



Substance Abuse and Mental Health
Services Administration

Mental Health: Get the Facts

Can you tell the difference between a mental health myth and fact? Learn the truth about the most common mental health myths and information to help destigmatize them. SAMHSA works to [prevent](#) and [treat](#) mental health conditions and provides support for people seeking or already in [recovery](#).

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Myth: Mental health issues can't affect me.

Fact: Mental health issues can affect anyone. In 2020, about:

- One in 5 American adults experienced a mental health condition in a given year
- One in 6 young people have experienced a major depressive episode
- One in 20 Americans have lived with a serious mental illness, such as schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, or major depression

Additionally, suicide is a leading cause of death in the United States. In fact, it was the [second leading cause of death](#) for people ages 10-24. Suicide has accounted for the loss of more than 45,979 American lives in 2020, nearly double the number of lives lost to homicide.

Myth: Children don't experience mental health issues.

Myth: People with mental health conditions are violent.

Myth: People with mental health needs, even those who are managing their mental health conditions, cannot tolerate the stress of holding down a job.

Myth: Mental health issues are a result of personality weakness or character flaws, and people can "snap out of it" if they try hard enough.

Myth: There is no hope for people with mental health issues. Once a friend or family member develops a mental health condition, they will never recover.

Myth: Therapy and self-help are a waste of time. Why bother when you can just take a pill?

Myth: I can't do anything for a person with a mental health issue.

Myth: It is impossible to prevent a mental health condition.

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<https://www.samhsa.gov/mental-health/what-is-mental-health/facts>