

Preventing and Addressing Child Trafficking

Emergency Backpack List & Safety Planning Tool - Go Bags!



ABOUT GO BAGS



What Is a Go Bag?

A Go Bag is a backpack filled with essential items for youth who may be in crisis or transition. Go Bags are especially useful when a young person is recovered from a trafficking situation, is leaving placement, or may find themselves in an unsafe or high-risk situation.

Go Bags are a key harm reduction strategy, helping to meet youth where they are by ensuring they have access to basic needs, comfort items, and safety resources. While a Go Bag cannot prevent a crisis, it can support a youth's dignity, safety, and wellbeing, and help reduce risk during difficult times.

The list on the following page was developed as a resource for your county program or agency to consider when developing Go Bags.

Purpose of a Go Bag

- To provide immediate access to essential supplies during emergencies or transitions.
- To reduce harm by helping youth stay safer when outside of care or in unstable situations.
- To empower youth with choice, autonomy, and practical resources.
- To affirm worth and dignity by offering high-quality, respectful, and personalized care items.

A Few Tips for Use

Partner and Prepare

- Partner with local community groups or advocacy agencies to fund Go Bags and supply them in advance to organizations or systems that support youth, so they're ready for quick distribution.
- Include a printed copy of the packing list, and review it with the youth as they pack or receive their bag.

Develop a Safety Plan Together

- When possible, use the Go Bag as a conversation starter to help the youth create their own safety plan. Assist to identify key safe(r) people, places, and resources that can help them during a crisis.
- Review Asterisked (*) Items

Go over written instructions and safety practices for any specialized or sensitive items. These discussions can also be a valuable opportunity for engagement and connection.

Offer Choice and Personalization

- While pre-packed Go Bags can be convenient, involving youth in choosing their items provides an opportunity for connection and empowerment.
- Have extra items available so youth can swap out products to match their preferences and needs.
- Avoid assumptions about gender preferences (e.g., deodorant, underwear, lotion).
- When possible, provide full-size hygiene items—they can be both practical and meaningful.

A Go Bag is more than a collection of supplies—it's a message that the youth is valued, seen, and worthy of care. Each Go Bag represents an act of compassion and a tangible expression of dignity and support.

PACKING LIST



- Flashlight (rechargeable)*
- 2 locks*: one for a locker or a tent & one to lock up the main part of backpack
- 2 water bottles (one that filters water*)
- Personal Alarm to scare people away, rape whistle or pepper spray*
- Emergency Sleeping bag
- Raincoat or Poncho
- Soft blanket
- Charging cables for electronics or phone (consider: portable phone charger)
- Hairbrush or Incl. option for culturally specific hair products (ie: cap, detangling brush)
- Personal care kit (toiletries w/ added: nail clippers, lip balm, hand lotion)
- Soap container (to hold soap bars)
- Band-aids
- Condoms*
- 3 pairs of socks
- Notebook/Journal and pen
- Permanent marker (to put your names on things)
- Large plastic bag that zips (gallon or larger size)
- Personal wipes (body wipes or baby wipes)
- Keychain or fidget toy

Local Resource Directory

- National/Local Hotline Numbers
- Food
- Medical Care
- Showers
- Laundry
- Clothes
- Safe Using Sites
- Mobile Clinics
- Emergency Help
- 2SLGBTQIA+ safe places
- Mental Health
- Cultural and Spiritual Resources



**Have explanations of how to use this item that you go over together with youth*

EXTRA ITEMS TO CONSIDER



- Art Supplies
- Better sleeping items: heavier blanket, tarp to keep moisture out, bed pad, tent/sleeping bags
- Biohazard buckets for needles*
- Books: I.e. Runaway Girl (Carissa Phelps), In Pursuit of Love (Rebecca Bender), OVC Graphic Novels for Youth, coloring books, comic books and non-HT Related Books for social justice education and entertainment based on preference i.e. Brene Brown, Angela Davis, Adrienne Marie Brown, Bell Hook.
- Access to preprogrammed audiobooks, an iPod or battery operated radio for music and news.
- Cell phones and safe cell phone use policy*
 - Include phone charger
 - Pre-program safe places phone #'s into contacts
- To-Go Food Items: (ie: Cup O' noodles, Mac N' cheese cups, microwaveable soups and pastas, protein shakes/bars)
- Snacks or gift cards to fast food places
- Feminine Hygiene Products
- Fentanyl Testing Strips*
- Make-Up, wigs/hair products for different hair types (Gender affirming products for trans women)
- Medications- (small amounts and/or the pharmacy location to get their refill)
- Narcan*
- Nicotine Patches or Nicotine Chewing Gum*
- Portable toilets
- Sweatshirt & Sweatpants/Leggings
- Stuffed Animal (squishmallows, beanie baby, or smaller huggable pillows)
- Transportation cards i.e. metro, uber, bus, etc.*
- Underwear/Boxers/Sports Bras
- Wallet or Coin Purse (to keep identification)

** Have explanations of how to use this item that you go over together with youth*





SAFETY PLANNING TOGETHER

When to Start Safety Planning?

