

Keith Turner books back to the community and youth

By [Bill Beene](#) Of the St. Louis American

When Keith Turner was growing up, youth organizations

and mentors helped to give him hope.

As an adult, Turner has been giving back hope by volunteering

and serving on boards of youth organizations, and recently he created the "H is for Hope" children's book series.

In the series, with the help of illustrator Samuel W. Williams III, Turner encourages and inspires children to become responsible and respectful people in their communities, addressing improvement, self-care and collective responsibility.

"I believe that it is important to teach our children about personal value and self-empowerment," writes Turner on his website, hisforhopebooks.com.

He continues, "Children should know that what is put in their heads is more important than what is placed on their heads.

They should know that it is more important to maintain your personal hygiene, have healthy eating habits, and help others than how much your gym shoes cost, the type of cars people drive or the words to the latest rock song."

Turner goes on to write that we want children to recognize that their importance is not based on money or material items, but the way they maintain and improve themselves personally through education, community service and personal maintenance.

Turner released the first book in the series, "H is for Hygiene," in April of this year, along with his publishing company, TurnGroup, a subsidiary of Turngroup Technologies, an IT consulting firm and his entrepreneurial 9 to 5.

The company received the "Emerging Business of the Year" award in 2004 from the St. Louis American Foundation, St. Louis RCGA and Urban League of Metropolitan St. Louis.

Though Turner's business was already zapping his time, he was determined to find time and energy for the "H is for Hope" book series. "He's just been one of those types of people who finds out what he wants and goes after it," said his cousin Monica Huntspon.

Huntspon took her children to a book signing Turner had for "H is for Hygiene" Saturday at Borders in Brentwood, where the book is still available. The books are also available online and at upcoming book signings around town.

"It's educational, and the color is so vibrant that it will make children want to look at the book," she said, calling it a great tool for children. "It's a simplistic book, but it's getting back to the basics and we just want to get kids focused on what's important," Turner said.

The book covers showering, face washing, teeth-brushing and flossing, hair-combing and brushing, deodorant and skin moisturizer and hand-washing. To date, Turner's publishing company has sold between 800 and 900 books.

He is planning to target public and private schools, boys and girls clubs and public health agencies.

"That's my passion - especially knowing that our people need help and supplements in the household," Turner said, including "keeping kids off the streets, going to college and bringing some skill set to children to set some higher goals for themselves."

The next book in the series is "H is for Helping Hand."

Turner said this book will teach children their roles in the community.

"I understand the importance and impact of service," said Turner, adding that he wants kids to be better citizens, stay off the streets and go to college.

Other books to hit shelves soon from the series are "H is for Healthy Diet" and "H is for Heroes."

The TurnGroup also publishes books for other authors.

"There are a lot of people out there who have ideas and just need help bringing them to life, and that's what we're going to help them do," Turner said.

To buy books online or for more information, visit www.hisforhopebooks.com



Author and TurnGroup publisher Keith Turner discusses his "H is for Hygiene" book to Taylor, Naya and Kaci on Saturday at Borders in Brentwood.