

2011-2012
Teen
Yellow Pages

**For Teens Living In
Clay, Platte, and Ray Counties**

Published and Distributed By

*Clay, Platte, Ray, Mental Health
Board of Trustees*





About the Teen Yellow Pages

This directory is published and distributed by the **Clay, Platte, Ray, Mental Health Board of Trustees.**

The Clay, Platte, Ray, Mental Health Board of Trustees administers the mental health tax levy fund for the three-county area.

These funds are used to assist residents through tough, emotional, stressful times in their lives. In addition to providing monetary assistance for residents to secure mental health services, the Mental Health Board provides education and prevention services.

The Teen Yellow Pages is a reminder that you are not alone. There are people who care. If you need another copy of this directory for yourself or for a friend, call 468-4352.

An online edition of the Teen Yellow Pages can be accessed on the Tri-County Mental Health Services website at www.tri-countymhs.org and click on "Helpful Info."





Introduction



As a teenager in the Northland, you are faced with many questions and decisions. There are many people in the Kansas City area who are ready to help you find answers. The Teen Yellow Pages is a resource guide written just for you. The resources listed in this guide can help you with life's challenges. We hope that the Teen Yellow Pages will help you learn more about local resources. Remember, it never hurts to ask for help.

Almost all of the agencies listed in the Teen Yellow Pages guarantee your confidentiality when you call them. This means they will not tell other people you have contacted them or discuss what you talk about. If you want to make sure the agency will keep your conversation private, simply ask them when you first call, "Will this conversation be confidential?"

How to use these yellow pages

If you have a question, interest or concern, the Teen Yellow Pages gives you up-to-date information and telephone numbers of organizations that can help you. The Table of Contents can help you find the numbers quickly.

In addition to the telephone numbers in this directory, there are many people in your life who can listen to you and help you: parents, family



members, family friends, religious leaders, teachers or counselors.

This booklet is not intended to take the place of professional advice. It is for information purposes only and offers you suggestions on where to get started when you need help.

When phone numbers are listed in **bold** type, these are agencies we suggest you call first.

Put the area code before all phone numbers, except those in the area code from which you are dialing. The phone numbers in this directory are in the 816 area code, unless stated otherwise.

If you can't find the information or phone number that you need in these Yellow Pages, call United Way at 2-1-1.

If you happen to call a number that is no longer working, don't give up. Call another resource listed in that same section or check with the telephone operator or your phone book for the agency's new number.

If you live in Ray County and the number you need to reach is long-distance, please call the Salvation Army in Richmond at 776-8191. They will help you contact the agency or organization.

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Fun Things To Do

Having fun is important! Sports, clubs, school or church activities are a few examples of how you can meet friends, learn new skills, feel good about yourself and have fun, too.

There are lots of ways to have fun with a group or by yourself.

Our community offers roller and ice skating, bowling, swimming, gymnastics, karate, and lots of opportunities for hiking, walking, and bicycling. Check with your school and church for community education and recreation activities. Your local parks department can tell you about the many recreational programs they offer.

Doing new things can be scary sometimes, but it gets easier once you get involved. There are places throughout the Northland that offer programs especially for young people. Some of them are listed here. Call and ask for more information. If they don't offer what you're looking for, ask them if they know of an organization that does.

American Red Cross -----	931-8400
(Classes in fire safety, basic first aid, water safety)	
Boy Scouts (Clay, Platte and Ray Co.) -----	942-9333
Boys & Girls Club of Greater Kansas City -----	361-3600
Camp Fire Boys and Girls -----	756-1950
Girl Scouts (Clay, Platte and Ray Co.) -----	358-8750
Salvation Army (Activities and Programs) -----	452-5663
Synergy Teen Youth Leadership (STYL) -----	587-4100
Community 2000 (TCMHS) -----	468-0400
YMCA -----	453-6600



You can get help in planning activities for your school, church or other organization from **TREND**. This national organization helps teens "celebrate sober events." For more information, just call **1-314-962-5124**.

Public libraries provide many free services. There are books on almost every topic, from basketball to romance, self-esteem to job hunting. Libraries also have college catalogs, magazines, computers, films, audio and video cassettes, compact discs and artwork. Some have special programs for teens.

Synergy's Teen Youth Leadership program offers a unique opportunity for teens to volunteer, learn leadership skills and have fun together. For more information, call **Synergy at 587-4100**. Our area's Community 2000 program offers teens opportunities to organize drug and alcohol-free youth activities. Leadership opportunities are also available through the program's **Youth With Vision** initiative. Call **468-7088, ext. 196** for information.

Through the Kansas City Star website you can access a site (www.4KIDS.org) that keeps you up-to-date on fun things to do in our community. Your library has a computer you can use to look up websites.

Volunteering

Volunteering is a way you can use your special talents to help other people. You can learn a lot and gain job experience, too. You might volunteer at a church, city hall, a local hospital or nursing home.

It's easy to get involved. Contact a teacher or counselor about your school's community service activities. Check your local newspaper for volunteer opportunities. Call one of the agencies listed in this directory and ask to talk with someone about volunteer opportunities.





To find out about volunteer opportunities, call:

- Community 2000 468-0400
- United Way 2-1-1
- Synergy Teen Youth Leadership 587-4100
- Volunteer Connection 472-4865
- YMCA 453-6600
- Tri-County Mental Health Services
- Youth with Vision 468-7088, ext. 196

Internet Savvy and Safety

Whatever your age, the Internet is a fun place to hang out. Facebook, MySpace, and Twitter are great ways to keep in touch with friends and family. There are sites to keep up with your favorite hobbies and help with homework. By going online, you have access to the worldwide community of libraries, museums and places to have fun.

However, it is very important to follow a few simple guidelines to assure your safety and privacy. Being online can make you a target for crime and exploitation. Not all of the individuals are who they say they are. By taking some precautions and using common sense, you can participate in all of the benefits of the Internet and stay safe. For more information and ways to insure your



privacy and safety, go to www.safeteens.com,
www.netsmartz.org. or
<http://personalweb.about.com>.

- The most important thing to remember is when you are online in any kind of public forum, anyone can read whatever you post. Never post anything that you wouldn't want everybody to see or know.
- **Keep your identity private.** Never give out your full name, address or phone number, the name of your school, birthdate or any other information that could help someone determine your actual identity. Use a screen name. Don't post your last name; just use your last initial.
- Use privacy settings to restrict viewing of your profile only to your friends/family. On Twitter, use the "protect my updates" setting. On Facebook, use the privacy settings in the profile section.
- When posting your photograph, choose a close-up shot of your face or a group shot of friends. Do not post photos that show school or work uniforms.
- Never upload or post pictures on the internet to people you don't know. Never post suggestive pictures.
- Never download pictures from an unknown source.
- Never agree to meet with someone you meet online.
- Never post false information about other people.
- Never respond to e-mail, chat comments or newsgroup messages that are hostile, belligerent, inappropriate or make you feel uncomfortable.
- Not everything you read online is true. If you are accessing information about alcohol, tobacco, drugs or your health, be sure to use reliable, science-based websites. Many of these reliable websites are listed in this directory.



Doors to More Learning

Getting an education is one of the most important things a young person can do. Staying in school and graduating is the best way you have of reaching your goals for the future. If you are having trouble with your grades in school, get help. Ask your school counselor about available tutoring or assistance.

If things are happening in your life that make staying in a regular school seem impossible, you don't have to give up. Talk to a teacher or counselor at your school. Alternative schools and GED programs are available to help you.

DeLaSalle Education Center 561-4445
GED Programs and Adult Education and Literacy Program (Clay, Platte and Ray counties) 413-5480

In today's job market, a high school diploma is necessary for almost any job. But it is also to your advantage to have education or training beyond high school. Your school counselor has lots of information to share with you about different schools you could attend. Or you might want to attend a vocational school and learn skills which will help you qualify for a particular job.

There are many resources to help you pay for your education. Your school counselor has information about what kind of financial assistance is available.

Working is a great way to gain experience, to explore career choices, and to earn extra income.

