

House of Hope

Healing Homes One Family at a Time

The road of parenting is never straight and narrow. Instead, it's often windy with curves and turns we cannot even see. And in some cases our path requires a U-turn. Mistakes happen and poor decisions yield wrenching consequences. Turbulent teenage years can throw a family into turmoil and a child into despair.

When the warning signs are not heeded, the effects can be devastating.

- An estimated 8% of 12-to-17 year olds or (2 million young people) experienced at least one major depressive episode during the past year, yet only 39% receive treatment.
- Suicide is the third leading cause of death for 10 to 24 year-olds. (Center for Disease Control and Prevention)
- In the majority of adolescent suicide victims, 63% had psychiatric symptoms—including depression—for more than a year before their deaths.

However, studies tell us that few teens seek help or disclose their suicidal thoughts. While 15% of high school students consider suicide, less than one in five communicate these thoughts to parents. And – up to 60% of teens who attempt suicide do not disclose their actions.

The solution is clear. *Early intervention in the lives of hurting teens is key.* Intervention can save a life, foster higher educational achievement, prevent crime and delinquency and reduce teen pregnancy. Long range benefits continue

with more financial security and brighter futures. Marilyn Thomas, founder and executive director of House of Hope Kansas City, started the residential home and treatment program for girls ages 13-17 with the ultimate mission to heal hurting hearts and unite divided families. "Since I was a young girl, my heart has had a soft spot for struggling children," said Thomas. Every child, no matter how troubled, angry or depressed, was created as one-of-a-kind, and has been given a purpose in life. At House of Hope it's our goal to teach them to realize this, and when they do, they just thrive," Thomas added.

Since its opening in 2007, House of Hope Kansas City has helped over 300 teenagers and parents become healthy, thriving family members where bonds strengthened and lives now flourish. Teenagers who come to House of Hope are often struggling with normal teenage problems like rebellion, or defiance—and some are dealing with depression, sexual promiscuity or drug or alcohol abuse.

One parent recalled the story of her daughter when she was 16 years old. She was lost, filled with sadness and anger. "After she came to House of Hope we found notes where she said she wanted to end her life, so we

really feel like this saved her life. The light at House of Hope brought hope into her life and encouragement, which has allowed her to excel and move forward and go to college," said the parent, "and we're very proud of her."

House of Hope broke ground early in the year for a new "Life Center" that will include an art center, library, exercise room and larger space for Hope Academy, the school for girls living in the home. The new building is expected to open in October.

Healing the heart of one can impact the lives of many. If you would like to invest in the transformation of children's lives by donating or volunteering, please contact House of Hope Kansas City at 913.262.8885 or visit www.houseofhopekc.net.

"Our whole mission is to restore the teenagers back to their families and the parents back to their children."

*—Marilyn Thomas,
Executive Director*

