

# ETHICAL CHOICES

**HEALTH**

**TALK**

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This guide was produced by

**Thirteen·wnet**  
Educational Resources Center  
Ruth Ann Burns, Director

**Project Director:** Robert A. Miller  
**Graphic Designer:** B.T. Whitehill  
**Writer/Editor:** Jimin Han  
**Associate Editor:** Christina L. Draper  
**Copy Editor:** June U. Yang  
**Proofreader:** Kevin E. Kennedy

### Advisors:

Kim Anderson  
Manager, Teen Leadership Institute and Training  
Thirteen/WNET

Dale Cummins  
Student, Prospect Heights H.S., Brooklyn, NY

Georganne Del Canto  
Assistant Director, Intermediate School Program  
Columbia University School of Public Health, New York, NY

Shawn Dove  
Program Director, Rheedlen Centers for Children & Families  
New York, NY

Katia Nelson  
Student, Catherine McAuley H.S., Brooklyn, NY

Kathleen Rae  
Director, Educational Technology, Thirteen/WNET

Jhansi Reddy  
Student, Phillips Academy, Andover, MA

Suzanne Rose  
Coordinating Producer, ETHICAL CHOICES: HEALTH TALK

Adam Salky  
Student, Collegiate School, New York, NY

Sandra Sheppard  
Director, Educational Video Services, Thirteen/WNET

John R. Torres  
Health Education Consultant, Mt. Vernon, NY

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**Producer:** Sandra Sheppard  
**Coordinating Producer:** Suzanne Rose

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## Honesty ... Responsibility ... Loyalty ... Independence ...

### What do these words mean to today's teenagers?

The ETHICAL CHOICES series challenges high school students to question their beliefs and to consider the impact of their choices. Drawing on the experiences of teenagers who confront critical issues involving violence, health, and cultural diversity, among others, ETHICAL CHOICES promotes the development of ethical reasoning, higher-level thinking, effective communication, conflict resolution, and responsible decision making. ETHICAL CHOICES utilizes the Socratic method, in which participants are asked to examine their values and assumptions in a question-and-answer forum. ETHICAL CHOICES originated from Thirteen/WNET's Teen Leadership Institute, a highly successful symposium for high school students in the New York-New Jersey-Connecticut area.

### PROGRAM OVERVIEW

ETHICAL CHOICES: HEALTH TALK takes a candid look at health issues affecting teenagers today. Moderator Kim Taylor-Thompson, associate professor of law at Stanford University, leads a panel of seven teenagers, along with health-education experts Alan Ross and Lenore Roseman, and pastor and parent Reverend Dr. T. Monroe Turner through a series of interconnected hypothetical situations. Based on real-life incidents, the hypotheticals focus on the story of Kim, a high school student who encounters a number of health dilemmas. As the program begins, we learn that Kim (role-played by the moderator) is feeling stress from school pressures. Over time we watch her struggle with the tragic death of her sister, a new boyfriend who wants to have sex, and peer pressure to drink alcohol and smoke marijuana. Like the moderator who plays various roles in the scenarios, adult and teenage panelists assume roles, playing Kim's parent, teacher, or confidant. None of the responses is scripted. Each participant reacts spontaneously to the situations presented. Perceptive and timely, this sixty-minute program encourages young people to make the best possible choices for themselves.

### OBJECTIVES

Students will:

- Engage in classroom discussions on youth health.
- Develop critical reasoning and communication skills.
- Analyze their values and ethics and evaluate how these in turn make an impact on decision making.

## HOW TO USE THIS TEACHER'S GUIDE

This Teacher's Guide provides suggestions for developing lessons on issues relating to youth health and is to be utilized in conjunction with the 60-minute videotape **ETHICAL CHOICES: HEALTH TALK**. Designed for use with high school students, this guide is divided into five general discussion segments: Stress, Depression, & Suicide; Sex: Roles & Realities; Relationships & Responsibilities; Substance Use/Abuse, and Conclusion. These segments correspond to sections of the videotape, and may be used in one or more class periods. If you choose to use some but not all of the segments and/or use them nonsequentially, provide students with an overview of preceding events.

The following steps are recommended for effective interactive use of the Teacher's Guide and videotape. Keep in mind that the segment breakdowns are broad and general in scope. Apply the techniques below to shorter segments you may adapt to your students' needs.

