

Runaway:

In New Mexico there is no law stating a child cannot voluntarily leave their house. When a child runs away they cannot be arrested and the person who they are with cannot be charged with a crime if they are only supplying a safe place to stay for the child. It is illegal for an adult to interfere with another parent's custody and to kidnap a child.

If a child who runs away has criminal charges already pending, that child could face a violation of conditions of release in their criminal case for leaving their home.

If a child is reported as a runaway to the police, it is the police's job to ensure the child is safe. The police may come into contact with the child where they are staying and ensure it is safe. The police may also contact the parent and tell the parent where the child is staying. Generally, police do not physically restrain and return children to their homes without a court order. A police officer may contact child protective services (CYFD) and take the child to meet with CYFD to determine if abuse or neglect has occurred.