

When a young person comes back

Return from missing: checklist and welfare conversation · children's homes

Precinct Care

For the staff on shift when a young person comes back after being missing. Keep it calm and welcoming: the aim is that they are safe and know they can come back.

This is the home's own welfare conversation. It is not the independent return home interview, which the placing authority must offer within 72 hours of the young person's return.

Straight away

- ☐ Tell the police they are back (call 101 with the police reference number).
- ☐ Check for injuries, and get medical help if needed.
- ☐ Offer food, a drink, a shower and rest.
- ☐ Check medication: were any doses missed?
- ☐ Tell the manager on call.
- ☐ Tell the social worker, or the out-of-hours team at night.
- ☐ Tell family if the young person's plan says to.
- ☐ Note the time they came back, and how and with whom.

Signs to look out for

- ☐ New phone, clothes, money or gifts
- ☐ Injuries or marks
- ☐ Alcohol or drugs
- ☐ Very tired, hungry or unwashed
- ☐ Change in mood or behaviour
- ☐ Travelled a long way, or came back in a car with someone
- ☐ With older people, or people we don't know

The welfare conversation

When they are ready, ideally the same day. Use their words in the record.

Are you OK? Is anything hurting?	
Where did you go?	
Who were you with?	
Did anyone give you anything (money, a phone, alcohol, drugs, gifts) or ask you to do anything?	
How did you get there and back?	
Did anything happen that worried you?	
What made you go, and what would help next time?	
Is there anyone you would like us to talk to?	

Afterwards

- ☐ Write up the missing record and daily log within 24 hours.
- ☐ Raise a safeguarding concern with the DSL if there are any signs of exploitation or harm.
- ☐ Chase the independent return home interview (offered within 72 hours).
- ☐ Update the missing from care profile and risk assessment.
- ☐ Review the young person's plan for if they go missing.
- ☐ Notify Ofsted under reg 40 if police involvement was serious or exploitation is suspected.
- ☐ Pass information to the police (partnership intelligence form) if it could help.

Sign off

Staff member	
Date and time	
Reviewed by the manager	