

Minority Mental Health Awareness Month

JULY 2011

Division of Behavioral Health Services

www.azdhs.gov/bhs/

QUICK FACTS:

- Roughly 58 million Americans are challenged with mental illness.
- Mental illness can affect a person at any age, even childhood.
- People with mental illness are more likely to be victims than perpetrators of violent crimes.
- Alcohol is the most commonly used addictive substance in America.
- Over 60% of the illegal drugs in the world are consumed in America.
- Persons who stick with substance abuse treatment generally achieve and maintain sobriety.
- Arizona is among the top 10 states for death by suicide.
- “Behavioral health” means both mental illness and substance use disorders.

RESOURCES:

- [Arizona Stigma Reduction](#)
- [NAMI AZ](#)

July is Minority Mental Health Awareness Month. A time to unite and celebrate mental health awareness across the nation. Also a time to learn the importance of early detection and treatment of mental illness. Take part and help spread the word: recovery is possible!

MENTAL HEALTH: EVERYONE HAS IT!



Mental health is part of your whole health. Just like you need to keep your blood pressure, cholesterol, and weight in a healthy range, you also need to maintain good mental health to lead a healthy, happy life.

Did you know that 1 in 4 Arizonans have a diagnosable mental illness? Approximately 58 million Americans will experience a diagnosable behavioral health condition per year. That is nearly 25% of the population.

Mental illness doesn't discriminate — it can affect anyone at anytime, regardless of ethnic background, gender or income.

Anyone can experience a behavioral health disorder. Friends, neighbors, teachers, medical personnel, co-workers, supervisors, parents and grandparents, military personnel and veterans, judges, athletes, children and teens, legislators, actors, artists, musicians and writers, truck drivers, beauty queens...anyone can experience a behavioral health challenge – even you!

Stigma keeps people from seeking treatment for mental illness. Stigma means branding and shame; it is a form of discrimination, blame, and prejudice toward someone with mental illness. Through your choice of words you may stigmatize a person without being aware of it.

Diverse communities often have more barriers to seeking treatment. Cultural differences and lack of information about mental health result in greater levels of stigma associated with mental illness. This causes many people to avoid accessing and adhering to treatment. Other barriers include: language and cultural barriers, no health insurance and a shortage of bilingual mental health providers.

Things you can do this month (and always):

- Know the facts about mental illness and substance use disorders.
- Educate others regardless of culture – share what you've learned about mental health.
- [Know what to do to help someone with mental illness get the services they need.](#)
- [Learn how to provide Mental Health First Aid \(become a MHF-Aider\).](#)
- Choose your words carefully – language matters!
- Be aware of your own attitudes and behavior – recognize the signs and get help if you need it.
- Take a [Mental Health Screening](#) (in English and Spanish)
- Encourage people in their recovery.
- **Take care of your mental health just as you do your physical health.**