Your age determines how many hours and what types of jobs you can hold. If you are 16 or 17, you may work unlimited hours at any nonhazardous job. If you are 14 or 15, you may work outside school hours on a limited basis: 3 hours on a school day and 8 hours on a non-school day





with a limit of 18 hours in a school week and 40 hours during a non-school week. There are many ways that younger teens can earn some extra money and gain experience, such as yard mowing or child care. These agencies can also help you get job training or find a job:

- Boys & Girls Club of Greater Kansas City 361-3600
- Don Bosco Center 691-2900
- Excelsior Springs Job Corps Center 630-5501
- Full Employment Council 468-8767**
- Ray County 776-3920**
- Northland Career Center 858-5505

Joining The Military

Many students help pay for educational expenses by making a commitment to one of the branches of the Armed Forces. Remember that it is very difficult, and in most cases, impossible to change your mind about military service once you have signed, regardless of what you have been told. Once you enlist, you are legally obligated to keep this commitment. Even the Army recruitment site encourages teens and parents to “start slowly,” when considering enlistment. Incentive packages vary and the benefits promised can change depending upon testing and basic training results. For more information about joining the military, visit the following websites:

- Department of Defense www.usmilitary.about.com
- Marine Parents www.marineparents.com
- Army www.goarmy.com
- Navy www.navy.com
- Air Force www.airforce.com
- Marines www.marines.com





Stress Management

As a teen, you certainly know about stress. School demands, problems with friends and peers, your parents expectations, and too many activities are just some of the reasons you might feel stressed.

Stress can often result in physical symptoms, like headaches, panic attacks and insomnia. The best thing you can do is to learn some strategies to quickly reduce your stress. Here are some tips to try. If you are still feeling overwhelmed, it would be a good idea to talk with your health care provider or counselor.

- Exercise and eat regularly.
- Avoid excess caffeine (sodas, coffees) which can increase feelings of anxiety and agitation.
- Avoid illegal drugs, alcohol and tobacco.
- Learn relaxation exercises (abdominal breathing and muscle relaxation techniques).
- Develop assertiveness training skills. For example, state feelings in polite, firm and not overly aggressive or passive ways: "I feel angry when you yell at me" or "Please stop yelling."
- Rehearse and practice situations which cause stress. For example, if talking in front of people makes you nervous, take a speech class to help you deal with your anxiety.
- Learn practical coping skills. For example, break a large task into smaller, more attainable tasks.
- Decrease negative self talk. "My life will never get better" can be transformed into "I may feel hopeless now, but my life will probably get better if I work at it and get some help."

- Learn to feel good about doing a competent or “good enough” job rather than demanding perfection from yourself and others.
- Take a break from stressful situations. Activities like listening to music, talking to a friend, exercising, drawing, writing, or spending time with a pet can reduce stress.
- Build a network of friends who help you cope in a positive way.

What is This Thing Called Love?

The normal changes that happen to everyone as they grow up can be exciting and confusing. It may seem like you wake up one morning and everything about you is different. Your friends are probably feeling the same way, but that doesn't always make it easier.



Many of the changes you are experiencing are sexual. Your body is developing into an adult, and your feelings can be very strong. Having good information about these changes helps you understand them and can make them seem less confusing. The more you know about and like yourself, the more likely it is that you will make decisions that are right for you, especially the decisions that involve dating, relationships and sexuality.

There are lots of messages around about love and sex. Friends, parents, church, television, movies and magazines may present different ideas about being in love or being sexually active. It is important you get the facts, listen to people you trust, and sort through your feelings. You are the one who must make choices and be willing to live with the consequences, good or bad.



You should not be embarrassed or feel pressure to do anything that you think is “too soon” or “too fast.” There are many ways to show someone you care or you “fit in” without making yourself uncomfortable.

Talk with your parents or another adult you trust or respect. Check with your school counselor for courses that cover growth and development or family living. Many churches, youth groups and other organizations offer information and support.

Sometimes teens have questions about homosexuality and gender identity. If you have feelings about your sexuality that are confusing or different from your friends, it is important to talk with someone you can trust. If you need to talk to someone confidentially or get more information, call:

- Planned Parenthood 453-6000
- Synergy 24-Hour Youth Crisis Line 741-8700
- Toll Free 1-888-233-1639
- Mental Health America/Help Line 913-281-1234
- Tri-County Mental Health Services 468-0400
- Richmond 470-3555

Date Rape

At least one third of all reported rape victims know their attacker. It’s hard to think of someone you are dating as a rapist, but being forced into having sex is still rape and it is a crime. Nothing you do, say or wear gives someone the right to assault you - sexually or otherwise. Follow these suggestions to protect yourself:





- When you first date someone you don't know, check him out with friends. Plan to meet some place where there are other people or go with a group of friends.
- Be prepared to find your own transportation home or to a safe place. Carry a cell phone or change for a phone call so if you need help you can call your parents or a friend.
- Don't use alcohol. These decrease your ability to take care of yourself and make sensible decisions.
- Watch your drink at all times. The "date rape" drug rohypnol is tasteless and odorless and produces amnesia.
- Clearly and firmly let your date know your limits before you get into a situation you can't control.
- Don't leave a party, a concert, or a ball game with someone you just met.
- Trust your instincts. If you think something's not quite right, get to where there are other people or tell your date to leave.
- Be assertive. Say "NO" firmly, even if he tries to make you feel guilty, unpopular, or babyish.

If you have been raped or think you have been given the drug rohypnol, it is important to go to the emergency room at your local hospital or your doctor as soon as possible.

MOCSA (Metropolitan Organization to Counter Sexual Assault) provides 24-hour assistance. Call 931-4527.

For more information contact:

National Domestic Violence Hotline www.ndvh.org
 1-800-799-7233





Sexually Transmitted Diseases

Anyone who is sexually active can get a sexually transmitted disease (STD), also called venereal disease (VD). It only takes one sexual encounter to expose yourself to STD. The only way to get a STD is through sexual intercourse or other sexual contact with someone who already has it. These diseases include AIDS, syphilis, gonorrhea, herpes, chlamydia, pelvic inflammatory disease (PID) and venereal warts.

Even though you may feel embarrassed to get help when you think you have a STD, remember that STDs are simply diseases that, if not treated, can seriously damage your health, impact your ability to have children and threaten your life. You can get STDs at any age. Three million teenagers -- roughly 1 in every 8 aged 13 to 19 and about 1 in 4 of those who have had sexual intercourse -- acquire a STD every year.

Facts about AIDS and other STDs

AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome) has been in the news a lot. AIDS is a virus that is transmitted through unprotected sex, sharing needles, and through blood/body fluid contact. You do not catch the AIDS virus or other STDs from toilet seats, door knobs or through "casual" contacts like handshakes or kissing. While there are treatments for AIDS that can prolong your life, there is no cure for AIDS at this time. AIDS attacks your body's ability to fight diseases. That means a simple infection can lead to death. AIDS is the sixth leading cause of death for 15 to 24 year olds.



Protecting Yourself

The only sure way to prevent STDs (including AIDS) is not to have sexual contact. Abstinence is a choice that you can make for yourself.

If you do not choose to be abstinent, you are risking catching an STD with any sexual contact, including oral sex. However, there are ways you can help protect yourself. Remember that none of these options will protect you 100% from getting a STD:

- Use a latex condom (also called a rubber) during intercourse or oral sex.
- Do not have sex with a lot of partners.
- Do not have sex with people who have discharges, sores or blisters around their mouths or sex organs.
- Do not have sex with someone you don't know well.

You can't tell if someone has a STD just by looking.

It is important for you to know that condoms do not always prevent pregnancy: the failure rate for condoms in preventing pregnancy is 12%.

WARNING: If not treated, STDs can result in serious damage (even if the outward symptoms disappear), including sterility (the inability to have children), heart diseases, damage to unborn babies, blindness, deafness, non-healing skin sores, paralysis, and even death.

STD Tests

STD tests are confidential. Your parents' permission is not required. Also, you do not need a parent's permission to obtain birth control information and products.

If you are concerned about STDs, go to a doctor, clinic



or the health department to be tested. You will have a medical exam and a lab test. Blood tests determine the presence of the AIDS virus. You will be tested for AIDS if you donate blood. It is possible to have STDs without feeling badly or noticing any changes in your body. If you think you may have a STD, do not be embarrassed to see a doctor. The longer you go untreated, the more damage the disease will do to your body.

If you do find out that you have a STD, you need to tell your sexual partner, because he or she has been exposed to the disease as well. Your sexual partner deserves to know of your condition so they can seek appropriate medical care. The following organizations provide STD information, testing, and treatment.

