

Appearance v Reality: Unlocking the Closed Doors of Youth Mental Health

Featuring REAL conversations with best-selling author **Julie Fingersh**, podcast creator and host **Susie Gurley**, and local leader and speaker **Bernadette Spooner Thompson**. Guests include youth with lived experience and other local behavioral health experts - all with unique lenses on this critical topic.



Dear Friend,

Mental health, stress, anxiety, and depression – these topics appear in the news almost as often as the weather forecast. Yet, we often discuss them only in brief sound bites about the nation’s mental health crisis, especially among youth. We hear statistics about self-harm, eating disorders, bullying, social media pressures, and more. But how often are we really talking about it? Too often, privacy concerns and fear of stigma prevent honest conversations and keep many from seeking help.

We can do better. Last year, Seton launched a pilot program called Seton CARES to provide free therapy and skill building classes for Jackson County youth ages 10-18. Now in it’s second year, the program is growing. This year, we would like to do more!

Join us in kicking off Mental Health Awareness Month by sponsoring or attending Appearance v Reality: Unlocking the Closed Doors of Youth Mental Health, hosted at the Kauffman Foundation on April 29th at 8:30 a.m.

Together, we’ll go beyond surface-level discussions to explore what happens when we ignore mental health struggles—or when we finally open up and talk about them.

The event will feature:

- Candid conversation between **Julie Fingersh**, award-winning author of *Stay: A Story of Family, Love and Other Traumas*, and **Susie Gurley**, founder and host of *The Just a Mom* podcast
- **Youth Panel** with lived experience including suicidal ideation, eating disorder, self-harm, gender identity, homelessness and more. Hosted by **Michael Duncan**, Seton CARES Program Director.
- *Cultural Moral Injury* by local leader and speaker **Bernadette Spooner Thompson**
- Q & A with local behavioral health experts with lenses on how factors such as race, faith, gender, and generational poverty can influence mental health outcomes.
- **Breakout sessions** to include *Mental Health First Aid*, *Conflict Resolution for Youth*, *CALM Training* and *What is Allyship?*

We hope you’ll join us for this meaningful conversation and take part in unlocking the closed doors of youth mental health. **Breaks will be offered for mindfulness and a reset throughout the day!**

Warm regards,
Stacy Mayer
CEO



2816 E 23rd Street Kansas City, Missouri 64127

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Wednesday, April 29, 2026

8:30 am - 3:30 pm*

**Includes breakfast & lunch,
copies of **Stay, A Story of Family, Love and Other Traumas**
& other trauma-informed resources.*

Kauffman Foundation
4801 Rockhill Road
Kansas City, MO 64110

Presented by  SETON CENTER

with the support of Mary Lew & Marcus McCarty

Visit www.setonkc.org or contact
development@setonkc.org with questions or for more information!

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Unlocking the Closed Doors of Youth Mental Health

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Presenting \$25,000

- Logo or Listed as Presenting Sponsor on marketing materials & signage
- Acknowledged from the podium
- 30 Tickets to Symposium
- Opportunity to include company swag in gift bags
- Social Media posts & website inclusion
- 30 copies of ***Stay, A Story of Family, Love and Other Traumas*** by Julie Fingersh
- continental breakfast & buffet lunch for 30

Pathway \$10,000

- Logo or Listed as Pathway Sponsor on marketing materials & signage
- Acknowledged from the podium
- 20 Tickets to Symposium
- Opportunity to include company swag in gift bags
- Social Media posts & website inclusion
- 20 copies of ***Stay, A Story of Family, Love and Other Traumas*** by Julie Fingersh
- continental breakfast & buffet lunch for 20

Growth \$5,000

- Logo or Listed as Growth Sponsor on marketing materials & signage
- Acknowledged from the podium
- 14 Tickets to Symposium
- Social Media posts & website inclusion
- 14 copies of ***Stay, A Story of Family, Love and Other Traumas*** by Julie Fingersh
- continental breakfast & buffet lunch for 14

Nurture \$2,500

- Logo or Listed as Nurture Sponsor on marketing materials & signage
- Acknowledged from the podium
- 12 Tickets to Symposium
- Social Media posts & website inclusion
- 12 copies of ***Stay, A Story of Family, Love and Other Traumas*** by Julie Fingersh
- continental breakfast & buffet lunch for 12

Seed \$1,500

- Logo or Listed as Seed Sponsor on marketing materials & signage
- Acknowledged from the podium
- 10 Tickets to Symposium
- Social Media posts & website inclusion
- 10 copies of ***Stay, A Story of Family, Love and Other Traumas*** by Julie Fingersh
- continental breakfast & buffet lunch for 10

Individual Ticket \$60 includes:

- Single Ticket to Symposium
- Copy of ***Stay, A Story of Family, Love and Other Traumas*** by Julie Fingersh
- continental breakfast & buffet lunch

***Everyone staying for Zero Suicide can receive 2 hours of CE credit!*

YES! We agree that Minds Matter! Count us in for _____ sponsorship level!

List our name as: _____

Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Contact name: _____ Contact email: _____

Bill/invoice me

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card #: _____ exp date: ____ / _____ CVC code _____

Card address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

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Tentative Program Schedule

8:30 am Registration & Continental Breakfast

9:00 am Welcome & Introduction

9:15 - 10:00 am Fireside Chat with Guest Speakers Julie Fingersh & Susie Gurley

*Julie is the best-selling author of **Stay, A Story of Family, Love and Other Traumas**. Susie is the founder & host of **The Just a Mom** podcast*

10:00 - 10:30 am Q & A

10:30 - 10:40 am Mindfulness & Break

10:40 - 11:30 am Lived Experience Youth Panel

Moderated by Michael Duncan and featuring youth with lived experience including suicidal ideation, homelessness, domestic violence, eating disorder, and self harm.

11:30 am - noon Q & A

12:00 - 12:30 pm Lunch Break

12:30 - 1:10 pm Cultural Moral Injury with *Bernadette Spooner Thompson*

Q& A panel featuring Youth Behavioral Health experts, including:

Michael Duncan** (Seton Center CARES program creator & Program Director), **Jessica Doane

*(Resolve Counseling), **Jonathan Ruiz**, LMSW, bilingual (Spanish and English) outpatient child therapist at Swope Health specializing in child and adolescent behavioral health.*

1:10-1:40 pm Q & A

1:40 - 1:50 pm Mindfulness & Break

1:50 - 3:00 pm Breakout sessions, including:

CALM (Counseling on Access to Lethal Means) **Training,***

Conflict Resolution Overview for parents & caregivers

Mental Health First Aid

What is Allyship?

3:00 - 3:30 pm Q & A

Closing Remarks & Thank You for Coming!