

RAISING *mental health awareness*

The facts



Everyone has mental health.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) defines mental health as:

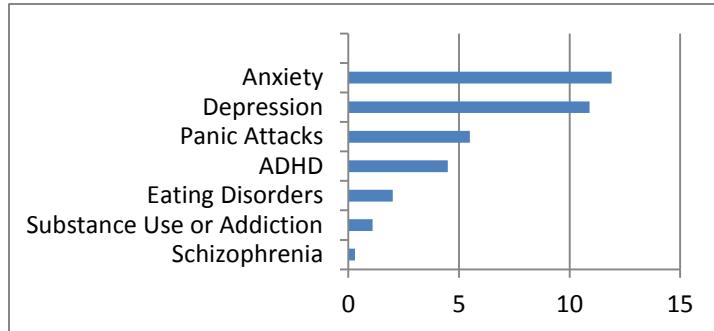
A state of well-being in which a person realizes his or her own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully and is able to make a contribution to his or her community.

The CDC defines mental health conditions as:

Health conditions that are characterized by alterations in thinking, mood, or behavior (or some combination of those) associated with distress and/or impaired functioning.

Did you know that mental health conditions are common? **1 in 4** young adults has a mental health condition.

The percent of college students diagnosed or treated by a professional for mental health conditions in the past twelve months...



Mental health conditions are a result of a variety of factors, including **biological** and **environmental**.

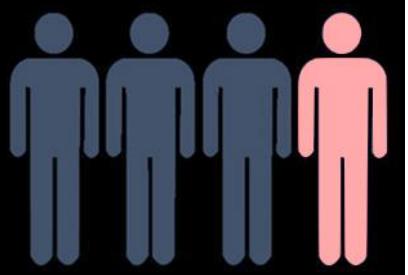
Stigma is the number one barrier to college students seeking help.

Raising mental health awareness with *the facts* helps to end stigma and to create more supportive communities.

For citations and to learn more, visit www.nami.org/namioncampus.

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Common warning signs



10 common warning signs of a mental health condition:

- Feeling very sad or withdrawn for more than 2 weeks
(e.g., crying regularly, feeling fatigued, feeling unmotivated)
- Seriously trying to harm or kill oneself or making plans to do so
- Severe out-of-control, risk-taking behaviors that can cause harm to self or others
- Sudden overwhelming fear for no reason, sometimes with a racing heart, physical discomfort or fast breathing
- Not eating, throwing up or using laxatives to lose weight; significant weight loss or weight gain
- Severe mood swings that cause problems in relationships
- Repeated use of drugs or alcohol
- Drastic changes in behavior, personality or sleeping habits
(e.g. waking up early and acting agitated)
- Extreme difficulty in concentrating or staying still that puts a person in physical danger or causes school failure
- Intense worries or fears that get in the way of daily activities like hanging out with friends or going to classes

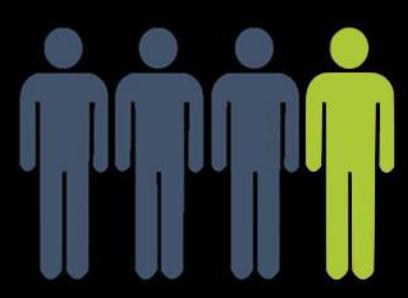
Raising mental health awareness about *common warning signs* leads to more individuals in need getting help. Learn how to help a friend at www.nami.org/namioncampus.



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Suicide prevention



Did you know...?

- Suicide is the 2nd leading cause of death in college students.
- More young adults die from suicide than from cancer, heart disease, AIDS, birth defects, stroke, pneumonia and influenza and chronic lung disease **combined**.
- 7% of students have “seriously considered suicide” in the past year.
- 90% of those who commit suicide had an underlying mental health condition.

Common suicide warning signs

- Talking about hopelessness, worthlessness, being a burden to others, feeling trapped or having no reason to live
- Having no motivation or losing interest in activities once enjoyed
- Withdrawing or feeling isolated
- Sudden change in personality or behaviors
- Giving away possessions, behaving recklessly
- Talking about death or not being here tomorrow. Looking for ways to kill oneself such as searching online or buying a gun

If you or someone you know is exhibiting these signs:

Take action immediately and always take it seriously

Tell someone you trust to assist you in taking action
or call the National Suicide Lifeline at
(800) 273-TALK (8255).

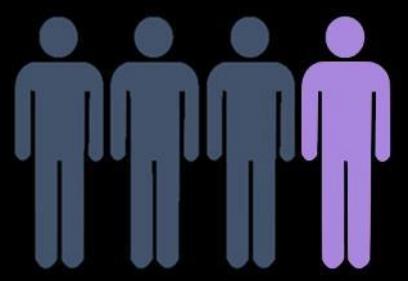
Raising mental health awareness about *suicide prevention* could help save a life.



For citations and to learn more, visit www.nami.org/namioncampus.

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How to help a friend



Be there for a friend with a mental health condition...

Reach out to Someone you Trust. You don't need to go at it alone. You may want to involve others who can help provide the right support. Here are some people you can reach out to:

- Friends and family
- Residential assistants/advisors
- Campus counseling center staff
- On-campus health care providers
- Faith-based leaders
- Faculty advisors
- Sorority and fraternity chapter mentors and advisors

Share your Concerns. Share your observations with your friend. Focus on being nonjudgmental, compassionate and empathetic. Use these "I" (instead of "you") comments to get the conversation started:

- "I've noticed you're [sleeping more, eating less, etc.]. Is everything okay?"
- "I've noticed that you haven't been acting like yourself lately. Is something going on?"
- "It makes me afraid to hear you talking about dying. Can we talk to someone about this?"

Offer Support. Ask the person what you can do to help. You can suggest specific things that might help like:

- How can I best support you right now? Is there something I can do or can we involve others who can help?
- Can I help you locate mental health services and supports? Can I help you make an appointment?
- Can I help you with your errands until you're feeling better?
- Would you like me to go with you to a support group or a meeting? Do you need a ride to any of your appointments?

Be a friend. You can play an important role in helping your friend build a positive, social support network. Here are ways to do that:

- Check-in regularly
- Include your friend in your plans
- Learn more
- Avoid using judgmental or dismissive language, such as "you'll get over it," "toughen up," "snap out of it"

Raising mental health awareness about *how to help a friend* provides hope and lets others know that they are not alone.

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