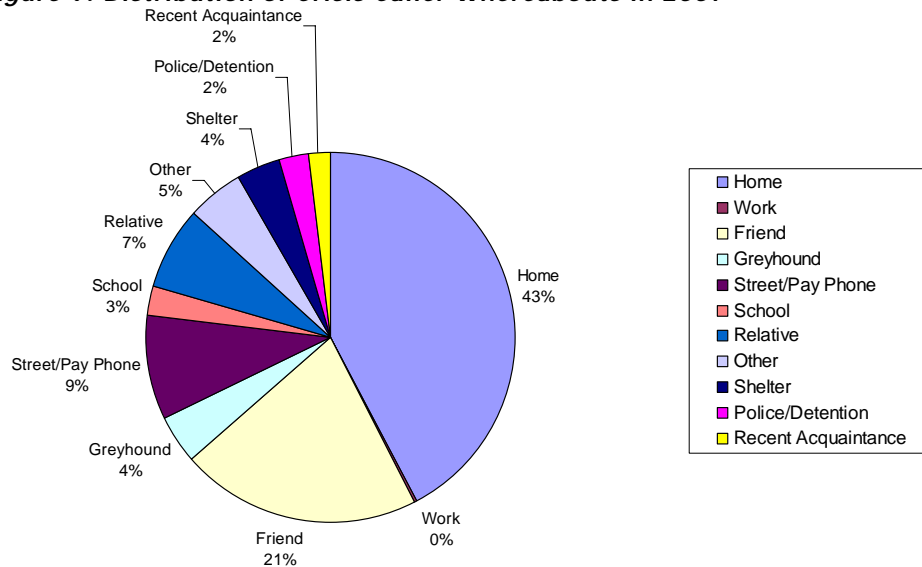
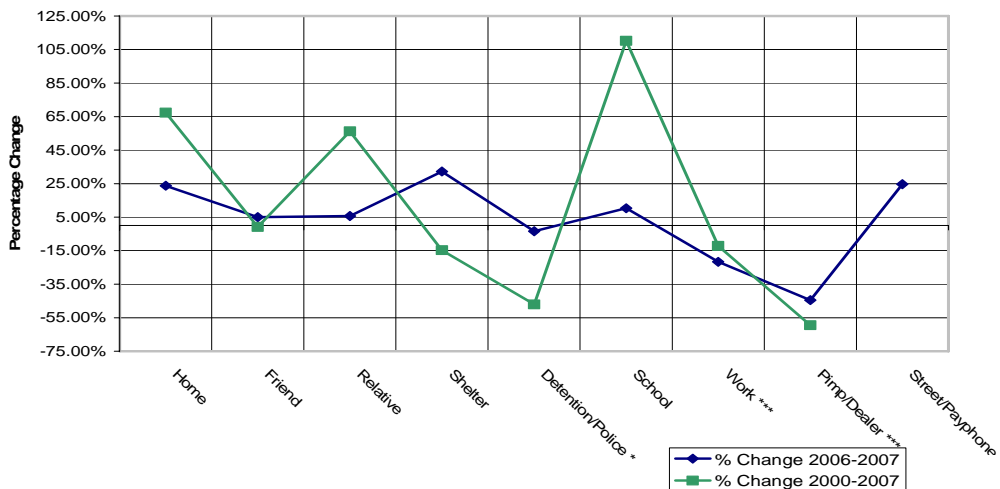


Figure 10: Trend Analysis of Crisis Caller Whereabouts 2000-2007

Percentage Change in Whereabouts of Caller

(Based on a combined sample of 99,677 crisis calls for all eight years)



Crisis Caller Problems

The most commonly reported crisis caller problem in 2007 was family dynamics at 28 percent of crisis callers (see figure 11). However, the number of youth reporting family dynamics as a problem has dropped 26 percent over the past eight years. NRS has seen a 78 percent increase in the number of crisis callers reporting abuse (physical, verbal, sexual, neglect) as a problem over the past eight years (see figure 12).

