



Work Force Of Interest

Summer 2021


Stamping Out Stigma

Although 1 in 5 Americans have been experiencing mental health conditions for decades, stigma has shamed too many into silence and prevented them from seeking help. 2021 can be the year that stigma ends. The COVID-19 pandemic is shining a spotlight on the prevalence of anxiety, depression, and substance use, igniting a national conversation around mental illness and substance use disorders.

Stigma is when someone, or even yourself, views a person in a negative way just because they have a mental health condition or substance use disorder. According to the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI), some people describe stigma as a feeling of shame or judgment from someone else. Stigma can even come from an internal place, confusing *feeling* bad with *being* bad.



EAP CAN HELP!



Your EAP is a confidential, assessment, short-term counseling and referral program for you and your household members. It is a free benefit provided to you by your organization

Please call 1-800-769-9819 to speak with an EAP counselor today! No question or concern is too small.

Online Work/Life Services

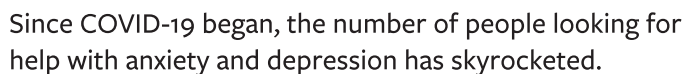
If your organization offers Work/Life services, please contact EAP or your HR for your company code. Then check us out at www.workforceeap.com

Navigating life while experiencing a mental health or substance use condition can be challenging, and the secrecy and isolation fostered by stigma creates barriers to accessing needed support. People often face rejection, bullying and discrimination, which can make their journey to recovery longer and more difficult. Even though most people can be successfully treated, less than half of the adults in the U.S. who need services and treatment get the help they need.

To address stigma, **we must first recognize the high prevalence of mental illness and substance use disorders.**

Mental Health America reports that even before COVID-19, the prevalence of mental illness among adults was on the rise, as was suicidal ideation.

"Some of the most comforting words in the universe are 'me too'. That moment when you find out that your struggle is also someone else's struggle, that you're not alone, and that others have been down the same road." -- Unknown



- Mental health conditions are the leading cause of disability in the United States.
- More than 70,000 Americans died from drug-involved overdose in 2019, including illicit drugs and prescription opioids.
- Suicide is the second leading cause of death of youth ages 15-24 and the tenth leading cause of death for all Americans.

When people come out of the shadows to share their experiences, let them know that there is hope and that it is possible to get help and recover. Together, we can transform the dialogue on mental health and addiction from a whisper to a conversation.

1. Talk Openly about Mental Health
2. Educate Yourself and Others
3. Be Conscious of Language
4. Encourage Equality Between Physical and Mental Illness
5. Show Compassion for Those with Mental Illness
6. Choose Empowerment Over Shame
7. Be Honest About Treatment
8. Let the Media Know When They're Being Stigmatizing
9. Don't Harbor Self-Stigma

A silhouette of two people holding a heart shape with the word 'HOPE' inside, set against a sunset background. The image is framed by a teal border.