

KY-SPIN's Youth eNews 5/28/2026



Youth News!

Get **SET**...**S**upport, **E**ducate, **T**rain for Success!

The **mission** of KY-SPIN, Inc. is to link families and individuals with disabilities to valuable resources that will enable them to live productive, fulfilling lives.

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What Is Mental Health (and Why It Matters)?

This video, "Let's Talk About Mental Health and Wellness," explains how your thoughts, feelings, and behaviors all connect to how you handle everyday life and challenges. As you watch, think about your own experiences and whether you've ever felt "off" without knowing why. This video is a great first step in learning how to notice those signs and understand when it might be time to reach out for support.



Let's Check In: How Are You Really Doing?

It's important to take a moment and check in with yourself. How are you really feeling—stressed, tired, happy, or overwhelmed? All feelings are normal, and noticing them helps you understand what your body and mind need. When you pay attention to your feelings,

you can catch problems early, make better choices, and find healthy ways to cope before things feel too big.

If something doesn't feel right, you don't have to handle it alone. Talk to a trusted adult or try simple strategies like taking a break, listening to music, or going for a walk. Asking for help shows strength, and you deserve support. Look at the resources in this email to find ways you can start owning your mental health.

Kentucky's Exceptional Youth Voices!!!

Question:

I haven't been feeling like myself lately, but I don't really know why. I feel tired, overwhelmed, and sometimes just "off." I don't know what's wrong or what to do about it. How can I start understanding what's going on and feel better?

Answer:

Not feeling like yourself can be confusing, but the first step is to start paying attention to the signs your mind and body are giving you. Notice changes in your mood, energy, sleep, or interest in things you usually enjoy. Instead of trying to figure everything out at once, focus on simply recognizing how you feel each day.

It can also help to talk to someone you trust—like a parent, teacher, counselor, or mentor—who can support you and help you make sense of what you're experiencing. Small steps, like checking in with yourself and reaching out, can help you better understand your mental health and start feeling more in control.



Each month, we will share an advocacy success story or answer a question about life, school, and friends sent to us by students around the state. Your stories and questions are important, so don't wait, be a part of the changes in Kentucky today.

Why Do Feelings Change?

Checking in with your feelings each day may seem like a small habit, but it can make a big difference in understanding your mental health. Your mood can be affected by many parts of your daily life, like sleep, stress, relationships, and school.

When you start to notice what affects your mood, you can better understand why your feelings change and what you might need. Take a look at this flyer for common reasons feelings change and simple ways to recognize what may be impacting you.

Why Do Feelings Change?

Understanding Mental Health

Everyone has mental health - just like physical health. Feelings can change based on what's happening in your life. Sometimes these changes **can feel overwhelming**.

What Affects Your Mood?	Common Reasons Feelings Change:
Sleep Habits	Big life changes (moving, new school, new job)
Social Media	Stress from school, work, or relationships
Stress	Lack of sleep
Relationships	Changes in routine
School Work	Conflict with friends or family
Health	Physical health problems
	Trauma or difficult experiences
	Feeling lonely or left out
	Social media or comparing yourself to others

"It's okay to not feel okay sometimes—you don't have to handle it alone."



What Affects Me? _____

Circle or check things that affect your mood:

☐ Sleep ☐ Friends ☐ Family ☐ School ☐ Phone ☐ Health ☐ Other: _____



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Mental Health

Helpful Resources

Taking care of your mental health is an important part of growing, learning, and becoming more independent. Understanding how you feel, recognizing when something doesn't feel right and knowing when to ask for help can make a big difference in your success at school, work, and in your daily life. The good news is that there are many resources and supports available to help you learn how to manage your mental health step by step.

Organizations like **KY-SPIN**, **National Alliance on Mental Illness**, school counselors, and local community services can help you find support, learn coping strategies, and connect with people who care about your well-being. If you ever need immediate support, **you can call or text 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline to talk to someone right away.** With the right support and a willingness to reach out, you can take important steps toward understanding and owning your mental health.



988 | SUICIDE & CRISIS
LIFELINE
24/7 CALL, TEXT, CHAT

TEAM KENTUCKY.
CABINET FOR HEALTH
AND FAMILY SERVICES

SAMHSA
Substance Abuse and Mental Health
Services Administration

Speaking Up: Asking for Help
Understanding Mental Health

Talking about your feelings can feel scary—but it is one of the strongest things you can do. A trusted adult listens, cares, and wants to help you stay safe.

Who Can Be a Trusted Adult?

- Parent or guardian
- Teacher or school staff
- Job coach or supervisor
- Counselor or therapist
- Church Staff

Step-by-Step

Pick a safe person
Choose a quiet time
Say how you feel
Ask for help
Keep talking—even if it's hard

How to Start the Conversation:

- "I've been feeling really stressed lately."
- "I need help with something."
- "I don't feel like myself."
- "Can we talk?"

When Should I Ask for Help?

When I feel overwhelmed
When I do not understand
When I do not feel safe
When my feelings won't go away

Fill in the blanks:

- I feel _____
- I need help with _____
- Can we talk about _____

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Understanding who you can go to for help is a key part of good mental health. Trusted adults—like **parents, teachers, counselors, job coaches, or other support staff**—are there to listen and help you work through challenges. Knowing when to ask for help, such as when you feel overwhelmed, confused, unsafe, or like your feelings won't go away, can help you take action before things become more difficult. Practicing simple ways to start a conversation, like saying "I need help" or "Can we talk?", can make it easier to reach out.

Developing the habit of speaking up prepares you for success in school, work, and your community. It helps you build confidence, strengthen communication skills, and take control of your well-being. By learning to recognize your feelings and ask for help—even when it's hard—you are taking an important step toward independence and mental health awareness.

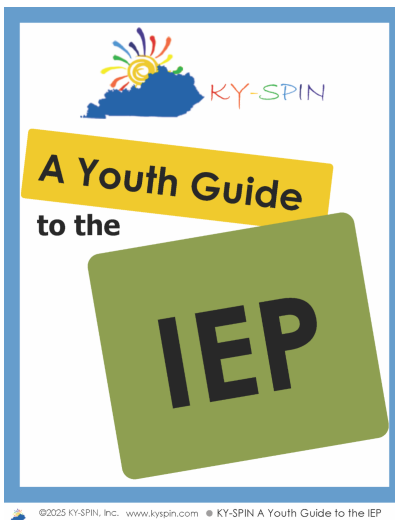
Mental Health Explained

In this video, a youth reporter, Ainara Alleyne, breaks down the basics of mental health in a way that's easy to understand. It explains what mental health means, why it matters, and how it affects everyday life. The video also talks about the stigma around mental health and shares ways to challenge it, helping viewers better understand how mental health impacts both individuals and their communities.



If you need someone to talk to...

988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline: Call or Text 988
Website: <https://988.ky.gov>



Don't Forget!!!!

A Youth Guide to the IEP workbook is **available now**. Make sure you download your copy today!

[A Youth Guide to the IEP - KY-SPIN](#)

Learn more about us [KY-SPIN Infographic](#)
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800-525-7746 or 502-937-6894- spininc@kyspin.com
[Contact Form](http://www.kyspin.com/contact/) (www.kyspin.com/contact/)

Download Printable [KY-SPIN Referral Form Here](https://tinyurl.com/4t2evb59) (<https://tinyurl.com/4t2evb59>)



KY-SPIN, Inc. | 800-525-7746 | spininc@kyspin.com |
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KY-SPIN, Inc. | 10301-B Deering Road | Louisville, KY 40272 US

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