Figure 11: Distribution of Youth Crisis Caller Problems in 2007

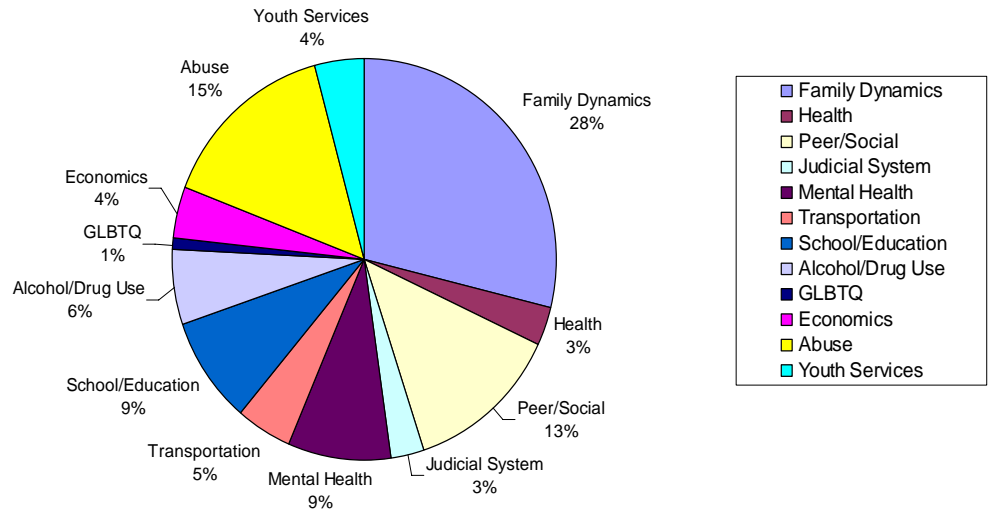
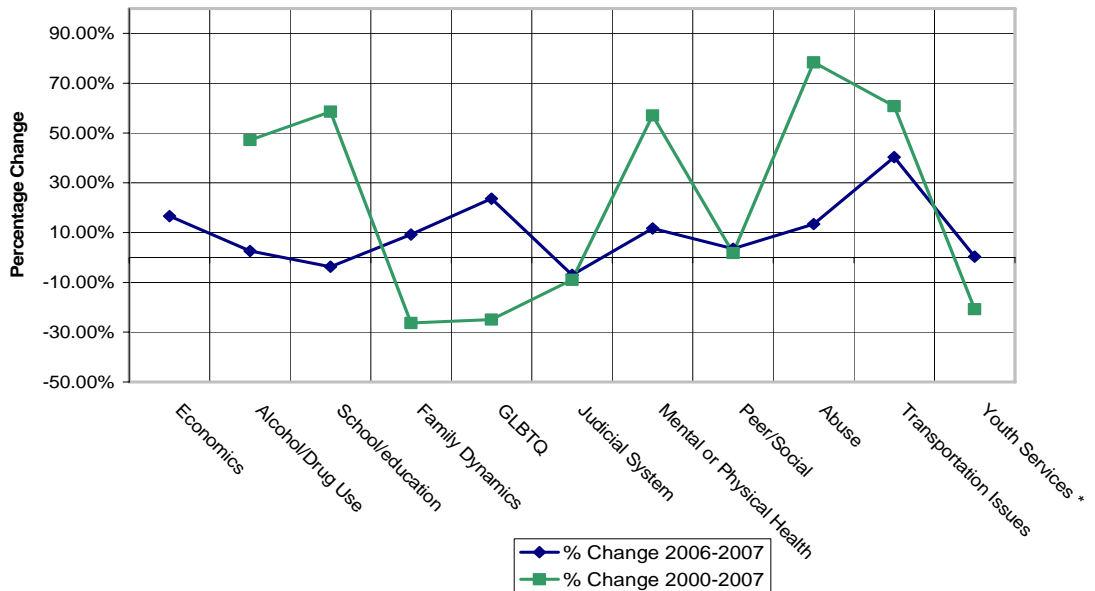


Figure 12: Trend Analysis of Youth Crisis Caller Problems 2000-2007

Percentage Change in Problems Identified by Callers

(Based on a combined sample of 417,383 responses for all eight years - callers can provide multiple answers)



Crisis Caller Relationship to Youth

The majority of crisis callers to the National Runaway Switchboard (NRS) in 2007 were youth calling about themselves at 50 percent (see figure 13). Youth calling about themselves has increased 35 percent over the past eight years (see figure 14). There has also been an increase in youth's friend at 25 percent, relatives, at 20 percent, and non-relative adults, at 37 percent, calling about a youth in crisis over the past eight years.

