

232.196 Runaway assessment center.

1. As part of a county runaway treatment plan under section 232.195, a county may establish a runaway assessment center or other plan. The center or other plan, if established, shall provide services to assess a child who is referred to the center or plan for being a chronic runaway and intensive family counseling services designed to address any problem causing the child to run away. A center shall at least meet the requirements established for providing child foster care under chapter 237.

2. *a.* If not sent home with the child's parent, guardian, or custodian, a chronic runaway may be placed in a runaway assessment center by the peace officer who takes the child into custody under section 232.19, if the officer believes it to be in the child's best interest after consulting with the child's parent, guardian, or custodian. A chronic runaway shall not be placed in a runaway assessment center for more than forty-eight hours.

b. If a runaway is placed in an assessment center according to a county plan, the runaway shall be assessed within twenty-four hours of being placed in the center by a center counselor to determine the following:

(1) The reasons why the child is a runaway.

(2) Whether the initiation or continuation of child in need of assistance or family in need of assistance proceedings is appropriate.

c. As soon as practicable following the assessment, the child and the child's parents, guardian, or custodian shall be provided the opportunity for a counseling session to identify the underlying causes of the runaway behavior and develop a plan to address those causes.

d. A child shall be released from a runaway assessment center, established pursuant to the county plan, to the child's parents, guardian, or custodian not later than forty-eight hours after being placed in the center unless the child is placed in shelter care under section 232.21 or an order is entered under section 232.78. A child whose parents, guardian, or custodian failed to attend counseling at the center or fail to take custody of the child at the end of placement in the center may be the subject of a child in need of assistance petition or such other order as the juvenile court finds to be in the child's best interest.

97 Acts, ch 90, §4; 98 Acts, ch 1100, §29