County Health Departments

- Clay County** 595-4256
- Platte County/Platte City** 858-2412
- Platte County/Parkville** 587-5998
- Ray County** 776-5413

Crisis Pregnancy Center

- Excelsior Springs** 637-7700
- National STD and AIDS Hotline/
- American Social Health Assoc. 1-800-227-8922
- www.ashastd.org
- Planned Parenthood 453-6000
- Rachel House Pregnancy Center 453-1011
- Good Samaritan Project 561-8784
- www.gsp-kc.org
- Teen Health www.familydoctor.org
- KidsHealth - Nemours Foundation ... kidshealth.org/teens/

***Remember! STDs can be treated.
Don't be afraid to see a doctor.***



Staying Healthy

Living A Healthy Lifestyle

Decisions that you make now will affect your health as a teen and as an adult. Many of the major causes of death - cancer, heart disease, stroke, lung disease and injury - can sometimes be prevented by making good choices about your lifestyle.

Here are things that you can do today to protect your health now and in the future:

- Don't drink alcohol or use illegal drugs.
- Use prescription or over-the-counter drugs only if you are directed to by parent, trusted adult or doctor.
- Don't smoke or use tobacco.
- Eat right. Eat a variety of healthy foods including fresh vegetables and fruits. Limit the amount of fried, processed, and junk foods that you eat.
- Protect your bone health by drinking milk or eating other foods rich in calcium.
- Drink at least eight 10 oz. glasses of non-caffeine fluids each day.
- Don't sunbathe or use tanning booths.
Wear sunscreen.
- Keep your immunizations up to date.
- Have a yearly physical.
- Exercise regularly.
- Get enough sleep. You need more sleep now than you did when you were younger to ensure healthy physical and mental development.
- Keep weight within acceptable medical guidelines.





Getting Health Care Services

You can get health services free or based on your ability to pay. In most cases, services are confidential.

Do I Need My Parent's Permission?

If you are under 18, you must have a parent's permission for medical treatment. There are a few exceptions. Some hospitals or clinics allow you to consent for your own testing and treatment for pregnancy, sexually transmitted diseases (including AIDS) and drug and alcohol abuse at any age. Others allow you to consent to your own treatment only if you have reached age 13. If you are younger than 18 but are married or in the military, you are considered emancipated (on your own) and you may seek medical treatment without your parent's permission.

How do I make an appointment?

Before going to the places listed below, call and ask, "What services are offered? How are charges handled? Do I need an appointment? Do I need my parent's permission?"

These places can provide you health care:

Children's Mercy Hospital, Teen Clinic 234-3050

County Health Departments

Clay County **595-4200**

Platte County/Platte City **858-2412**

Platte County/Parkville **587-5998**

Ray County **776-5413**

Kansas City Free Health Clinic 753-5144

Northland Health Care Access 880-6700

Swope Health Northland 627-2050





Health Education and Information
 American Red Cross 931-8400
 General Health Information www.drkoop.com
 Teen Health Website www.familydoctor.org
 USHHS Girls Health Website www.4girls.gov
 KidsHealth - Nemours Foundation ... kidshealth.org/teens/

Services for the physically or mentally challenged

These agencies offer services for young people who are physically or mentally challenged:

Concerned Care 474-3026
 Developmental Disabilities Resource
 Board of Clay County 792-5255
 Triality 781-0177
 K.C. Regional Center for the
 Developmentally Disabled 889-3400
 Platte County Board of Services 891-0990
 The Whole Person 561-0304
 Vocational Services 781-6292

I think I might be pregnant

If you, or someone you know, thinks she is pregnant, it is important to find out immediately. It is important to have a pregnancy test in a medical setting as soon as possible. Tests done with kits at home are not always accurate. You also need to talk with someone you can trust and get medical attention right away. Pregnancy testing and counseling about your situation are available to you, usually without an appointment or parental permission.





Call one of these agencies:

Catholic Charities 1-800-875-4377

Children's Mercy Hospital, Teen Clinic 234-3050

County Health Departments

Clay County **595-4355**

Platte County/Platte City **858-2412**

Platte County/Parkville **587-5998**

Ray County **776-5413**

Rachel House Pregnancy Resource Centers 453-1011

Crisis Pregnancy Center Excelsior Springs 637-7700

Hands of Hope Crisis Pregnancy Center 858-4855

Kansas City Free Health Clinic 753-5144

Northland Health Care Access 880-6700

Swope Health Northland 627-2050

Planned Parenthood 453-6000

Liberty Women's Center 415-5111

The Women's Clinic of K.C. 836-9000

..... www.thewomensclinic.net

Truman Medical Center, Adolescent

Prenatal Clinic 404-4100 ext. 2

If you are pregnant or a new parent

A variety of agencies offer services especially for pregnant and/or parenting teens. To find out about special programs your school district has for pregnant students, talk with your school counselor or principal.

If you are interested in learning about adoption options for your baby, talk with your physician, minister or attorney. **Adoption and Beyond (913-381-6919)** can also help you explore your options.

Other services available to you include education,





medical care for you and your child, and counseling.

County Health Departments

Clay County	595-4355
Platte County/Platte City	858-2412
Platte County/Parkville	587-5998
Ray County	776-5413
Healthy Families Counseling and Support	468-6336
ParentLink	1-800-552-8522
Truman Medical Center, Adolescent Prenatal Clinic	404-4100 ext. 2

The Mentor Moms Program (Synergy Services, 587-4100) matches pregnant and parenting teens with a volunteer mentor to help you.

Healthy Families Counseling and Support offers a 10-week workshop and mentoring program, BraveHearts, for fathers of children up to age six.

Your school district's "Parents As Teachers" program can help you with parenting skills. If you need help in finding someone to care for your child while you work or go to school, call the **Family Conservancy, Division of Family Support at 913-342-1110.**

Making Your Own Decisions

No matter how old we get, we still care about what others think about us, and we want to fit in. As a teen, when you are just starting to think about yourself, the influence of your friends and other teens -- your peers -- can be powerful. It can affect how you feel, dress and act. This is called "peer pressure."





Peer pressure can be good and bad. Positive pressure from your peers might lead you to play sports, study hard or join clubs.

But there are often negative pressures, too -- pressures to make fun of someone, tell a lie or cheat on a test. Sometimes the pressure may be about actions that have more serious consequences, like skipping school, using alcohol or drugs, shoplifting, joining a gang or having sex before you are ready. It is important to think about what could happen if you go along with the crowd.

Teens often feel pressured to participate in racial or sexual orientation prejudices. Be aware of your own attitudes and find positive ways to interact and learn from all kinds of people. Do what you can to promote understanding and stop prejudices, racism and bigotry with your peers. Always be kind.

Make up your own mind, even if your peers don't agree with you.

Young people have decisions to make every day. Some decisions are more important than others. There is a big difference between deciding what to wear to a party and deciding whether or not to have sex with someone. The decisions you make say a lot about what kind of person you are. When you feel unsure, try talking to someone you trust: your parents, another adult who cares, a close friend you respect, or a school counselor.





It's okay to say "yes"

It is also okay to say "yes" to many activities in your life. Your time as a young adult should be enjoyed.

Say "YES" to:

- Positive friendships
- School activities
- Family Relationships
- Volunteer opportunities
- School studies
- Setting goals for your life
- Taking positive steps to help yourself when in trouble
- Exercise and fun physical activities
- Art, music and recreation
- Learning for learning's sake
- Making good choices.

It's okay to say "no"

Some decisions, like those about drinking, drugs or sex, are difficult to make and can have serious consequences. Be prepared to feel peer pressure, and be aware that there are different kinds of pressure. It can be disguised as friendly teasing, for example. If so, you can respond in the same way.

Other pressure may be more direct. Plan to say "no" if you think you might be tempted by peer pressure. Try these ways to say "no":



- Change the subject.
- Avoid the situation.
- Have something else to do, leave, or make it clear that you don't have to go along with other people.
- Tell the truth. You've thought about it and choose not to participate.
- Use your parents as an excuse.
- Make commitments to yourself, your parents, your big brother or sister, or your church that you will keep.

Staying Safe on the Road

Learning to drive is an exciting time for teens. But it is also a time of risk. Automobile accidents are the cause of almost 50,000 deaths each year in the United States. Teens (especially males) have the highest rate of automobile related deaths even though teens are smart, skilled and have great reflexes. Teen driving deaths frequently occur after dark, when driving with friends, when the teen is drowsy or after drinking alcohol.

