

# King County Safe Place

*Safe Place is a program that quickly connects runaway and homeless youth ages 12-17 to services, either by reuniting them with their family or providing them with emergency shelter. Youth can go to Safe Place site or call our 1-800 number, and Safe Place staff will arrive to provide assistance.*

## How does Safe Place work?

- Safe Place is a national program that began 1983 at the YMCA of Greater Louisville; since then, it has grown to include nearly 140 programs in 39 states.
- In King County, certain local businesses and non-profit organizations have volunteered to be “**Safe Places**” – locations where youth can go and request assistance. Staff members at these locations are trained to appropriately respond to youth in need by immediately contacting Safe Place and providing a place for the youth to wait. These locations are designated by the yellow diamond Safe Place logo.
- Safe Place maintains a **24/7 hotline, 1-800-422-TEEN (8336)**, where youth can directly connect with Safe Place.
- Youth can **text the word SAFE and their location to 4HELP (44357)** to find the closest Safe Place site. They will also receive the Safe Place hotline number, a message that all Metro buses are Safe Place sites, and have the option to text with a National Safe Place counselor.
- Safe Place staff meets with the youth, assesses the situation, and works with the youth to place them at shelter, or reunite them with parents/guardians.
- In King County, Safe Place is run through a collaboration between Friends of Youth and YouthCare.

## Why is Safe Place Important?

- **Safe Place gets kids off the streets** by providing immediate access to community resource options.
- **Safe Place intervenes during a crisis.** Families can be complicated, and Safe Place provides a safe respite for youth and families in need of immediate respite and support.
- **Safe Place provides a safe alternative.** Some youth simply aren't safe at home and escape to the streets only to discover that the streets aren't safe either; others are told to leave their homes. Either way, Safe Place provides immediate help.
- **Safe Place sites engage the community in issues impacting youth** in our local area. The community is more engaged, involved, and committed to addressing issues of homeless and runaway youth when they have a better, and more personal, understanding of these issues.



For more information, please contact [safeplace@youthcare.org](mailto:safeplace@youthcare.org)

## 2020 Priorities

Safe Place is focusing on developing sites and increasing youth awareness of the program through partnerships with King County businesses, non-profit organizations, city governments, and schools.

## Safe Place by the Numbers

Between January – December 2019:

- 84 youth received assistance from Safe Place, either through connecting them to immediate help and safety or through crisis intervention assistance.
- 310 youth, young adults, and community members received immediate phone counseling and community resources through Safe Place.
- The average age of youth contacting Safe Place was 16.
- 10,000 youth and adults were educated about Safe Place through community events, presentations, and outreach.
- More than 15,000 students were provided with Safe Place information through partnerships with King County schools.
- There are currently over 2,100 Safe Place sites in King County.