1. Pre-screen the program to determine its suitability for your class.
2. Review the Background to the Socratic Method (page 7) utilized by the moderator in the program.
3. Conduct Pre-Viewing activities, such as Introducing the Topic of Youth Health (page 3).
4. Begin each program segment by discussing the Pre-Viewing questions.
5. Give students a focus for viewing, i.e., tell students to listen to opinions expressed by the panelists, or direct students to keep the Pre-Viewing discussion in mind as they watch the segment unfold.
6. Play the program as instructed.
7. Pause at cue. (The pause function provides an opportunity to check on student comprehension, ask questions, call for predictions, and have students write down their observations or raise questions.)
8. Ask questions that are listed in the Discussion Section.\*
9. Resume playing the program to the next pause cue or to the end of the segment, and lead a discussion as noted.
10. Allow students time to discuss any outstanding questions or concerns in pairs or small groups before moving on to the Follow-up Activities.
11. Conduct Follow-up Activities to apply and reinforce the concepts discussed.

Be flexible. Do not follow the pause points strictly. Adapt the content of the program to your students' needs. Because of the sensitive nature of **ETHICAL CHOICES** topics, you may wish to pause the videotape after each panelist's response to slow down the discussion and fully explore students' reactions. To develop dialogues on topics more specific to your class, refer to Using the Socratic Method in Class (page 7).

\*Questions may also be used after viewing the program in its entirety.

## Special Note on HEALTH TALK

**ETHICAL CHOICES: HEALTH TALK** may provoke a variety of emotional responses in students. Be sure to set ground rules in the classroom that call for respect, consideration and above all, confidentiality. Look into your specific school policies and guidelines. Be aware of the religious and cultural backgrounds of each of your students. To establish a more private setting, you may wish to break students into small groups to allow them to share and reflect on the issues raised in the program. Alert students to qualified support staff within the school, as well as experts outside the school (see page 8). Invite support staff or outside professionals to your classroom to handle potentially unsettling situations or to extend discussion of topics.

## CROSS-CURRICULAR USE

**ETHICAL CHOICES: HEALTH TALK** may be used in a variety of subject areas, such as health, guidance, ethics, parenting courses, extracurricular activities like peer counseling, as well as community-based programs for teens and parents.

## INTRODUCING THE TOPIC OF YOUTH HEALTH

**Objective:** To encourage open dialogue and explore the feelings of teenagers about health and its importance in their lives.

Ask students to give their opinion on the state of teen health today. Present the topics covered in the program as examples (i.e., stress, depression, substance abuse, etc.) Are teens for the most part in good health? In crisis?

What are the factors that contribute to this situation? How might teens handle these issues?

## START VIDEO

and play until **Kim** says:

"We hope that as you watch, you will do the same."  
(Approx. 3 min.)

- **“More than a temporary ‘blue’ mood, depression is an illness that occurs in an estimated 6 percent of children between the ages of 9 and 17. Early intervention can help reduce the severe impact of depression on school performance and family relations, and reduce the very real threat of youth suicide.”**

Isabel Davidoff, Director,  
Depression Awareness,  
Recognition and Treatment Campaign,  
National Institute of Mental Health

- **According to the American Association of Suicidology, approximately every two hours a young person (15-24 years old) commits suicide.**

## STRESS, DEPRESSION, & SUICIDE

### Pre-Viewing

Write the word “stress” on the board. Ask students for other words which they associate with this term. Write responses on the board. Encourage students to talk about personal stress in their lives. Discuss some of the sources of stress, the positive and negative ways that teenagers handle stress, and possible strategies for responding to stress.

**PLAY VIDEO** for approx. 3 min.

**PAUSE VIDEO** after **Alan** says:

“It’s normal but left unabated, it could become a bigger problem for you.”

### Discussion

- Ask students how they feel about Kim’s situation. Is it typical? Is it okay to be stressed out? What are possible causes? What are some of the ways that teenagers might handle stress?

**RESUME VIDEO** for approx. 4 min.

**PAUSE VIDEO** after **Marina** says:

“Sometimes you don’t want to talk to your friends.”

### Discussion

- Ask students how they would respond to Kim. What would they say? Would they mention Kim’s sister? How persistent would they be? To whom would they turn for help? Why?
- Ask students to list the signs of depression which the panelists discussed. How might they help someone who is depressed?