Here are some tips to help you drive safely:

- Take a driver's education course.
- Always wear your seatbelt and make sure all passengers use their seatbelts.
- Never try to fit more people in the car than there are seatbelts.
- Obey the speed limits.
- Don't run red lights.
- Use turn signals to indicate your intention to turn or to change lanes.
- Make sure your windshield is clean. Maintain your car.



- Keep the radio volume down. You need to be able to hear a siren or horn that could warn you of possible trouble.
- Don't use your cell phone while driving. Pull off the road to use the phone.
- Don't put on make-up, comb your hair or eat while driving.
- Don't leave your car in cruise control when you are driving late at night or when you are tired.
- Use good quality tires and make sure they are inflated to the right pressure.
- Use headlights while driving during the daylight.
- Make sure your tank has gas in it. Don't ride around with the gauge on "empty."
- Don't "hill jump" or take other unnecessary risks.
- When driving to a new place, get complete directions before you leave.
- Stay in your car in case of a break down. Wait for the police to come to you.

Alcohol, Drugs and Driving

More than half of all fatal car accidents involve alcohol or drugs. No one can tell in advance how they will be affected by alcohol, prescription and nonprescription drugs, or street drugs. Your driving ability is reduced greatly with only a small amount of alcohol or drugs. It is important to ask your doctor about the side effects of any prescription or medicine. Even over-the-counter medications can affect your driving.

Anyone under the influence of alcohol or drugs must not drive. It is very dangerous to get into a car driven by someone under the influence of alcohol or drugs.





Things seem really hard right now!

Today, more than ever, it seems like pressure is hard to escape. You may feel stress building at home, at school, at work, and most of all, within yourself. Bottling up your feelings can bring you farther “down” physically and emotionally, leaving you drained and depressed. Sometimes it may be difficult to sort through feelings and really understand the cause of your anxiety, loneliness, fear, anger, sadness or confusion. All of us want good mental health . . . but what is mental health? Mental health is much more than merely the absence of mental illness.

Mental health has to do with everyday life: happiness, peace of mind, enjoyment, satisfaction. Mental health is the ability to cope with everyday life in reasonable, successful patterns. Mental illness is best defined as being unable to function appropriately in everyday life. There is no line that neatly divides the mentally healthy from the unhealthy.

Getting Help

If you are unable to solve your own problems or you find great difficulty functioning in an effective and successful way, you may need help. If you answer “yes” to some or many of these questions, talk with a family member or a counselor who can help you.

- Do you seldom feel successful at home? At school? At work?
- Is your behavior sometimes harmful to yourself or others?
- Do you have a low opinion of yourself?





- Do you sometimes feel life is a hassle, and not worth living?
- Do you use drugs or alcohol as an escape?
- Are you dishonest with people who care about you?
- Are you often hostile to others?
- Do you frequently lose your temper and sometimes even go into a rage?

If you or someone close to you is experiencing one or more of these warning signs, get help from a counselor or a mental health professional.

- Sudden changes in mood or eating or sleeping behaviors, or isolating from others.
- Depression, feeling unhappy for a long time.
- Losing your temper over small things.
- Dropping grades or not caring about things.

Talking to a mental health professional can be useful. Someone else's ear and information may help you see things about your problem that you haven't noticed. A counselor can help you find solutions. You may want to start with your school counselor, your minister, or someone else you trust.

If, after talking with someone, you think counseling might be the best solution, there are people who are willing to help you. When setting up an appointment with a counselor, you will want to ask if your parents' permission is required for services and how much the counseling will cost. Most counseling services will base their fees on your ability to pay. If you cannot pay for



counseling, do not let this stop you from getting help. There are agencies that will help you at no charge. There are lots of services that can directly help you or refer you to the places, people or agencies that can. For further information, call:

- American Psychological Assoc. Information Line 1-800-964-2000
- Anger Alternatives/Stop It Program 816-753-5118
- Anxiety Disorders Assoc. of America www.adaa.org
- Family Conservancy Northland 436-0486
- Mental Health America of the Heartland
 - Help Line 913-281-1234
 - Healthy Families Counseling and Support 468-6336
- National Mental Health America 1-800-969-6642
..... www.nmha.org
- Screening for Mental Health
..... www.mentalhealthscreening.org
- Synergy 24-Hour Youth Crisis Line 741-8700
 - Toll Free 1-888-233-1639
- Synergy Services, Inc. 587-4100
 - Richmond 816-776-7058
- Tri-County Mental Health Services 468-0400
 - Richmond 470-3555

Eating Disorders

Eating or not eating to feel better about yourself or as a way to avoid feelings is not good for your health. Controlling your food intake this way may lead to eating disorders. Eating disorders surface many times during adolescence and can become very serious. There are



two major classifications of eating disorders and these often go hand-in-hand,

ANOREXIA NERVOSA is a condition that involves extreme self-restriction of food intake. This self-restriction results in an individual not maintaining the minimum normal weight for age or height. This restriction in food intake is paired with the individual seeing themselves as always "too fat," often skipping meals or finding new ways to avoid eating. This person may also exercise excessively to lose weight. An anorexic individual may also induce vomiting after meals as a way to lose weight.

BULIMIA is the second type of eating disorder and involves a cycle of "binging," which is overeating, and purging or forcing oneself to vomit.

Both of these types of eating disorders may also involve the individual taking laxatives or excessive amounts of diet pills as one way to keep from gaining weight. Both disorders may result in loss of muscle tissue and deterioration of teeth from stomach acid. These disorders can lead to severe malnutrition, which may require hospitalization. These eating disorders usually start out as single events and generally progress to a point where the eating disorder takes control, so much so that sometimes, whether the individual wants to vomit after meals or not, her body will automatically respond that way.

OBESITY can be defined as an excessive accumulation of body fat, which results in individuals being at least 20% heavier than their ideal body weight. "Overweight" is defined as any weight in excess of the ideal range.





Obesity is a common eating disorder associated with adolescence. The incidence of obesity among American teenagers is 12 to 15%. Obesity is more common in girls. One study reported a high prevalence of obesity in 14-year-old girls (32.4%) compared to 14-year-old boys (3.6%).

You need balanced nutrition to maintain a stable, healthy body weight. If you aren't sure what normal body weight for your age and height is, check with your school nurse or doctor. Many people are amazed at what normal body weight is. Exercise is extremely important to keep your weight at a normal level.

If you are concerned about being overweight or your own or others' eating habits, call one of the numbers listed under counseling on page 28 for information or help. Other resources for help are:

- Anorexia Nervosa and Related Disorders
..... www.anred.com
- Research Medical Center, Inpatient
and Outpatient Care - VITA 276-3830
- National Eating Disorders Association Information,
Publications, & Referral Helpline 1-800-931-2237
..... www.nationaleatingdisorders.org
- Eating Disorders Program of K.C. 942-1811
- Kids Health/Nemours Foundation kidshealth.org/teens/
- Mental Health America Resource Center
Eating Disorders 1-800-969-6642
..... www.nmha.org
- Surgeon General's Website
www.surgeongeneral.gov/topics/obesity
- General Health Information www.drkoop.com





If You Feel Like Hurting Yourself

Sometimes, the stresses of being a teen can seem overwhelming. Some teens try to cope with these feelings by doing physical harm to their own bodies. They try to use the pain (from cutting, biting, skin-picking, burning or other pain-inflicting activities) to distract them from the emotional pain they are feeling, to try to feel in control of their pain, or to release bad feelings and pressures.

Cutting and other self-injury activities usually indicate that, somewhere along the line, you didn't learn good ways of coping with overwhelming feelings. Self-injury is very dangerous. It can cause serious infections and permanent scars and damage.

A very dangerous self-injury behavior is participating in a "choking game." Effects from choking can be extreme, including death.

Your stress and anger are very real feelings, but self-injury is a destructive way to deal with them. There are better ways to cope with these feelings. The first step in stopping self-injury is to ask for help in learning different ways to cope with your stress and anger.

