

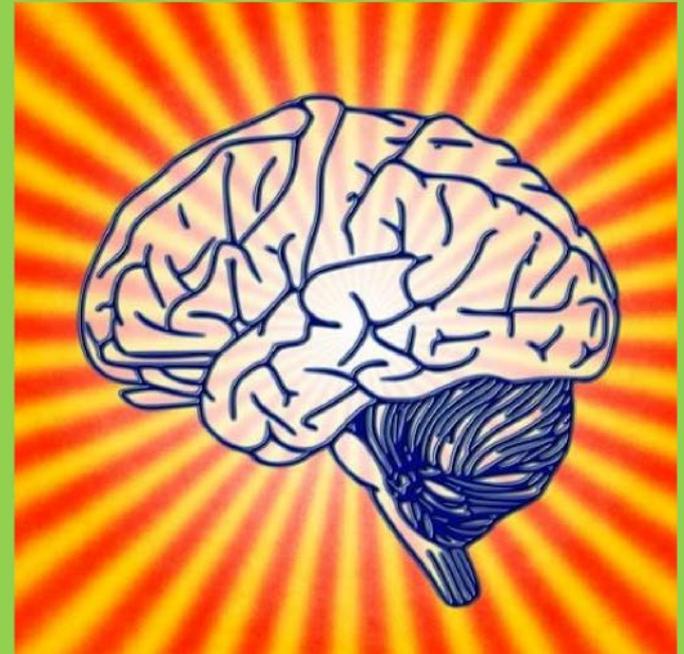
RAISING *mental health awareness*

**Educate Yourself and Educate Others**

# Why does mental health matter

## People who feel well, do well.

- Achieve academic success
- Stay physically healthy
- Get involved with their communities
- Have self-confidence
- Establish healthy habits
- Experience positive friendships and relationships



# Why does mental health matter

Everyone has mental health



1 in 4

People experience a mental health issue (you probably know someone right now who is).



Many individuals don't ask for help because of negative perceptions.



It's time we talk about mental health openly. It can save a life

You are in the perfect position to speak up and support your friends



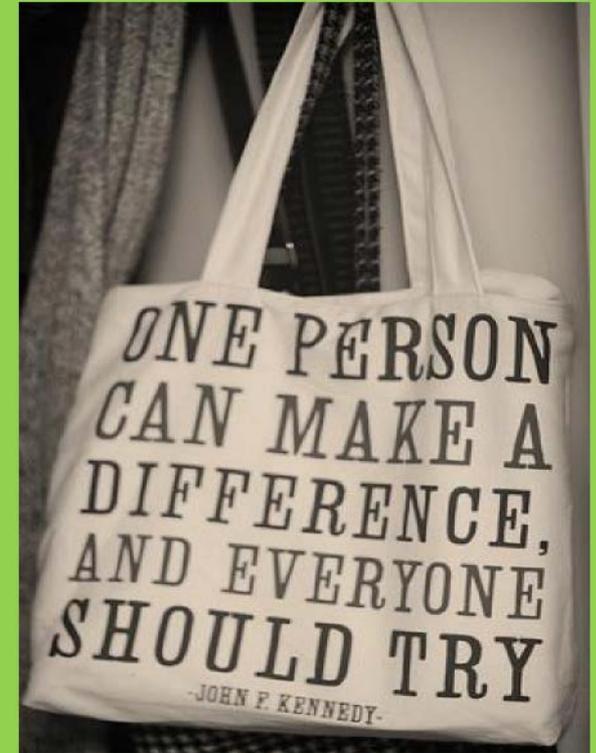
# You can make a difference

## Educate Yourself

- The facts about mental health
- The warning signs of mental health issues
- What to do if you see the warning signs

## Educate Others

- Raise mental health awareness



***The fact that you are here already makes a difference!  
THANK YOU.***

# **Educate Yourself**

Let's talk about  
the facts

# What is? mental health

*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.*

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

# What does it mean to be mentally healthy

**Coping** in a healthy way  
with unexpected events in life.

A peaceful **balance** of feeling  
and functioning well.

Working on your **inner  
self**, which leads to being  
happier and healthier.