Figure 13: Distribution of Crisis Caller Relationship in 2007

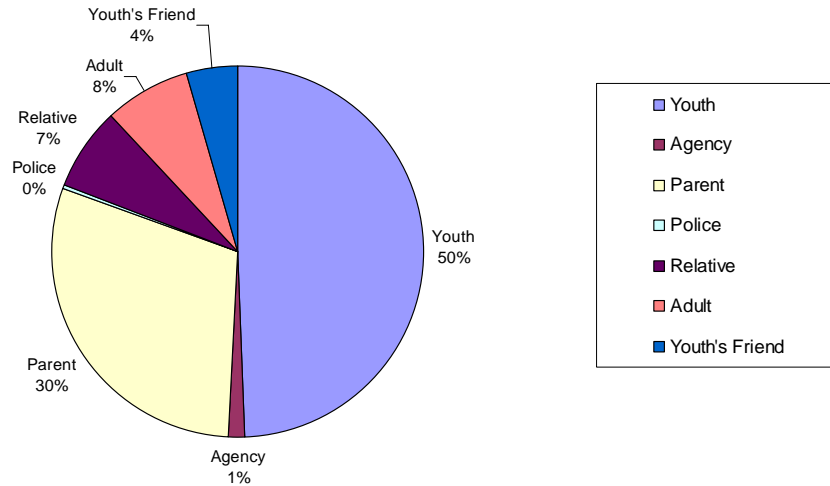
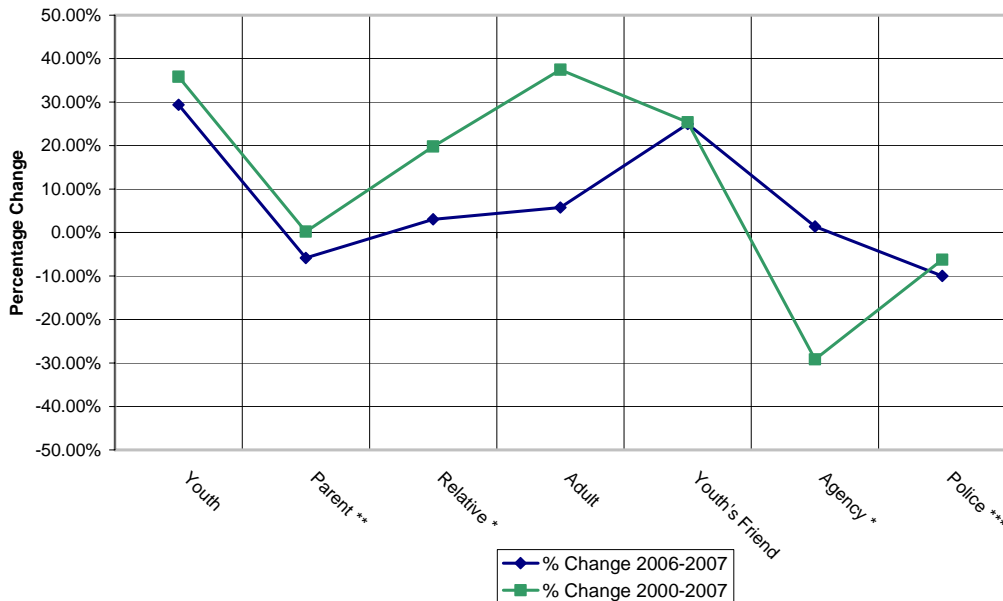


Figure 14: Trend Analysis of Crisis Caller Relationship 2000-2007

Percentage Change in Caller Relationship

(Based on a combined sample of 112,320 crisis calls for all eight years)



Crisis Caller Gender

The majority of crisis calls to the National Runaway Switchboard (NRS) in 2007 came from females at 75 percent. However, there was a 27 percent increase in the number of males calling NRS over the past eight years and a 17 percent increase in the number of females calling NRS in the same period. This shows that male crisis calls to NRS are increasing more rapidly than female crisis calls to NRS, and if the trend continues it will slowly equalize the call rates for males and females (see figure 15).

*Figure 15: Crisis Caller Gender
(Based on a combined sample of 113,326 crisis calls for all eight years)*

<i>Gender</i>	<i>Percent Change 2006-2007</i>	<i>Percent Change 2000-2007</i>
Female	4%	17%
Male	7%	27%