Purpose

Give direction to staff members when a youth is brought or presents to a West Des Moines public safety building that is identified as a “Safe Place”.

Policy

Provide a safe environment where a youth in crisis can wait until a YESS (Youth Emergency Services & Shelter) staff person can respond. Check on the youth as needed while he/she waits. If a youth arrives at one of the public safety buildings after normal business hours or if no other city employee is in the building, the ambulance staff is to be placed out of service until a supervisor or police officer arrives to assume responsibility for the youth.

Procedure

1. Get a general idea of what is wrong. Ask the youth if they came into your building because it is a “Safe Place”.

Do not attempt to go into detail about the problem. Be supportive of the youth that has asked for help. Tell the youth that you are going to call Youth Emergency Services & Shelter (YESS) and have them send a staff person to talk about the situation.

Offer the youth a place to sit and wait for the YESS representative.
2. Contact YESS at (515) 282-9377. Tell the person answering the telephone you are calling from a “Safe Place” site. Identify yourself, your location and give a description of the youth. The YESS staff person will ask some general questions, and ask to speak with the youth.

3. A YESS staff person will call you back and tell you the name and identification of the staff, and the description of the vehicle being used to pick up the youth.

Tell the youth that a staff member from YESS will be there shortly.

4. Remind the youth to wait in the area you have suggested. Make an effort to check on the youth every few minutes and show support without getting into specifics of the situation.

While the youth is waiting, make sure he/she is not vulnerable to someone who might talk him/her out of getting help. Be sure the youth waits inside the building in the area designated at each facility. The youth should not be in the way of normal business activities, but at the same time should be in an area where he/she can be easily checked on.

5. When the YESS staff person arrives, they will identify themselves with a photo ID. IF there is any discrepancy or question, call YESS back. Do not allow the youth to meet or go with someone who has not been verified.

6. After YESS staff has escorted the youth from the building, record your name, the YESS staff person’s name, the date and time of the incident in an incident report in Share Point.

Special Circumstances

1. If the youth has evidence of injury, evaluate the patient, provide routine care and transport the youth to a local hospital for further evaluation.

2. If there is a situation where you or the youth are threatened or in danger, call for a police officer to assist.