Being physically **active**.

**Social** and emotional well-being.

Managing the stress and  
emotions of everyday life in  
healthy ways and with  
**positive** steps forward.

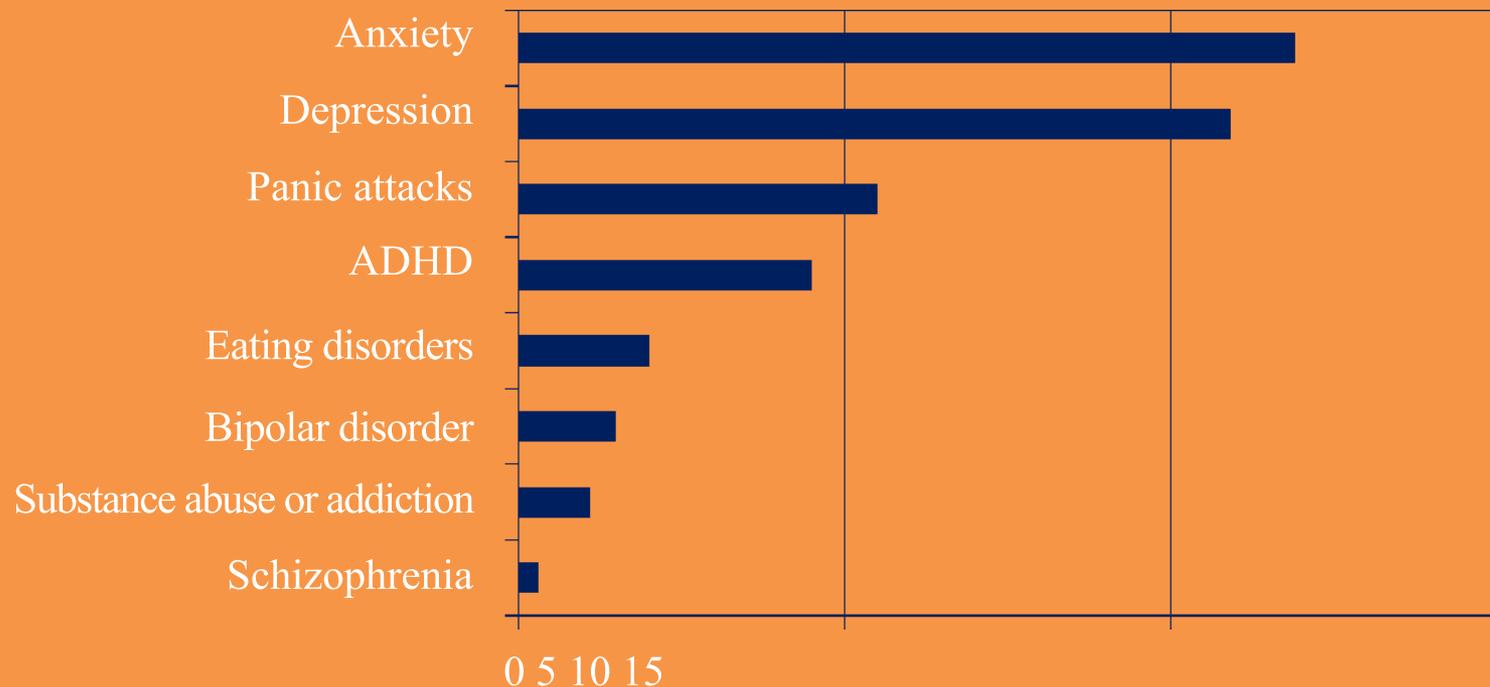
# What are mental health conditions

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

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

# What mental health conditions are most common

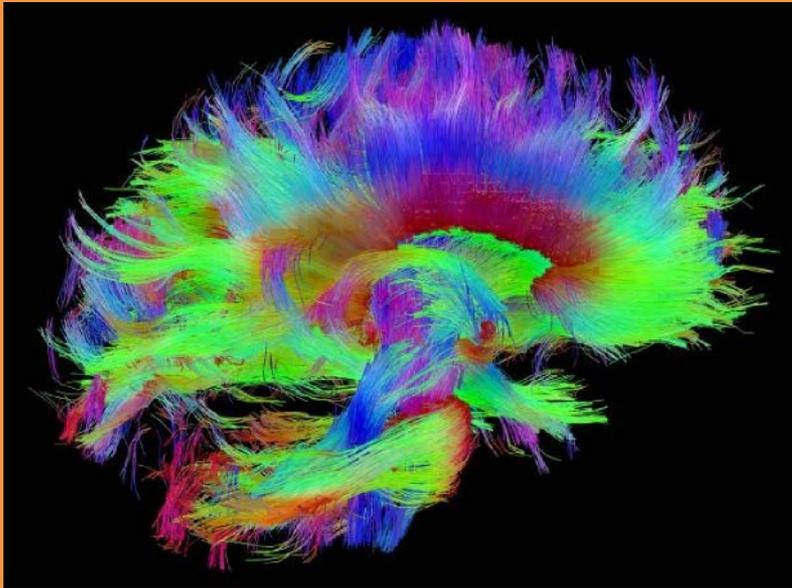
The percent of college students diagnosed or treated by a professional for mental health conditions in the last twelve months...



American College Health Association (2012)

[www.acha-ncha.org](http://www.acha-ncha.org)

# What causes mental health conditions



The risk of developing a mental health condition is related to a variety of factors, including the following:

- Biological
- Environmental

# STRESSORS that can impact mental health

Relationship breakups

Homesickness

Peer pressure

Loneliness

Academic pressure

Future career stress

Financial issues

Lack of sleep

Taking on too much

Overinvolved

Body image concerns

Drug and alcohol use

Poor diet and lack of exercise

Sexual identity

Hazing

Bullying

Veteran status

Death

Divorce

# Mental Health Conditions



What my friends think



What the doctors think

**YOU'RE  
CRAZY**

What most people think



What society thinks



What I think I look like



What I really look like

# People with mental health conditions succeed



**Help is available and  
treatment works**



# The facts about mental health conditions

- Mental health matters and affects everyone.
- Mental health conditions are common and real. They can be mild and brief or more serious and persistent.
- They are not a result of personal weakness or choice but a combination of biological and environmental factors.
- Students are especially susceptible because of college stressors and other triggering events like excessive alcohol and substance use.
- It's ok to ask for help. Students often get better with the many treatment options available. It's better to get help early, before an issue gets worse.