**RESUME VIDEO** for approx. 4 min.

**PAUSE VIDEO** after **Marina** says:

“But if he just disregards it, then he might feel responsible for something that might happen to you.”

### Discussion

- Ask students if teachers or counselors should call Kim’s parents if they suspect that she is suicidal. How might her parents respond? How might parents and teenagers improve their means of communicating with one another?

**RESUME VIDEO** to the end of the segment, approx. 6 min.

### Discussion

- Ask for a show of hands from students who would keep a friend’s confidence about suicide. Would students seek help from a teacher or counselor? Why or why not? What would students say to a friend who discovers that his or her confidence had been betrayed?
- Ask students what some of the warning signs of suicide might be. List them on the board and discuss.

### Follow-up Activity

#### What if...

Refer to the list of words prepared in the Pre-Viewing activity. After viewing this segment, would students change or add to their list? Then break students into groups and have them write scenarios for a role play where an individual is feeling stress in his or her life. Ask students to work out plans to reduce the stress or respond to the stress in a positive way. Students may choose to develop Kim’s scenario further or come up with new characters and new situations.



# SEX: ROLES & REALITIES

## Pre-Viewing

Initiate a discussion on values. Brainstorm with students for a definition of "values," and construct a list of values on the board. Some examples include: family, health, material wealth, etc. Ask students to write on paper, in order of importance, a list of their top five values. Discuss where values come from and how these values affect students' lives.

**PLAY VIDEO** for approx. 3 min.

**PAUSE VIDEO** after Maggie says:

"I mean, if you're the kind of person who thinks you can handle a casual sexual relationship, and, you know, then you have to decide that for yourself."

## Discussion

- Ask students to list the factors (i.e., religion, morality, etc.) that influence a teen's view on sex.
- Ask students how they would respond to Kim and her dilemma if they were her confidants. Which issues should Kim consider to help make her decision? Have students list the pros and cons of having sex. Write responses on the board and discuss.
- Ask students how peer pressure affects a teenager's decision to have sex or not to have sex. Do teenagers respect other teenagers' decisions about sex?

**RESUME VIDEO** for approx. 3 min.

**PAUSE VIDEO** after Trei says:

"So they're gonna try it. And then if they like it, you know, it just keeps going on."

## Discussion

- Ask students to discuss socially or culturally influenced differences between young men and young women in sexual matters. Is there a double standard for men and women? Explain.
- Ask students to consider the role the media plays in influencing teenagers. What messages are being conveyed? How do teenagers judge the information they are given? Whom do they trust?

**RESUME VIDEO** for approx. 7 min.

**PAUSE VIDEO** after Megan says:

"And since no parent is going to be proud of the fact that their child is having sex, I think it's up to the school."

## Discussion

- Ask students if they agree or disagree with Megan. What role should schools play, if any, in educating young people about sex? Why or why not? Should schools teach abstinence?
- Ask students if condoms should be distributed in schools. What kinds of arguments for each side have students heard? Discuss.

**RESUME VIDEO** to the end of the segment, approx. 3 min.

## Discussion

- Ask students how they feel about talking with their parents about sex. Why? What could teenagers and parents do to improve the situation?

## Follow-up Activity

### Local Health Talk.

Encourage students to research the history of sex education in their school, as well as current-day school policies. How do students feel about the sex education they are receiving? Have students interview classmates, teachers, school administrators, and parents. If appropriate, ask students to research how other schools have successfully implemented policies concerning sex education. Ask students to propose a plan based on this research.