Just as trauma informed engagement should start at first point of contact with a youth, so should safety planning. Use the time during your initial contacts to affirm that you are there for them. Get to know who they are, what coping skills they have, how they assess danger, and what plans they have if they find themselves in a dangerous situation.

Key Questions to Ask:

- What does safety look like for you?
- Who do you consider safe within your chosen village?
- Where would you go if you needed a place to hide?
- Are there any current or previous risks to your safety you want me to know about?
- What are some immediate needs that you have?
- How can I help support those needs?
- Who else can support?

Key Resources to provide - Youth can program numbers in their phone under other aliases

- National Human Trafficking Hotline (888)373-7888
- CA Youth Crisis Line (800)843-5200
- 9-1-1 **AND** have a trauma informed conversation with them about their experience with law enforcement. What fears do they have if any with making that call? Assess if this would be a viable option in a life or death situation for them.
- Role play what to do during common situations they may experience (ie: if you are in a car and unable to get out, what other exit strategies are available?)

How to Safety Plan if Youth is already in crisis?

There will be times in our work with youth who experience trafficking that we are meeting them in the middle of a crisis where the threat of danger is imminent. It is important to be a constant grounding presence to assist them during an emergency. Their fears, anger, survival will be high. Recognize that you are engaging with them during a fight, flight, freeze, or fawn state, be direct and calm in your response.

Key Engagement Responses

- Affirm the seriousness of the situation and ask permission at each step. Ex: I hear that you are scared right now, would it be ok to send police to your location?
- Give them agency to make choices along the way. Ex: Because you are a minor, I can't just leave without having a response right now. Can we call the crisis line together or would you rather do that on your own while I wait outside?
- Finalize the plan of action with them and bring in coping skills along the way. Ex: Can you take a few sips of water while I talk? Sounds like we are going to take 3 steps today. Step 1: You are going to grab your go bag. Step 2, we are going to meet at Starbucks in 15 minutes. Step 3: We are going to find a safe place for you to sleep tonight.

REPORTING & RESOURCES

California Local Child Welfare 24/7 Hotlines - Report Child Abuse & Neglect

Contact the respective county child protective services hotline to consult or make a report on child abuse and/or neglect.

- www.cdss.ca.gov/reporting/report-abuse/child-protective-services/report-child-abuse

National Center for Missing & Exploited Children (NCMEC)

Report instances of missing & exploited children to NCMEC and check out specialized resources and training available to educate the community and first-responders on child sex trafficking and sextortion.

- 24/7 Hotline: 1-800-843-5678
- Cyber Tip report.cybertip.org

Office on Trafficking in Persons: Report Concerns Involving Foreign National Youth

Report concerns of foreign national youth who may have experienced trafficking on their journey to the United States or after arrival. Youth may be eligible to apply for certain assistance programs, and must first receive an Eligibility Letter or Interim Assistance Letter from the Office on Trafficking in Persons (OTIP).

- Ph: (202) 205-4582
- Email: childtrafficking@acf.hhs.gov
- [OTIP Child Trafficking Eligibility Toolkit](https://acf.gov/otip), <https://acf.gov/otip>

National Human Trafficking Hotline

Report tips, seek services & ask for help 24/7 (available in 200 languages).

- 24/7 Hotline & Tip Line: 1 - 888- 373-7888
- Textline: Text "BeFree" (233733)
- Live Chat: <https://humantraffickinghotline.org/en/chat>

Report Child Labor Violations

- CA Labor Commissioner's Office (415) 703-5300 | www.dir.ca.gov/DLSE
- US. Department of Labor (866) 487-9243 | www.dol.gov/whd
- YoungWorkers.org - A project of the California Partnership for Young Worker Health and Safety. Their goal is to prevent California's young workers from being injured or killed on the job. The site hosts downloadable materials regarding employment for young workers.



For more info about PACT & Additional Resources visit PACT.CFPIC.ORG