

Video Guide

KIDS IN CRISIS

color, 55 minutes, 1986

Adolescence is a time of great change. Teens are dealing with self-identity and getting along with the group, with freedom and responsibility, with physical maturing and sexual awakening. For some teens these years result in overwhelming confusion and stress, misuse of drugs, and trouble with parents, school, and the law. It appears that current teens are experiencing more difficulty than previous teens. Suicide rates have tripled in the past 20 years for teens. 10 % of teens are believed to suffer from severe depression. The current generation of teens is the most self-destructive in our history. For too many teens these years are a time of crisis.

Increasingly, teens and their parents are turning to mental health professionals and psychiatric hospitals. There has been a large increase in teens on psychiatric wards with 20% of all psychiatric patients under the age 18.

In this videotape we talk with 12 troubled teens in 3 psychiatric hospitals which allowed filming. Brian, Andrew, **Kristen**, and Cori are interviewed the longest.

As I watched the film, I was struck by the desire of all teens except Andrew to better handle their world. I also was struck by their courage and the amount of time it was taking in the psychiatric hospitals to bring about health.

In general, abnormal refers to behavior that has one or more of these characteristics.

- a. **Social deviance** - unusual, extreme, persistent behaviors which disturb others.
- b. **Subjective distress** - the person reports unhappiness, suffering, and unusual thoughts or hard to handle emotions.
- c. **Psychological handicap** - the person is not able to handle normal social, family, and school responsibilities when previously he/she could.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

1. What are the symptoms shown by these teens?

2. What seemed to be the causes of their problems?

3. What was being done to help them?