

# Parent Options for Ungovernable Children

Summary guide for parents whose children run away, often skip school, and/or are beyond parental control

## ALL FAMILIES AND CHILDREN EXPERIENCE CRISIS

Sometimes one or more crises may be going on at the same time within families. Families may be able to handle and resolve most of these problems quickly. However, sometimes families have problems that push them to the limit. These problems might include a child who often skips or misses school, runs away from home or threatens to and/or will not follow any directions and is beyond parental control.

## THERE IS HELP FOR YOUR FAMILY

The Florida Legislature passed a law (now Chapter 984, F.S.) that provides help to families and children who need services to improve the behaviors on the part of the child, help the family to move beyond crisis and prevent further problems. The Florida Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) funds and supports these programs to keep kids out of serious trouble.

## CINS/FINS

The services under the law are called [A Child In Need of Services \(CINS\)](#). CINS is a child who has been found by the court to be a runaway, habitually (often) truant, or ungovernable (does not obey you). [A Family In Need of Services \(FINS\)](#) is the term used for a family that has a child who is displaying any of the problem behaviors above as outlined in the law.

## LOCAL PROGRAMS MAY PROVIDE SOLUTIONS

There are local programs that can help you find ways to reduce or stop these kinds of behaviors. Most of the time families can get services in their homes or at a local program. Some solutions require families to go to court, but only as a last resort. In Florida, as a parent, you are responsible for your children and cannot deny them food, clothing, medical care or shelter. If your child often skips school (is truant), you must first work with the school and use available school resources through your local CINS program.

## STEPS TO GET THE HELP YOU NEED

**CALL TOLL-FREE 1-800- RUNAWAY (786-2929).** A trained and experienced counselor can answer your questions and direct you and your child to the Florida Network of Youth and Family Services program nearest to you; **OR** call the program nearest to your home—the location of each program is on the back of this booklet.

**ANSWER** the counselor's questions so that it can be determined if your child can get the services offered through this law. Your child cannot have an open

delinquency case with the Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) and cannot be under the supervision of Department of Children and Families (DCF).

**TELL** your story so that the counselor can understand the situation. This will help the counselor see that you get the right kind of help at the right place.

**LISTEN** to the suggestions and directions for getting help.

**ASK** questions if you do not understand.

**FOLLOW-UP** by going to the CINS/FINS program in your area and by making the appointments or phone calls suggested to you.

**CONTINUE** to work with your local CINS/FINS program and school to improve the situation.

## SERVICES OFFERED BY LOCAL PROGRAMS

### Screening and Assessment

Screening is the beginning of gathering of information about you and your child that helps decide if you are eligible to receive CINS/FINS services. You will be asked questions. You are not eligible for/cannot get services if your child is currently under supervision for delinquency (DJJ) or dependency (DCF). Assessment is the further review and evaluation of the information you give to help you and your child to get the right services.

### Planning for Improvement/Service Plan

Your counselor will work with you, your child and others to write a plan that fits you and your child's needs and goals, the things that will need to be done and the time it will take to finish them.

### Counseling

You and your child may be offered group, family and/or individual counseling.

### Residential Shelter

If you and your child need a break from each other, your CINS/FINS counselor may suggest your child go to the local shelter for "time-out." They will provide safe shelter, food, clothing, and counseling (if necessary), to your child. This short time-out will give you and your child a chance to "cool off" so that work can begin on family issues. The shelter may offer other services that will be explained to you and your child during the intake phase.

## Case Management

Case Management is the coordinating and monitoring of services provided to you and your child.

## Referral Service

Your local CINS/FINS programs can refer you to other agencies in your community that may be able to help you and your child.

## Case Staffing Committee

A Case Staffing Committee is made up of people from the CINS/FINS program, schools, other social service agencies and you. The committee may include a representative from the State Attorney's office or the Florida Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) attorney. The purpose of this "staffing" is to review your child's case and the first service plan developed by you, your child and the CINS/FINS program. If too little or no progress has been made, the plan can be changed. The Case Staffing Committee will meet with you and your child to review the case if:

- you or your child **do not agree with** the services or treatment offered; **and/or**
- you or your child **are not doing your part or taking part** in the services or help; **and/or**
- the local program needs help in developing a **better plan** for you and your child.

You, the parent(s), may ask the local program to hold a case staffing. Your request must be in writing. Please talk to your CINS/FINS counselor before you ask for a case staffing to be scheduled.

If you ask for a case staffing in writing, it must be scheduled within 7 days after the program receives your written request. This 7-day period does not include holidays or weekends.

## OPTIONS WITH THE JUVENILE COURT

**CINS Petition:** A CINS Petition is a written request to the court to find that your child is a CINS (child-in-need-of-services). A CINS petition is usually filed if the child refuses services or continues to exhibit problem behaviors. The Case Staffing Committee could recommend that a CINS petition be filed in court. Sometimes going to court may be the best way to deal with your problems. Going to court is the last resort. The local DJJ attorney will file a CINS petition, if recommended by the Case Staffing Committee. Either at the case staffing or within 7 days of the case staffing, the Case Staffing Committee will send you another plan. This plan will state if filing of a petition to the court is or is not going to happen.

## Florida Network CINS/FINS Agencies

If you, as a parent do not participate, do not allow your child to participate, or you allow your child to ignore the services in this plan, you may be taken to court and a judge may:

- order you to go to family counseling and other programs, **and/or**
- order you to complete community service, **and/or**
- order you to pay a fine.