Here are some resources to help:

- Healthy Families Counseling and Support 468-6336
- Synergy 24-Hour Youth Crisis Line 741-8700
- Toll Free 1-888-233-1639
- Tri-County Mental Health Services 468-0400**
- Richmond 470-3555**
- Focus Adolescent Services
..... www.focusas.com/SelfInjury.html
- SAFE (Self Abuse Finally Ends) 800-DONT-CUT
- Self-Harm.Net www.selfharm.net





When Someone You Know Dies

Grieving is a natural reaction to death. When you are grieving it is sometimes difficult to control your emotions, thoughts, and physical feelings. Often you feel out of control.

Grieving is a different experience for each person. For example, one teen may deal with grief with sadness and crying, while another may respond with humor and laughter. There is no “right” way to grieve. Every death is unique and is experienced differently. Even within a family, each person may mourn differently.

Grief is ongoing. Grief never ends, but it does change in character and intensity. Most people will be anxious for you to have “closure” and to put the death behind you and go on. But life is never the same again. This does not mean life will never be joyful again. Grief is not a disease that can be cured, but a process we learn to incorporate in our lives.

Many of these natural responses can be very difficult, not only for the person experiencing the loss, but also for their friends and family. Some healthy ways of coping with the death of a loved one include:

- If you don't feel brave or strong, don't try to be. Dealing with grief means accepting your feelings and expressing them.
- Keep a regular schedule. Exercise and eat healthy food.
- Write down your feelings or emotions in a journal or write a good-bye letter or prepare some other meaningful ritual such as candle lighting.



- Accept that people will say incredibly insensitive things. Often they don't really know what to say.
- Talk to someone -- a friend, family member, counselor or clergy member.
- Give yourself permission to have rough times on birthdays, holidays and anniversaries.
- Read a book on grief and loss.
- Join a support group.
- Get involved in a volunteer activity.

Some resources to help you with your grief include:

American Hospice www.americanhospice.org
 Griefworks BC www.griefworksbc.com
 Kids Health/Nemours Foundation kidshealth.org/teens/
 New Hope www.newhope-grief.org/teengrief/
 Solace House 913-341-0318
 www.solacehouse.org
 The Dougy Center www.dougy.org

Running Away

Almost everyone thinks about running away from home at some time. When you are feeling bad about your life, when you want to do something -- anything -- that will change the way things are going, that is a time when it's hard to think clearly. You need to talk it out with someone you can trust. If you and a friend or parent or counselor try talking it out and it doesn't seem to help, and running away still seems like the answer, it is very important that you have a safe place to go. It's harder than you think to make it on your own.

There is a safe place to go: Synergy Emergency Shelter. This shelter is especially for runaway and





homeless youth. You can be safe, talk things out and work with a counselor to decide what to do next. If you need transportation, go to the nearest SafePlace (all QuikTrip stores in the Kansas City metropolitan area are designated SafePlaces) and someone there will help you.

If you are considering running away, call Synergy's 24-Hour Crisis Line at 741-8700 or Toll Free at 1-888-233-1639 and talk with a counselor.

If you need help or advice, you can also call:

National Runaway Switchboard 1-800-RUNAWAY
 (1-800-786-2929)
 www.1800RUNAWAY.org

Suicide

If someone talks about suicide, take it seriously. Friends may tell you they are thinking of killing themselves and ask that you keep it a secret. **THIS IS A SECRET YOU MUST NOT KEEP!**

You can be a better friend by telling someone -- a parent, teacher, counselor, minister, or someone else you trust. You might also encourage the person talking about suicide to talk to an adult they trust. If you think someone may be suicidal, don't be afraid to ask. Mentioning suicide will not give someone the idea or push them over the edge. Talking about it can prevent it from happening. A suicidal person is not beyond help. The crisis period usually lasts only a short time. A suicidal person needs professional help. With professional help, a suicidal person can get better!





Some warning signs of suicide are:

- Talking about committing suicide
- Giving away prized possessions
- Significant behavior changes
- Preoccupation with death, no future plans
- Having a “plan” to commit suicide
- Not caring about anything, loss of hope
- Sudden withdrawal from normal behavior.



If you or a friend show any of these warning signs, you must be concerned and tell someone who can help. Remember, the first step in stopping a suicide is to have the person promise, “If I feel like I’m going to hurt myself, I will call a trusted friend or a hotline first.”

If you or a friend are thinking about suicide, please call one of these numbers:

- CommCare Crisis Line 1-888-279-8188
- Healthy Families Counseling and Support 468-6336
- Synergy 24-Hour Youth Crisis Line 741-8700
- Toll Free 1-888-233-1639
- Tri-County Mental Health Services 468-0400**
- Richmond 470-3555**
- National Mental Health America 1-800-969-6642
- www.nmha.org





Drugs and Alcohol

**For any alcohol or other drug-related emergency,
go immediately to the hospital or CALL 9-1-1**

There are many reasons why teenagers, even you, may be tempted to use and abuse alcohol and other drugs. Many people think that alcohol and other drugs can help them escape from their problems, gain acceptance, gain power, be more relaxed, gain courage, or have fun.

In reality, alcohol and other drug use will cloud your ability to perform and to make judgments, even though it may “feel” like it’s helping you. Research shows that because of your age, your brain is particularly susceptible to the damaging effects of alcohol and drugs. Even using some of the more powerful drugs once is enough to get you “hooked.” Chemical dependence is a difficult and sometimes impossible cycle to break. When used in large amounts over a long period of time, or in the wrong combination, alcohol and other drugs can kill you!

Research shows that if your parents abuse alcohol or other drugs, you have a greater chance of abusing drugs or alcohol yourself. This could be a result of heredity or due to learned coping skills that your parents have modeled for you. Each of the drugs listed in this section has a negative effect on your health. Some may even cause death. Make informed choices about what you want to do with your life. Don’t lose control of your life to drugs.

Here is an inventory that might help you determine if you or someone you know is beginning to lose control to drugs. Do you . . .





- Drink/do drugs because you have problems?
- Drink/do drugs when you get mad at others?
- Find your grades are starting to slip?
- Drink/do drugs in order to have fun at a party?
- Drink/do drugs even when you don't mean to?
- Drink/do drugs in the morning? Before school?
- Have blackouts (you can't remember events)?
- Lie about your drinking/drug use?
- Ever get in trouble because of drinking/drug use?
- Think it's cool to get drunk or high?

***If you answered "Yes" to ANY of these questions,
ASK FOR HELP!***

***Call for help immediately if a friend has
"passed out." They are not sleeping and they
need immediate medical attention! Call 9-1-1.***

Call one of these numbers for help or information:

- Alcohol and Drug Abuse Hotline 1-800-ALCOHOL
- Alcoholics Anonymous KC Area Office 471-7229
..... www.kc-aa.org
- Al-Anon or Alateen 373-8566
- Community 2000/Tri-County Mental
Health Services 468-0400**
- Drug Information Website www.freevibe.com
- National Council on Alcoholism &
Drug Dependence 361-5900
- National Drug & Alcohol Treatment
Referral Routing Service 1-800-662-HELP
- Narcotics Anonymous 1-800-561-2250
..... www.kansascityna.org
- Partnership for a Drug Free
America www.drugfreeamerica.org





Synergy Services 587-4100
 Mental Health Association/Help Line 913-281-1234
 24-Hour Crisis Line 1-888-279-8188
 Kids Health/Nemours Foundation kidshealth.org/teens/
 Teen Health Website www.familydoctor.org

Because alcohol and other drugs are easy to come by, it is important for you to make informed decisions about what you are getting yourself into if you choose to use them. Here is some information that can help:

OVER THE COUNTER (OTC) including cough medicines, sleep aids, and antihistamines can be abused when not taken as directed and can produce dangerous health effects. Even taken in quantities as directed, but taken with alcohol, the combination can be very dangerous.

ALCOHOL is a drug that comes in many forms, from beer to grain alcohol (which may be mixed with other beverages). Sweet alcoholic drinks (“alcopops”) are targeted especially for teens, but they are just as dangerous as any other alcohol. Alcohol can impair brain functioning, slow reaction times, cause blackouts and make you sick to your stomach. Alcohol is a depressant and affects your mood and body. Continued use may result in addiction, which can result in cirrhosis of the liver, the DT’s, and increased irritability. If any of your friends pass out or suddenly go to sleep after drinking large amounts of alcohol, call 9-1-1 immediately. They could be dying, not just sleeping it off! People can die from too much alcohol.