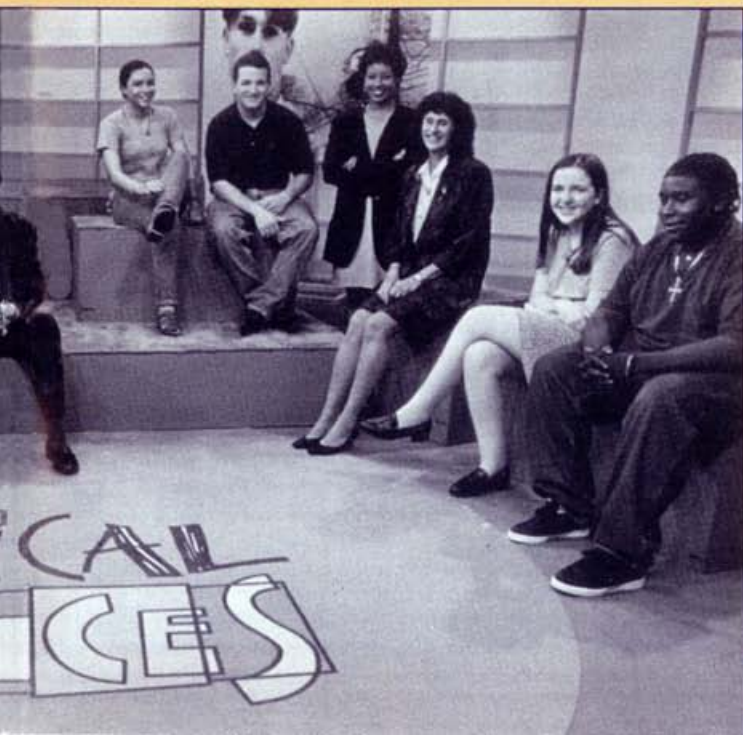


photo: Joseph Simrott

## Relationships & Responsibilities

### Pre-Viewing

Initiate a discussion on privacy. Where do students draw the line when discussing health issues? How do students decide if and when they should approach a friend about how he or she is living their life and affecting others? Who's responsible? What are the consequences of intervening? The consequences of not taking action?

**PLAY VIDEO** for approx. 4 min.

**PAUSE VIDEO** after Megan says:

"I might make it kind of like a hypothetical and say it happened to me where I wasn't sure if my boyfriend would use one, or I might not just say to her, because you don't really know her."

### Discussion

- Ask students what they would say to Jimmy if they were his friend. What if they were in his sister's place? Do students agree or disagree with the panelists' responses? Ask students to put themselves in Jimmy's place. Why is he continuing to have unprotected sex?
- Have students consider the predicament of Jimmy's girlfriend. Would students talk to her about Jimmy? How? Explain. How might Jimmy respond to intervention?

**RESUME VIDEO** to the end of the segment, approx. 4 min.

### Discussion

- Ask students if they feel comfortable talking to Jimmy about the gonorrhea he might have contracted through his last girlfriend. What would they say to him? How does testing positive for HIV affect students' friendship with Jimmy? Do students agree with Dae that Jimmy is a "victim"? Explain.
- Discuss with students how they feel about available health-care services for teenagers. What do students know about health clinics and services in their schools and communities? Is the care provided sufficient? Should visits be confidential? Would students feel comfortable going to health-care providers? Is confidentiality important? What changes, if any, would students like to see?

### Follow-up Activity

#### Investigative Reports.

Have students list the types of health care that clinics provide, i.e., counseling, HIV testing, birth control, etc. Break students into groups and have them research and visit organizations or clinics to find out how a specific issue is handled and what students can expect from each organization. Have them report back to the class. If necessary, ask students to develop a plan to improve the care that each clinic provides and present their findings to the management of the clinics.



photo: Joseph Simont

## Substance Use/Abuse

### Pre-Viewing

Initiate a discussion on friendship. Ask students to define it and write a list of their closest friends. Discuss how the friendships formed and how they are maintained. How do students choose their friends? What do students consider important factors? How much do students value their friends and those friends' opinions? In which situations do students value their friends' opinions the most? In which situations did students challenge their friends' opinions?

**PLAY VIDEO** for approx. 5 min.

**PAUSE VIDEO** after Trei says:

"You fit in just because of who you are."

### Discussion

- Ask students how they feel about drinking alcohol. What are the potential consequences? Is teenage drinking a serious problem? If so, why? How can the problem be solved? Why do adults drink? Compare and discuss. How are smoking cigarettes and other drug use similar to, or different from, drinking alcohol?
- Ask students about peer pressure to drink alcohol. Discuss where the pressure comes from and how a teenager can handle it.

**RESUME VIDEO** for approx. 3 min.

**PAUSE VIDEO** after Alan says:

"I'm not condoning it, I'm just saying this stuff does happen and we need to be realistic and make guidelines that are real instead of theoretic absolutes that no one follows."

### Discussion

- Ask students how they feel about smoking marijuana. Does it make a difference how well students know the person who offers the marijuana? What are the potential consequences? Why?
- Have students discuss Alan's response. What does he mean when he urges teenagers to use their judgment? How do teens decide whether or not to experiment with marijuana at a party or elsewhere?

