

# A growing suburban problem Police tackle problems of runaways

They are often...  
The fact that...  
While a few show up only after being arrested, others return home after a few days on the streets.  
"They get back home as soon as they find out it's not as easy as it seems to be on the street," said Farmington Hills Police Officer Linda Harris.  
"They find out it's a bad idea at home," she said.



LINDA HARRIS

WHILE MOST of them return home, the reasons for their hitting the road are sometimes, at this glance, trivial. One teen confessed she ran away from home because her parents insisted she wash the dishes in addition to doing her schoolwork. It was more than she could handle, she argued. The family has gone into counseling. Another teen left home because she resented the strict rules her parents set. They were religious and expected their daughter to act and dress in accordance with their church's policy. Things which seem minor to parents can have a greater effect on teens. In fact, some teens can be as much as motivated for their runaway behavior as a result of a bad grade or a bad fight with a friend. Others leave to find a situation of family and social problems. These problems are perpetuated by a lack of communication. Harris said. If you are old and are treated like a child and never can't get an answer from your parents is likely to run away from home. "I've often think that that kid is a runaway from a month old to 12 years old. They're not supposed to have opinions or feelings. They don't look at the person as an individual," Harris says of some teenagers' families. Once teens leave home, they can find someone to help them stay away from their family and police. Often, their friends' parents will

they sleep in their parents' beds...  
Some even help the teen evade their families, according to police.  
"That's standard procedure. Many adults look for the kids," Harris said. Some parents harbor the runaway friends because they fear their own offspring will leave with them, according to Harris.  
Police, usually younger adults who have their own living quarters, only see the runaway side of the story. They often feel, but any police officer can see the parents' side when they don't hear from their children.

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