COCAINE (coke, snow, blow, flake) is a white powder-like substance produced from coca leaves. It may be





“snorted” through a straw, smoked or injected into the blood stream. Crack is a refined version of cocaine that is smoked in a pipe. The greater the concentration of cocaine, the more addictive it is. Cocaine directly affects your central nervous system, harming your heart and affecting your breathing. It may produce hallucinations and thoughts that you are stronger than you really are. It may increase irritability and cause lack of sleep. Cocaine can cause heart attacks and sometimes death. Addiction and damage to the body happen very fast. One or two uses of crack can cause addiction.

DESIGNER DRUGS (synthetic or look-a-like drugs) are substances that are chemically related to naturally occurring mind-altering drugs. They vary in composition and are often much more potent (sometimes several hundred times) than the drugs they are designed to mimic. They are dangerous because of their side effects and because of impurities and unknown by-products that result from their preparation.

ECSTASY (MDMA) is often called the “Club Drug” and is usually taken orally as a tablet or crushed and snorted. Other names that the drug goes by are: Adam, Blue Kisses, E, Pill, Kleenex, Sweeties, X-TC, and Wheels. Nicknames for using the drug include rolling, running, slammin’, and X-ing.

Ecstasy is popular at parties because those using it believe it gives them energy to dance for long periods. One pill can take effect within one hour. The high can last as long as six hours. Taking ecstasy gives a “warm” feeling that is actually the body heating up. It causes increased heart rate and blood pressure. The increased



body temperature experienced with the drug can cause kidney and cardiovascular failure.

Other effects of using ecstasy include teeth grinding, vomiting, unclear vision, feeling faint, profuse sweating and, in some cases, convulsions or strokes. When combined with alcohol, ecstasy can be extremely dangerous, sometimes fatal. Chronic abuse of ecstasy may produce permanent damage to your brain.

HEROIN comes from the family of drugs known as opiates or narcotics. It is usually processed into a white or brown powder, which can be inhaled or ingested, but the preferred method of addicts is to inject the drug. Recently a new form "cheese" (a mixture of heroin with Tylenol PM) has become available. Heroin is highly addictive and causes an uncontrollable craving. When the high wears off, an addict may experience panic or paranoia and have insomnia and be physically ill. Withdrawal can be extremely painful. An overdose of heroin can cause sudden death. It suppresses the heart rate and breathing and can cause stroke or heart attack.

INHALING of solvents (glues, paint thinners, etc.) is very dangerous. When you inhale, the chemicals in the inhalants take the place of the oxygen that your body needs. It often is fatal.

KETAMINE-K (Special K) is also a common "Club Drug." Ketamine is a veterinary anesthetic that produces alteration in consciousness, dream-like or hallucinatory effects. It is most commonly used as a liquid applied to tobacco products or marijuana or as a white powder that is snorted like cocaine. At high doses, Ketamine produces



delirium, amnesia, impaired motor function, and sometimes fatal respiratory effects.

GAMMA-HYDROXYBUTRATE (liquid ecstasy, scoop, easy lay, and grievous bodily harm) is a clear, odorless liquid that is a central nervous system depressant. It has been associated with poisonings, overdoses, and date rape. It is NOT liquid ecstasy as its common name might indicate. Overdoses can lead rapidly to loss of consciousness, coma, and death. The purity and strength of individual doses of this drug can vary greatly, making overdoses likely.

LSD (acid) is a drug derived from a particular kind of fungus. It is a synthetic drug and comes in sheets, tablets or capsules. It has hallucinogenic effects and may cause nausea, increased heart rate and elevated blood pressure. Shrooms is a naturally occurring hallucinogen that works like LSD and is just as dangerous.

MARIJUANA is dried leaves and stems of the hemp plant. This plant contains the substance Tetrahydro Cannabis (THC) and is usually smoked in cigarettes (joints) and pipes. After caffeine, nicotine and alcohol, it is the fourth most popular abused substance in the world. The effects of this drug vary from person to person. These effects can include a decrease in motor skills (such as driving), increase in appetite, nausea or dizziness, paranoia, anxiety, and negative effects on your heart and lungs.

METHAMPHETAMINE (crank) takes the form of a white, odorless, and bitter-tasting crystalline powder. A new form called 'Strawberry Quick' is a mixture of powdered



drink mix with methamphetamine. Methamphetamine can be smoked, injected intravenously, snorted, or ingested. Methamphetamine is very addictive. It is a central nervous system stimulant with a high potential for abuse and dependence. Even small amounts can produce euphoria, enhanced wakefulness, decreased appetite and increased respiration. Other effects include irritability, insomnia, confusion, tremors, anxiety, aggression, hypothermia and convulsions. Using methamphetamine can cause cardiovascular side effects including chest pain, hypertension, and, sometimes, death. The drug can cause irreversible damage to blood vessels in the brain, producing strokes. Psychological symptoms of prolonged use can resemble those of schizophrenia and are characterized by paranoia, hallucinations and repetitive behavior patterns.

NICOTINE is a drug found in cigarettes, chewing tobacco and snuff. It is one of the world's most widely abused drugs and one of the most physically addictive. The earlier one starts, the harder it is to break the habit. Abuse may lead to decreased appetite, increased irritability, heart problems, lung problems and cancer. Using snuff or chewing tobacco can lead to mouth and throat cancer. The nicotine in one cigar is equal to the nicotine in one pack of cigarettes. Websites with information on how to quit smoking include: www.surgeongeneral.gov/tobacco/consquits.htm and www.notobacco.org.

PRESCRIPTION DRUGS are drugs ordered by a doctor to treat a specific condition. When taken properly under a doctor's care, these drugs can be beneficial. But using another person's medication or using prescription drugs



incorrectly is very dangerous. OxyContin and Vicodin are drugs commonly prescribed as painkillers. They can easily lead to overdose when crushed and snorted or mixed with other drugs, such as alcohol, and can be addictive and very dangerous. Do not take these drugs, or other prescription drugs, without doctor supervision.

Depressants such as Valium and Xanax can be deadly when not monitored by a physician. Using stimulants such as Ritalin and Adderall when they are not prescribed specifically for you can lead to serious mental and physical health problems.

Do not take any prescription drug that was not specifically prescribed for you personally. Always carefully follow the directions when using your prescribed medications. Your peers may encourage you to participate in a "Pharm Party" where everyone shares each other's prescription drugs. This is a very dangerous and could cause you permanent damage or even death.

ROHYPNOL is the name of a sleeping pill, sometimes called the "date rape" pill. Combining rohypnol with alcohol impairs judgment and motor skills. It is usually taken orally in tablet form or dissolved in beverages. Because the drug is odorless and tasteless and produces amnesia, it can be given to someone without his or her knowledge.

It is commonly reported that persons who have become intoxicated on a combination of rohypnol and alcohol have "blackouts" lasting 8 to 24 hours. To protect yourself from being given this drug, be sure to pour your own drinks and don't leave your drink unattended.

If you think you have been given rohypnol, you should go to the emergency room at your local hospital or see your doctor as soon as possible.





Call one of these numbers for help or information:

Alcohol and Drug Abuse Hotline 1-800-ALCOHOL
 Alcoholics Anonymous KC Area Office 471-7229
 www.kc-aa.org
 Al-Anon or Alateen 373-8566
**Community 2000/Tri-County Mental
 Health Services 468-0400**
 Drug Information Website www.freevibe.com
 National Council on Alcoholism &
 Drug Dependence 361-5900
 National Drug & Alcohol Treatment
 Referral Routing Service 1-800-662-HELP
 Narcotics Anonymous 1-800-561-2250
 www.kansascityna.org
 Partnership for a Drug Free
 America www.drugfreeamerica.org
 Synergy Services 587-4100
 Mental Health Association/Help Line 913-281-1234
 24-Hour Crisis Line 1-888-279-8188
 Teen Health Website www.familydoctor.org





It's the Law

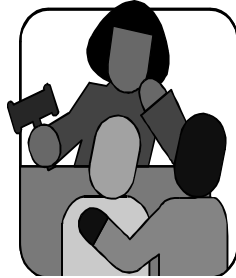
As a young person under the age of 18, how you are treated under the law and the consequences of breaking the law are different than if you were an adult. Juveniles (the legal definition of someone under 18) can be tried as adults for some serious crimes and repeat offenses. There are also special laws dealing with criminal acts committed by juveniles. These laws also protect your rights as an individual.