## Background

Essential to the ETHICAL CHOICES educational package is the use of the Socratic method, which is attributed to the Greek philosopher Socrates (ca. 470-399 B.C.). Known today as the "Father of Ethics," Socrates transformed philosophy from the study of the external universe to the study of human beings and their relationships. He sought to establish ethical truth through absolute standards of conduct and a system of morality independent of opposing doctrines, a system that was valid for everyone regardless of individual religious or civic views.

Socrates's method of challenging the claims of those who participated in his dialogues was to search for truth by discussion. He was able to expose ignorance by claiming his own ignorance ('Socratic irony') at times to elicit honest answers. Using inductive reasoning, Socrates centered the discussion on the individual he was questioning and on that individual's beliefs.

## Using the Socratic Method in Class

### Keep the following points in mind:

- Act as a facilitator rather than an authority figure, or allow a student to be a facilitator while you act as an observer.
- Draw from students' experiences to select an issue that is both meaningful to them and may evoke many different points of view.
- Set up a hypothetical situation specific to your school and/or community that frames the ethical dilemmas raised by the issue.
- Devise a sequence of questions that progressively challenges students to examine their own thinking.
- Guide students by utilizing the questioning tips below.
- Follow up the Socratic dialogue with a discussion on the insights gained from the experience and their possible applications.

### Questioning Tips

- Keep your questioning strategy flexible.
- Begin with general questions, and move toward specific and probing questions.
- Ask open-ended questions.
- If possible, share your own relevant experiences.
- Allow students time to think about answers before responding.
- Draw answers by innuendo, suggestion, and/or paradox.
- Probe students' responses by challenging their statements.
- Restate and reflect the students' statements in order to clarify and validate their thought (e.g., "I hear you saying that...").
- Where there is an agreement among students, take on the role of devil's advocate to enliven the discussion.
- Encourage students to ask questions or challenge other points of view.
- Avoid classifying students' answers as right or wrong.
- Insist that students explain how they reached their conclusions.
- Prompt students to draw from their personal experiences and observations.

**RESUME VIDEO** to the end of the segment, approx. 6 min.

### Discussion

- Ask students whether they would try to get out of the car if they noticed that the person getting behind the wheel had been drinking alcohol. Why or why not? What are Kim's options? If the car were in motion, what would students do? How could this situation have been avoided?
- Ask students about Kim's friends in the car. Should she try to persuade them to get out of the car also? How far should she go to help them?

## Follow-up Activity

### Art With Attitude.

Have students describe their view of alcohol and drugs. Have students, in groups or alone, represent their feelings by creating a collage or drawing, or writing a poem. Where do their ideas come from? Who or what has influenced them the most? Finally, have students research a local organization that specializes in helping substance abusers and invite a speaker to the class (see page 8); or ask students to research recent trends in teenage alcohol and drug abuse.

## Conclusion

The segment begins when **Kim** says: "Now it's the end of the year."

**PLAY VIDEO** to the end of the segment, approx. 1 min.

### Discussion

- Ask students to list the ways Kim handled her problems. Was the advice she received from panelists realistic?
- Ask students to think about the connection between self-esteem and a teenager's decisions. How does one's self-esteem affect one's actions?
- Ask students to list their goals. How many of these goals are directly affected by the health issues raised in the videotape?

## Follow-up Activity

### Run Your Own Show.

Have students select a topic related to youth health. Break students into groups and plan ways to improve youth health in their community. Examples: Organize a student group focusing on a specific topic; shoot a videotape documentary or conduct a campaign to raise awareness about student health issues; videotape a response to ETHICAL CHOICES: HEALTH TALK with a different set of panelists and a moderator.

**GENERAL**

**Planned Parenthood Federation of America**  
 810 Seventh Avenue  
 New York, NY 10019  
 (212) 541-7800

Planned Parenthood's 158 not-for-profit affiliates operate nearly 1,000 clinics in 49 states and the District of Columbia. Planned Parenthood centers provide medical and educational services for more than five million Americans each year, regardless of race, age, gender, sexual orientation, disability, or economic circumstances. Through its international program, Family Planning International Assistance, Planned Parenthood helps meet the family planning needs of women and men in the developing world.

**SUICIDE AND DEPRESSION**

**The American Association of Suicidology**  
 4201 Connecticut Ave., NW, Ste. 310  
 Washington, DC 20008  
 (202) 237-2280

The goal of the American Association of Suicidology (AAS) is to understand and prevent suicide. AAS promotes research, public awareness programs, and education and training for professionals and volunteers. In addition, it serves as a national clearinghouse for information on suicide. AAS is open weekdays, 9:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. (ET), and is not a provider of crisis services.

