



Heads Up Kentucky

Psychology Promotes Healthy Living

What is Heads Up Kentucky?

Heads Up Kentucky! is a collaboration of Psychology and Art that pairs consumer information about healthier living with commissioned public art. Over forty artistically transformed fiberglass "Heads" will be seen across Metro Louisville throughout the Summer, 2005. The Head Stands will serve as a display for consumer education information on the mind-body connection and psychological aspects of wellness, helping people learn how to live healthier lives. *Heads Up for Kids: Secrets of the Mind Body Connection* will bring health curriculum into the elementary schools this fall. The proceeds of the auction of the Heads will be split between the KPA Foundation and a consortium of visual arts education organizations.

About the KPA Foundation

The Kentucky Psychological Association Foundation seeks to improve the lives of Kentuckians through public education about psychology, supports psychological research, and provides scholarship to students in psychology at higher education institutions across the Commonwealth. Donations to KPAF are tax-deductible. For more information about KPA and the KPA Foundation, visit the web at www.kpa.org

Kentucky Psychological Association Foundation

120 Sears Avenue • Suite 202 • Louisville KY 40207
502.894.0777 • www.kpa.org

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Teens and Suicide



TIPS 4 PARENTS



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Presented by
THE KENTUCKY PSYCHOLOGICAL
ASSOCIATION FOUNDATION

Teens and Suicide

Adolescence has always been hard, and almost all teens will experience periods of moodiness. For some teens, this time may be so hard and they may feel so depressed that they consider killing themselves. Losses or rejections can feel devastating. Teenagers may see a temporary situation as a permanent condition and see suicide as a way to solve their problems. Suicide attempts are often impulsive responses to fights, losses, failures or disappointments—feeling like they've let themselves or someone else down.

What You Can Do

Build time together into your routine. Regular time together makes it much easier to talk. Like any other time in your child's life, spending time with your teen is important: eating together, time spent in the car, even doing household chores together. It is your "frontline defense" in knowing if your child is having problems that may need help.



Know your teen's friends. Get to know them and help them feel comfortable with you. This helps make it easier for them to let you know if they are worried about your child and helps reduce risks of alcohol/drug use or other risky behavior.

Store guns safely. Access to guns greatly increases risk. Keep guns unloaded and locked out of reach. Store ammunition locked and apart from the gun.

Get help with problems. If there are problems in the way your teen and you are getting along or problems in the family with alcohol, drugs or conflicts, get help to work things out.

Recognizing the Warning Signs

- Depressed mood or a sudden rise in cheerfulness and activity after a period of depression
- Giving verbal hints or talking directly about suicide
- Alcohol and/or drug use
- Violent actions, rebellious behavior, or running away
- A strong change in personality, eating or sleeping habits, or personal appearance
- Pulling back from friends, family and regular activities
- No longer interested in or enjoying activities that used to be fun
- Giving away, destroying or throwing away special personal possessions
- Persistent boredom, trouble concentrating, or a severe drop in schoolwork
- Frequent complaints about stomachaches, headaches, fatigue, etc.
- Not tolerating praise or rewards

Other Risk Factors for Suicide

- Previous suicide attempts
- Family member or friend who has committed suicide.
- Past psychiatric hospitalization
- Recent losses (death, divorce, breakup, etc.)
- Social isolation
- Handguns in the home, especially if loaded

What To Do If You Think Your Teen May Be Suicidal

- Offer help and listen. Encourage depressed teens to talk about their feelings. Listen, don't lecture. Allow and accept expressions of feelings.
- Pay attention to talk about suicide. Ask direct questions. Don't be afraid of frank discussions. Asking about suicidal thoughts will not put the idea in their head. It may help your child feel that he or she is being heard and is being taken seriously.
- Trust your instincts and seek professional help. If it seems that the situation may be serious, seek prompt help from a psychologist who has experience helping depressed teens.

National Suicide Hotline:

1-800-SUICIDE (1-800-784-2433)

For more information:

Heads Up Kentucky: www.headsupkentucky.org

www.kidshealth.org

American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry:

www.aacap.org

American Academy of Pediatrics: www.aap.org

American Association of Suicidology: www.suicidology.org

American Psychological Association: www.apa.org

National Mental Health Association: www.nmha.org

The material provided in this brochure is based on scientific research by psychologists and other health care professionals. For references, contributor information, and additional reading on this topic, please go to the Heads Up Kentucky! website at www.headsupkentucky.org.