When are you a juvenile? An adult?

The answer to this question is complicated because, under Missouri law, when you are considered an adult and when you are considered a minor or juvenile varies with the circumstances.

- At 15 and a half years old, you may get a restricted temporary instruction permit to allow you to drive with a parent, grandparent or guardian who has a valid drivers license.
- At 15 (if you are enrolled in a high school driver training program) or 16 (if you have passed the written drivers exam and vision test) you may get an instruction permit that allows you to drive with someone who has a valid drivers license.
- When you are 16 and have passed the written, eye, and driving exams, you may get an "Under 21" drivers license, which is distinctly different from the one you will be issued when you become 21 years old.
- You may be tried as an adult for any crime for which you are charged at age 17. If you commit an offense at age 16 or younger, the police will refer your case to the juvenile court. However, at any age, if you are alleged to





have committed a serious offense (such as murder, the sale of drugs, robbery, rape, or assault) or if you are a repeat offender, the juvenile court may certify you as an adult and transfer you to the adult criminal system. At age 12, the juvenile court can also certify you as an adult for other serious crimes, such as stealing a car, drug possession, or carrying a weapon.

- You must be 18 to vote, make a will, sign a contract, or sign a lease. At age 18, you may sue someone in court, and someone may sue you.
- All males must register for military service at age 18.
- You must be 18 to get married without your parent's permission. If you are under 15, you must receive permission from a judge to get married.
- You must be 18 to purchase tobacco products.
- You must be 21 to possess, use, or purchase alcoholic beverages.
- You must be 21 to gamble in a casino or online.
- You must be 21 to serve on a jury.

At any age, if you are the victim of a crime, you have the right to be paid for damages done to you and to attend hearings and trials about a case arising from the crime.



Gambling is Against the Law

It is becoming more common for teens to turn to gambling for excitement and relaxation or to cope with depression or loneliness. Gambling can be as addictive as alcohol or drugs. And it is against the law for anyone under 21 to gamble at a casino or online. Symptoms of gambling addiction are very similar to those of alcohol or drug addiction. If you or a friend exhibit signs of a gambling addiction, it is important to get help. Counselors at **Tri-County Mental Health Services, 468-0400**, are available to help you cope with gambling problems.

Other resources to get help include:

- Missouri Gambling Help 888-BETSOFF
..... www.888betsoff.com
- Gamblers Anonymous ... www.gamblersanonymous.com

If You Need Help

These organizations can help you if you have a legal question or need help finding an attorney:

- Juvenile Office, Clay County 736-8400
- Platte Co. 858-3420
- Ray Co. 776-5571
- KC Attorney Referral and Information Service .. 221-9472
- Legal Aid of Western Missouri 474-6750

In Clay County and Ray County, the justice system offers a court-ordered program called "Drug Court" which is a treatment-based alternative for individuals found guilty of drug offenses. Information is available from the juvenile office.





Someone is Hurting Me

Sexual Abuse

If someone is giving you physical attention (touching you or making comments to you), and you are not sure how you feel about it ... if you are being touched by a family member, adult friend or someone else and it makes you feel uncomfortable, unhappy or confused ... you may be the victim of sexual abuse.

Remember: It is not your fault!

You do not have to keep this secret any more. If this is happening now or has happened in the past, please talk with someone, it will help! You may have mixed feelings about the other person involved, or you may be afraid to tell someone. Get help now. Go to the nearest **SafePlace** (all QuikTrip stores in the Kansas City metro area are designated safe places), and someone there will help you. Or, call one of these numbers:

Childhelp Abuse Hotline 1-800-4-A-CHILD
Missouri Child Abuse & Neglect Hotline ... 1-800-392-3738
MOCSA Crisis Line and
24 Hour Rape/Support Line 531-0233
Synergy 24-Hour Youth Crisis Line 741-8700
Toll Free 1-888-233-1639

Sexual harassment is sexual abuse. It is against the law for other teens and adults (including your teachers,





coaches, ministers, counselors, and employers) to make sexual comments to you, make sexual jokes about you, or punish you if you do not participate in sexual activities. Report any sexual harassment to a trusted adult. If they don't help you, tell another authority. Keep telling, until someone helps you.

Rape or Sexual Assault

Rape, sexual assault or the attempt to do either is a crime. The rapist can be anyone ... a neighbor, a date, a friend, someone you do not know or a relative.

You have the right to say "NO" to anyone who tries to touch you in any way that makes you feel uncomfortable. If the person will not leave you alone, try to get away as soon as possible.

What you say or do or wear does not matter. If you have been raped, it is NOT your fault. You are the victim, not the criminal. You need to see a doctor as soon as possible. Seeing a doctor in an emergency room does not mean you have to involve the police.

If you have been raped, it is important to talk with someone who can help you. If you are assaulted at school, go immediately to your counselor or principal. The Metropolitan Organization to Counter Sexual Assault (MOCSA) provides counseling and will even meet you at the hospital. Don't be afraid to call **MOCSA (531-0233)** for help. You can call them anytime, day or night. MOCSA can refer you to a hospital with a Rape Receiving Center where staff is trained to help you.



Date Rape

At least one third of all reported rape victims know their attacker. It's hard to think of someone familiar as a rapist, but being forced into having sex is still rape and it is a crime. Nothing you do, say or wear gives someone the right to assault you - sexually or otherwise. Follow these suggestions to protect yourself:



- When you first date someone you don't know, check him out with friends. Plan to meet some place where there are other people or go with a group of friends.
- Be prepared to find your own transportation home.
- Don't drink or use alcohol. These decrease your ability to take care of yourself and make sensible decisions.
- Clearly and firmly let your date know your limits before you get into a situation you can't control.
- Don't leave a party, a concert, or a ball game with someone you just met.
- Trust your instincts. If you think something's not quite right, get to where there are other people or tell your date to leave.
- Be assertive. Say "NO" firmly, even if he tries to make you feel guilty, unpopular, or babyish.



- Watch your drink at all times. The “date rape” drug rohypnol is tasteless and odorless and produces amnesia.

If you think you have been given the date rape drug rohypnol, go immediately to the emergency room at your local hospital or call your family physician.

Incest

Incest is more difficult to talk about than rape, but it happens to at least 100,000 children and teens each year. The most common kind of incest is sex between an older family member -- a parent, stepparent, uncle or cousin -- and a child or teenager. Most victims are girls; although it can and does happen to boys.

Incest occurs through persuasion and pressure more often than by physical violence. It becomes a secret, continuing for years. The victims feel shame, anger, and guilt and usually believe they must handle the situation alone.

The best way to stop incest is to tell someone you trust and who will believe you. This can be very, very difficult and parents or relatives may say you are lying or that you caused the assault. Keep reminding yourself that incest is NOT an expression of love and you have the right not to be touched sexually by anyone against your will. Keep telling until someone believes you.





If you have been raped or sexually assaulted, your local police or one of these organizations can help you:

- MOCSA Crisis Line** **531-0233**
- Synergy 24-Hour Youth Crisis Line 741-8700
- Toll Free 1-888-233-1639
- Tri-County Mental Health Services 468-0400
- Richmond 470-3555
- National Domestic Violence Hotline www.ndvh.org

Protecting Yourself from Violence

Violence means using force to hurt someone or something. Some people get very angry and lose control. They may throw things, punch the wall or hit somebody. They may even be sorry afterward.

If you, a family member, or a friend have been beaten or hurt in other ways or your own behavior is out of control, call 9-1-1 or your local police . If you feel unsafe because of physical violence, verbal or sexual harassment, go to the nearest **SafePlace** (all QuikTrip stores in the Kansas City metropolitan area, ATA buses as well as some fire stations are designated safe places).

If there is no emergency, but you are afraid of being hurt by a friend or family member, talk about it with someone you trust or call one of the numbers listed on Page 57. It is common to have mixed feelings about someone who is violent toward you. Talk to someone who believes you. It helps.





Protecting Yourself at School

Many schools now offer student mediation programs. If you find yourself in conflict with another student, ask your counselor to help you arrange a mediation session.

Also, many schools have student-led programs to end violence in the school. Ask your counselor if your school has a program.

If you learn that a fellow student has brought a weapon to school, immediately tell a teacher or counselor. If a fellow student threatens you with a gun, immediately drop to the floor and take cover.