### You, as a parent or legal guardian, can also file a CINS petition with the court if:

- The local program will not hold a case staffing, **and/or**
- The local program does not schedule a case staffing within 7 days of receiving your written request, **and/or**
- You do not agree with the service plan made by the Case Staffing Committee, **and/or**
- The local program has not given you a report of the reason to recommend or decline a petition within 7 days after the case staffing.

If you wish to file your own CINS petition, the law requires that you let the local DJJ attorney know in writing of your wish to file a petition.

In your CINS petition, you must show that you have participated in and tried all the types of help that have been offered and that none of them helped you and your child with your problems.

If a judge decides that your child is a CINS, the court will have oversight of your child and your family. The judge may:

- place your child under the supervision of the local program; **and/or**
- place your child in the temporary legal custody of another adult willing to care for him or her; **and/or**
- place your child with a child care agency that is willing to care for him/her at no cost; **and/or**
- order your child or you to complete community service hours; **and/or**
- order your child to be placed in a Staff-Secure CINS Shelter for up to 90 days. While in the Staff Secure Shelter, you must participate in all efforts to keep the family together. If at the end of the placement, the family is not reunited, your child will be referred to the Department of Children and Families as a dependent child. Or, if your child continues not to obey the court, he/she may be ordered to a locked placement; **and/or**
- if the court finds that your child needs special services, your child will be referred to the Department of Children and Families; **and/or**
- fine you or your child; **and/or**
- order you or your child to participate in counseling; **and/or**
- order other actions as the court finds necessary.

ACT Corporation  
**Daytona** - (800) 539-4228

Anchorage Children's Home  
**Panama City** - (850) 784-1020

Arnette House  
**Ocala** - (352) 622-6135  
**Leesburg** - (352) 326-3663

Bethel Community Foundation\*  
**St. Petersburg** - (727) 866-2747

Boys Town of Central Florida  
**Oveido** - (407) 366-3667

Capital City Youth Services  
**Tallahassee** - (850) 576-6000

Center for Family & Child Enrichment\*  
**Miami** - (305) 624-7450

Children's Home Society  
**West Palm** - (561) 868-4300  
**Ft. Pierce** - (772) 460-9752

CDS Family and Behavioral Health Services  
**Gainesville** - (352) 334-3833  
**Lake City** - (386) 758-5780  
**Palatka** - (386) 312-2220

Crosswinds Youth Services, Inc.  
**Cocoa** - (321) 452-0800

Family Resources, Inc.  
**St. Petersburg** - (727) 384-8336  
**Clearwater** - (727) 449-8336  
**Bradenton** - (941) 708-5850

Florida Keys Children's Shelter  
**Tavernier** - (305) 852-4246

Friends of Children\*  
**Ft. Lauderdale** - (954) 578-8399

Hillsborough County Children's Services  
**Tampa** - (813) 272-6606

Lutheran Services Florida  
**Pensacola** - (850) 453-2772  
**Crestview** - (850) 682-2374  
**Oakland Park** - (954) 568-2801  
**Ft. Myers** - (800) 329-8336

Mt. Bethel\*  
**Ft. Lauderdale** - (954) 766-6058

Miami Bridge Youth and Family Svcs.  
**Miami** - (305) 635-8953  
**Homestead** - (305) 246-8956

Orange County Youth and Family Svcs.  
**Orlando** - (407) 836-7626  
**Orlando** - (407) 897-6370

Summit Behavioral Healthcare\*  
**Orlando** - (407) 928-4383

Sunnyside Village Youth Shelter  
**Kissimmee** - (407) 498-7016

Sarasota YMCA  
**Sarasota** - (941) 955-5596

Tampa Housing Authority\*  
**Tampa** - (813) 253-0551

Unity Counseling Center\*  
**Coconut Creek** - (954) 297-0297

Urban League of Palm Beach County\*  
**West Palm** - (561) 833-1461

Wayman Community Development\*  
**Jacksonville** - (904) 693-1503

Youth Crisis Center - The Safe Place  
**Jacksonville** - (904) 725-6662

Youth and Family Alternatives  
**New Port Richey** - (727) 835-1777  
**Brooksville** - (352) 797-7566  
**Mulberry** - (863) 595-0220

\* Non Residential services only



2850 Pablo Avenue  
Tallahassee, FL 32308  
(850) 922-4324  
Fax: (850) 921-1778

# IS YOUR CHILD SKIPPING SCHOOL, RUNNING AWAY, SNEAKING OUT AND BREAKING ALL THE RULES?

## Then Read this Booklet!

### A Guide to CINS/FINS Services For Parents

#### HOTLINES

Runaway Hotline	1-800-RUNAWAY	1-800-786-2929
Child Abuse Hotline	1-800-96-ABUSE	1-800-962-2873
Missing Children Information Clearinghouse		1-888-FLMISSING

#### WEBSITES

Florida Network of Youth & Family Services	<a href="http://www.floridanetwork.org">www.floridanetwork.org</a>
Florida Department of Juvenile Justice	<a href="http://www.djj.state.fl.us">www.djj.state.fl.us</a>
Florida Department of Children & Families	<a href="http://www.dcf.state.fl.us">www.dcf.state.fl.us</a>

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