

Addressing the Needs of Students with Emotional Challenges

Presenter:

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- More than 16 million young people attend colleges and universities in the United States (ACHA).
- According to the Suicide Prevention Resource Center, **one-fifth** of college students experience a mental illness.

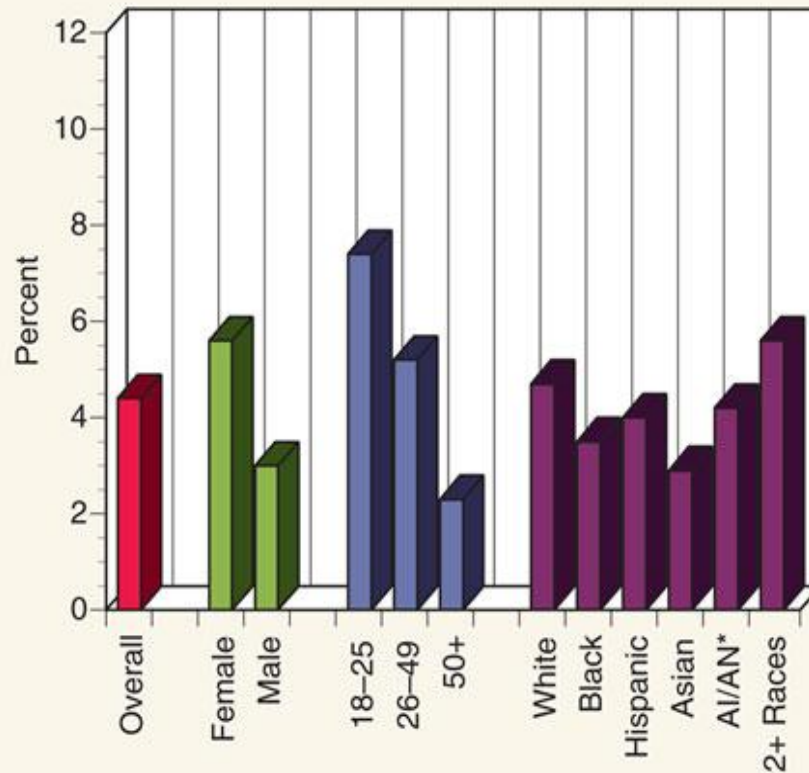
College-age adults are especially vulnerable to mental health problems, in part because many mental health issues first emerge in the late teens or early 20s.

SASFAA 2013 *Annual Conference*

Celebrating Yesterday's Achievements, Shaping Tomorrow's Aspirations



Prevalence of Serious Mental Illness Among U.S. Adults by Sex, Age, and Race in 2008



*AI/AN = American Indian/Alaska Native

Data courtesy of SAMHSA

Myths & Facts About Mental Health (The top 4)

Myth 1: There's no hope for people with mental illnesses.

Fact: There are more treatments, strategies, and community supports than ever before, and even more are on the horizon. People with mental illnesses lead active, productive lives.

Myths & Facts About Mental Health (The top 4)

Myth 2: I can't do anything for someone with mental health needs.

Fact: You can do a lot, starting with the way you act and how you speak. You can nurture an environment that builds on people's strengths and promotes good mental health. For example:

- Avoid labeling people with words like "crazy," "wacko," "loony," or by their diagnosis. Instead of saying someone is a "schizophrenic" say "a person with schizophrenia."
- Learn the facts about mental health and share them with others, especially if you hear something that is untrue.
- Treat people with mental illnesses with respect and dignity, as you would anybody else.
- Respect the rights of people with mental illnesses and don't discriminate against them when it comes to housing, employment, or education. Like other people with disabilities, people with mental health needs are protected under Federal and State laws.

Myths & Facts About Mental Health (The top 4)

- **Myth 3:** People with mental illnesses are violent and unpredictable.

Fact: In reality, the vast majority of people who have mental health needs are no more violent than anyone else. You probably know someone with a mental illness and don't even realize it.

Myths & Facts About Mental Health (The top 4)

- **Myth 4:** Mental illnesses cannot affect me.
Fact: Mental illnesses are surprisingly common; they affect almost every family in America. Mental illnesses do not discriminate-they can affect anyone.

Students With Emotional Challenges

- National Alliance on Mental Illness
 - College Students Speak: A Survey Report on Mental Health (2012)
 - 765 Survey Responses
 - Students in 48 states and the District of Columbia
 - Represent a diverse population (race, age, sex, and sexual orientation)
 - Type of illness – Depression, bipolar disorder, and posttraumatic stress disorder were the primary diagnoses of these in the survey.

Students With Emotional Challenges

- **45%** stopped attending college because of mental health related reasons did not receive accommodations.
- **50%** of the students did not access mental health services and supports.

WHY?

Questions?

- What do your school have to assist your students with their mental health issues?
- How can your school generate more of an awareness on campus?

Suggestions:

- By teaming up with a school's campus counseling services, psychology club (e.g., Psi Chi), office of disability, office of student affairs, office of diversity, or other groups, school staff can raise awareness of mental health problems and the importance of good mental health—especially during **May** (Mental Health Month) and the first week in **October** (Mental Illness Awareness Week)

Suggestions:

- **Add signage to high-traffic areas**
 - Harvard University students wrote their stories about dealing with mental health problems (using just a black marker on a white board).

Suggestions:

- **Incorporate mental health into Freshman Orientation.**
 - Many new students experience a lot of stress and anxiety. See if you can schedule a speaker, distribute brochures, or show a video on mental health issues.

Suggestions:

- **Get your message on the airwaves.**
 - Ask your campus radio station to highlight mental health issues by airing a public service announcement (PSA).

Suggestions:

- **Train campus leaders.**
 - Conduct mental health education and training for resident assistants and fraternity/sorority leadership. In 2001-2002, The Campaign for America's Mental Health conducted "Finding Hope and Healing" trainings for these audiences at campuses across the country.

- **Offer free mental health screenings.**
 - Work with your school's counseling services to conduct voluntary screenings for depression, eating disorders, and drug/alcohol and/or anxiety disorders. Local mental health organizations should be able to help you set these up as well.

Suggestions

- **Organize a run/walk.**
 - Every year, *Active Minds on Campus at the University of Pennsylvania* (an affiliate of *Active Minds on Campus*, a national organization) organizes a “Stamp Out Stigma” run. The national organization works with colleges around the country to sponsor mental health runs (e.g., *Active Bodies for Active Minds* at Duke University). It’s a great way to engage the general student population. (Consider teaming up with a local running club to recruit runners.)

Which Organizations Can Help?

- Active Minds on Campus <http://www.activeminds.org/> , a national organization, is specifically focused on college mental health issues and helping colleges create campaigns to counter stigma and discrimination.
- National organizations such as National Alliance on Mental Illness (*NAMI on Campus*) <http://www.nami.org>
- National Mental Health Association
<http://www.nmha.org/> _(*Finding Hope and Help*)

References

- Active Minds on Campus
<http://www.activeminds.org/>
- National organizations such as National Alliance on Mental Illness (*NAMI on Campus*) <http://www.nami.org>
- SAMHSA or the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.
- Suicide Prevention Resource Center, 2004

Addressing the Needs of Students with Emotional Challenges Evaluation System APP or Web

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