

Our Mission is...

The Family Services Team of Erie County is available to assist families with stabilizing their youth in their home, school, and community, along with preventing further system penetration through the linkage of targeted community-based services.

How do I apply for services at Family Services Team?

- Our hours of operation are Monday through Friday 9:00am to 3:30pm, closed on holidays.
- Parent/ legal guardian must fully complete the paperwork/ application.
- Parent/ legal guardian will meet with a staff member, where parent/legal guardian will discuss pressing issues concerning the family and youth.
- The staff member will review the application, assess risks and set-up a service plan that best fits the family based on the family's risk factors and needs in accordance with New York State law.
- If appropriate, the parent will be referred to a community based diversion service provider as a first step in problem resolution.

Can I go directly to Family Court to apply for PINS Diversion Services?

NO- All Pins Diversion complaints must come through the Family Services Team. Generally, a service plan is implemented and is required prior to Family Court involvement.



Parent Tips For Successful PINS Diversion

- Ensure that your child clearly understands what you expect from him/ her; Be specific.
- Be consistent with rules and expectations everyday; Don't frequently change them.
- Patience is key. New learning takes time, a child needs time to learn new behavior.
- Emphasize the positive and encourage through praise. Children succeed when they receive affection and support.
- Reward good behavior. This is more long-lasting and powerful than punishment..
- Use a positive approach to discipline. If you remain calm, so will your child.
- Follow through. Empty threats are not effective in stopping a negative behavior.
- Do not ignore a situation, but do not act out of frustration. Careful, controlled action will be effective at changing the undesired behavior.
- Be open to change. If your old ways of handling your child's behavior didn't work, you must be willing to try something new. Change takes time.
- Be a positive role model. Your child will most likely follow your example.

Appletree Business Park
2875 Union Road
Cheektowaga, New York 14227
Phone (716) 858-8349
Fax (716) 858-7492

Family Services of Erie County



Appletree Business Park
Suite 356
2875 Union Road
Cheektowaga, NY 14227

Hours of Operation
9:00 am -3:30
No appointment necessary

Telephone: 716-858-8349
Fax: 716-858-7492

What is a Person in Need of Supervision (PINS)?

A PINS individual is less than 18 years of age and demonstrates habitual ungovernable, incorrigible, disobedient behaviors including truant; and/or runaway behaviors. They are beyond the lawful control of a parent.

What does FST-PINS Diversion offer families?

FST offers youth and their families support and community-based services/resources to help stabilize a youth in their home, school, and community environments, in order to promote a successful transition to adulthood.

GOALS of PINS DIVERSION

1. Reduce the use of Family Court intervention for troubled youth and their families.
2. Reduce the number of out-of-home placements that result from a PINS petition being filed in family court.
3. Promote a successful transition to adulthood.

Who is eligible for PINS Diversion?

Erie County youth between the ages of 7 and 18 who demonstrate habitual ungovernable behaviors that put themselves at risk of out of home placement.

Examples:

1. Youth willfully does not regularly attend school.
2. Youth often disobeys parents, guardians, or other authority figures despite appropriate parental attempts to intervene.
3. Youth is missing from home (runaways), and whereabouts are unknown for over 24 hours.
4. Youth uses illicit substances without treatment cooperation.

Who can bring a COMPLAINT?

- Most PINS Diversion complaints are made by parent(s)/legal guardian(s). School districts (for truant filings) and peace officers may also file a complaint.
- Persons bringing a complaint must consent to and participate in all diversion efforts before a formal petition can be filed.

For further questions or clarification, you may contact the Family Services Team's general number by calling (716) 858-8349.

What Should I Do If My Child Runs Away?

- The child must be missing a minimum of 24 hrs.
- Family must be able to demonstrate efforts attempted to locate the youth (call school, family, friends, etc.)
- Obtain a missing person's report from your local police department. They will provide you with a personal complaint number.
- Bring complaint number to the Family Services Team.
- An Intake interview will be completed.
- If youth's whereabouts are still unknown, the family will be provided runaway outreach services.
- Runaway Outreach will work with you to find the youth.
- If youth remains missing, a PINS referral will be prepared and faxed to Family Court Petition Processing. This allows the parent/guardian or referral source to file a PINS petition in Family Court.
- Once youth has been located and answered their PINS Petition in Family Court, a determination of next steps for diversion will occur.

What Should I Do In An Emergency?

In any situation where your child appears to be a danger to him self or others:

Call the Crisis And Response
Emergency Services (C.A.R.E.S.)
(716) 882-4357