Bullying

Bullying is a very destructive behavior. A lot of young people have a good idea of what bullying is because they see it every day! Bullying happens when someone hurts or scares another person on purpose and the person being bullied has a hard time defending himself or herself. Usually, bullying happens over and over.

- Punching, shoving and other acts that hurt people physically
- Spreading bad rumors about people
- Keeping certain people out of a "group"
- Teasing people in a mean way
- Getting certain people to "gang up" on others

Bullying also can happen on-line. Cyberbullying is when children or teens bully each other using the Internet or mobile phones. This can include:

- Sending mean text, e-mail, or instant messages;
- Posting nasty pictures or messages about others in blogs, Facebook or on web sites;





Here are some strategies to help you if you are being bullied:

- Ignore or walk/run away from the bully or laugh it off.
- Get an older brother or sister to help or stay near an adult.
- Tell an adult, parent, teacher, counselor or principal or ask a witness to report the bullying to an adult.
- Stand up for yourself and firmly say. "Stop that!"
- Tell the bully's parents. Or tell a police officer.
- Avoid the bully.
- Offer to help the bully with a subject they find difficult; like spelling or math.
- If you see someone being bullied, offer support in private.
- Don't forward texts or emails about others. You can stop cyber bullying by not participating!

If you perceive yourself to be a bully, here are some tips:

- Recognize what you are doing.
- Assess if you are angry about a problem.
- Find an adult to talk to.
- Learn to handle your anger. Work really hard to control your behavior.
- Get some help if your family is abusing you.
- Think about how you would feel if you were the victim.
- Try to get some attention by doing something good.

Here are some online resources to learn more about protecting yourself from bullying:

Synergy Services/STOP Violence Coalition 505-4797
 www.stop-violence.org





Dept. of Health and Human Services
stopbullyingnow.org
 Teen Victim Program www.ncvc.org/tvp
 Common Sense Media www.common sense media.org

Protecting Yourself from Gangs

You may be facing increased pressure by others your age or older to join a gang or join in gang activities. There are many other positive ways to belong to a group rather than joining a gang.

Joining a gang is dangerous for you, your friends and your family. Once you become a member of a gang, there can be strong pressure for you to commit violent or criminal acts. It is very difficult to leave a gang once you have joined. It is also very important for your personal safety that you be careful about imitating gang behavior or wearing gang colors or apparel.

Protecting Yourself When You Go Out

To protect yourself from being hurt, please remember these important guidelines:

- If at all possible, take a buddy when you go out.
- Never get in a car or go to a business or home with someone you do not know. Sometimes, those who want to hurt you will try to lure you into their car by asking for your help, such as finding their lost pet.
- If you are driving, especially alone at night, have a system arranged with your parents or another caring adult to let them know when you are leaving, what route you are taking and when you will be expected at your destination. Check in when you arrive. It's a good idea to



have a cellular phone with you so that you can call if you have car troubles or run out of gas.

- Never walk along the highway alone or hitchhike.
- Always have your keys out and ready when going to your parked car. Check the back seat before getting in your car.
- If someone is following you or is acting suspicious, go to the nearest police station or SafePlace.
- If you have car trouble, stay in your car. Do not open your door or window to anyone who stops to help. Ask them to call for help. Wait until a legitimate authority comes along.

Managing Your Own Anger

As you mature and work to establish your own identity and value system, it is not unusual to have feelings of hurt, frustration and anger. But you need to pay attention if you have prolonged moods of aggression, isolation, irritability, disrespect, and a general "I don't care" attitude.

It is important for you to manage your own negative and cynical feelings. Otherwise, these feelings may lead to aggression and violence towards yourself and others.

Anger can work in two ways. It can help you get things done, handle an emergency, and make your needs known. Anger can also hurt you and others if you use it to be violent, break things, avoid problems, make another person feel badly or put yourself or others down.

Watch for signs that indicate you are angry. Your muscles are tense, you begin talking in a mean voice, you have a desire to break things, or you feel down or depressed.

If there are times when you feel like you're losing control, talk with family members, a school counselor or



another trusted adult about how to deal with your anger. Here are some tips to help you manage your own anger:

- Find some personal space to “chill” and try to consider all sides of the conflict.
- Wait before you act. Count to 10 (or 100!).
- Talk to a person you can trust.
- Write in a journal, write a letter.
- Laugh and use humor to deal with the situation.
- Exercise, play a sport or go for a walk.
- Talk with the person you are angry with. Find common ground. Listen to each other’s needs and talk about ways that would fix the problem.

Take an anger management course.
Know how to deal with another person’s anger.:

- Don’t answer anger with anger. Let the person know you want to listen.
- Show the individual that you care about what makes them angry. Ask the person what they want you to do about the situation.
- Get away or get help if the person becomes violent.
- Call the police, 9-1-1.

The Clay County Family Court offers an “Anger Management for Teens” program for all Northland teens. It helps teens learn effective problem solving and communication techniques to use with parents, friends, and teachers. For more information, call 736-8400.

Below are some other resources to help protect yourself from violence and manage your own anger:

Family Conservancy Northland 436-0486





Synergy 24-Hour Youth Crisis Line 741-8700
Toll Free 1-888-233-1639
Synergy Services 587-4100

Choosing An Adult You Trust

Throughout this directory, there have been many references to suggest that you talk with someone you trust, but sometimes it's difficult to decide who those people are. We suggest first that you consider your parents, your minister, or a respected teacher or counselor at school. If these people do not make you feel comfortable, here are some suggestions for choosing someone to talk to:

- Think about an adult who makes you feel comfortable about being a teenager and having adolescent experiences and ideas.
- Think about someone who sets boundaries with you and isn't too much like a teenager themselves.
- Choose someone who can keep confidences, but who will tell appropriate people such as parents or someone of authority when someone's safety or well being is in danger.
- Think about someone who listens without being judgmental.





HELPFUL NUMBERS

All 1-800, 1-888 and “*” numbers are toll-free

ALCOHOL AND DRUG PROBLEMS

- Alcohol/Drug Abuse Hotline 1-800-ALCOHOL
- Nat'l. Council on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse 361-5900
- Nat'l. Drug and Alcohol Treatment Information Line 1-800-662-HELP
- Mental Health America/Help Line 913-281-1234

DRIVING SAFETY AND EMERGENCIES

- Highway Patrol/Emergency Assistance
 - Cellular Phones *55 (Missouri) and *47 (Kansas)
- Information About Obtaining A Drivers License
 - Clay and Platte Counties 889-3913
 - Ray County 776-2404
- Missouri Highway Patrol 816-622-0800
- Road Conditions 1-800-222-6400

FAMILY VIOLENCE

- Missouri Child Abuse & Neglect Hotline ... 1-800-392-3738
- Synergy 24-Hour Youth Crisis Line 741-8700
- Toll Free 1-888-233-1639
- SafeHaven 24-Hour Domestic Violence Hotline 1-800-491-1114





HOSPITALS/MEDICAL CARE

Excelsior Springs Medical Center 630-6081
 Liberty Hospital 781-7200
 North Kansas City Hospital 691-2000
 Ray County Memorial Hospital 470-5432
 St. Luke's Northland/Barry Road 891-6000
 St. Luke's Northland/Smithville 532-3700

LEGAL PROBLEMS

K.C. Attorney Referral/Information Service 221-9472
 Legal Aid of Western Missouri 474-6750

OTHER IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS

ATA Bus Information 221-0660
 Social Security Administration 1-800-772-1213

POISONINGS

Regional Poison Center 1-800-366-8888

RAPE

MOCSA Crisis Line 531-0233
 Synergy 24-Hour Youth Crisis Line 741-8700
 Toll Free 1-888-233-1639

RUNNING AWAY

National Runaway Switchboard 1-800-786-2929
 Synergy 24-Hour Youth Crisis Line 741-8700
 Toll Free 1-888-233-1639





**If you are ever in trouble,
are hurt or need help,
look for this sign.**

**SafePlace sites are located throughout
the Kansas City metro area
and in other communities.**

**In the Northland, look for the SafePlace
sign at all QuikTrip Stores, Mid-Continent
Public Libraries, and KCATA buses.**

**If you just need advice
or someone to talk to, call
Synergy at 816-741-8700
(Toll Free 1-888-233-1639)**