



George McAuley, MD, Psychiatrist, treats patients at Northridge Hospital's Behavioral Health Unit—the only one in the San Fernando Valley to offer psychiatric services for adolescents.

42% The percentage that psychiatric admissions increased for teenagers ages 14 to 19 between 1996 and 2007. That's according to study findings released this past summer. Many of those teenagers are hospitalized for "cutting"—a form of self-mutilation used as a coping mechanism.

A CUTTER'S PATH TO HEALING

Sixteen-year-old "Melanie" recently started cutting again after a breakup with her boyfriend. Her parents took her to Northridge Hospital Medical Center's **Behavioral Health Unit**—the only one in the San Fernando Valley to offer psychiatric services for adolescents.

"The Adolescent Program is highly structured to provide an age appropriate, developmentally healthy environment," says **George McAuley, MD, Psychiatrist**. "Our goal was to show Melanie that we were here for her, and to provide her with better coping skills."

Melanie spent three days in the unit receiving intensive Psychotherapy and Group Therapy; Multifamily Group Therapy Sessions with her mother and father; and Art and Recreational Therapies.

"Having structure (in the program) kept me in an organized state-of-mind," Melanie recalls. "The staff was friendly, helped me whenever I needed to talk and the Group Sessions lifted my spirits."

"The program also focuses on personal responsibility," explains Dr. McAuley. "We ask patients, 'The world isn't likely to change so what can you do differently to adapt?' In Melanie's case, it meant accepting that she wouldn't reconcile with her boyfriend and finding a better way to handle the situation."

By the time Melanie was discharged, she'd found coping alternatives, such as discussing her problems with her family, jogging daily and using deep breathing techniques to relieve tension. She also gained the confidence to go back to school and tackle difficult issues, like facing her ex-boyfriend at school.

Our Behavioral Health team consists of Psychiatrists, Therapists, Social Workers, Nurses and Mental Health staff who offer inpatient and outpatient programs in a safe, healing environment.

In addition, our Partial Hospitalization Program provides the therapy structure of an inpatient program, but participants return home daily. We assess and treat adults, seniors and adolescents with a variety of issues, including:

- Abuse
- Anger Management
- Anxiety and Panic Disorder
- Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder (ADHD)
- Bipolar Disorder
- Chemical Dependency/ Detoxification
- Dementia
- Depression
- Eating Disorders
- Schizophrenia

Call our 24-hour crisis line for more information: **818-885-5484.**

For details about our Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance Group and Mental Health Support Group, see page 14 or visit www.NorthridgeHospital.org/supportgroups.