**The Samaritans**  
 P.O. Box 1259, Madison Square Station  
 New York, NY 10159  
 Hotline Number: (212) 673-3000

The Samaritans, the world's largest suicide-prevention organization, "befriends" people who are in crisis or suicidal through the operation of suicide-prevention hotlines, public education programs and "suicide survivors" support groups. Samaritans is nonreligious, completely confidential, and staffed by trained volunteers who do not express personal values or tell people what to do. Samaritans focuses on the "life, living, and exploring options" side of suicide and provides support and training to schools, government agencies, and nonprofit organizations.

**D/ART DEPRESSION Awareness, Recognition, and Treatment/NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF MENTAL HEALTH**  
 5600 Fishers Lane, Room 10-85  
 Rockville, MD 20857  
 (301) 443-4140 / (800) 421-4211

D/ART—for DEPRESSION Awareness, Recognition, and Treatment—is a public and professional education program sponsored by the National Institute of Mental Health in collaboration with private organizations and citizens. The program is based on over forty years of research on the diagnosis and treatment of depressive disorders. Its goals include the alleviation of symptoms through early intervention and effective treatment for the millions of Americans who suffer from depressive disorders each year.

**SEX/HIV/AIDS**

**American Social Health Association**  
 Case Management, Testing and Counseling,  
 Support and Education for People With HIV and AIDS  
 100 Capitola Drive  
 Durham, NC 27713  
 (919) 361-8400

Founded in 1914, the American Social Health Association is a nonprofit organization dedicated solely to the prevention and control of all sexually transmitted diseases. Its mission is to stop STDs and their harmful consequences to individuals, families, and communities.

**Girls Incorporated**  
 30 E. 33rd Street  
 New York, NY 10016  
 (212) 689-3700

A national service organization advocating on behalf of young women. Three hundred centers provide adolescent pregnancy prevention, substance abuse prevention, science and math encouragement, and sports programs.

**National Leadership Coalition on AIDS**  
 1730 M Street, NW  
 Washington, DC 20036  
 (202) 429-0930

A nonprofit organization consisting of businesses, labor unions, volunteer organizations, trade groups, and concerned individuals working together to stop the spread of HIV disease through effective workplace AIDS policies, practices, and teaching programs.

**ALCOHOL AND DRUG ABUSE**

**Boys & Girls Clubs of America**  
 1230 W. Peachtree St., NW  
 Atlanta, GA 30309-3447  
 (404) 815-5700

National service organization for disadvantaged youth. Provides drug and alcohol counseling, delinquency intervention, health and nutrition information, career exploration, and education.

**Center for Substance Abuse Prevention**  
 9300 Lee Highway  
 Fairfax, VA 22031  
 (800) 354-8824

Strives to prevent the negative effects of alcohol and other drugs on women, infants, children, and families by addressing issues of drug use during pregnancy and the intergenerational cycle of alcohol and other drug abuse.

**National Council on Alcoholism & Drug Dependence**  
 12 West 21st Street  
 New York, NY 10010  
 Toll free for referrals: (800) 622-2255

The National Council on Alcoholism & Drug Dependence provides education, information, health, and hope in the fight against this chronic and often fatal disease of alcoholism and other drug addictions. Founded in 1944 NCADD, with its nationwide network of affiliates, advocates prevention, intervention and treatment and is committed to ridding the disease of its stigma and its sufferers of their denial and shame.

**HOTLINES**

**American Council on Alcoholism:**  
 (800) 527-5344

**American Council for Drug Education:**  
 (800) 488-DRUG

**Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC) AIDS Clearinghouse:**  
 (800) 458-5231

**CDC National AIDS Hotline:**  
 (800) 342-AIDS  
 In Spanish: (800) 344-SIDA

**March of Dimes:**  
 (800) 99-MARCH

**National Alliance for the Mentally Ill:**  
 (800) 950-6264

**National Foundation for Depressive Illness:**  
 (800) 248-4344

**National Mental Health Association:**  
 (800) 969-6642

**National Institute on Drug Abuse:**  
 (800) 662-4357

**National Sexually Transmitted Diseases Hotline:**  
 (800) 227-8922

**The Samaritans:**  
 (212) 673-3000