- The understanding and support of friends can help those with a mental health condition continue to succeed.

**Educate Yourself**

The warning signs

# 10 common warning signs of mental health conditions

- ① Feeling very sad or withdrawn for more than 2 weeks  
(*e.g.*, crying regularly, feeling fatigued, feeling unmotivated)
- ② Seriously trying to harm or kill oneself or making plans to do so
- ③ Severe out-of-control, risk-taking behaviors that can cause harm to self or others
- ④ Sudden overwhelming fear for no reason, sometimes with a racing heart, physical discomfort or fast breathing
- ⑤ Not eating, throwing up or using laxatives to lose weight; significant weight loss or weight gain

# 10 common warning signs of mental health conditions

- 6 Severe mood swings that cause problems in relationships
- 7 Repeated use of drugs or alcohol
- 8 Drastic changes in behavior, personality or sleeping habits  
(*e.g.* waking up early and acting agitated)
- 9 Extreme difficulty in concentrating or staying still that puts a person in physical danger or causes school failure
- 10 Intense worries or fears that get in the way of daily activities like hanging out with friends or going to classes

# Drug and alcohol use

Here are words of caution on alcohol and/or drug use:

- Excessive use can trigger a mental health condition. Alcohol and some drugs are depressants and can make you feel worse.
- They can mask the existence of a mental health issue.
- Using prescription drugs that are not yours is harmful to your physical and mental health and poses a major risk.
- Using alcohol and/or drugs to cope with stress or other negative feelings indicates a problem that should be immediately addressed.

# 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

# With mental health conditions, Suicide is a real risk

- 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” during the past year.
- 90% of those who commit suicide had an underlying mental health condition.

# Suicide **warning signs**

Always take these warning signs seriously.  
Take action right away by:

- Telling someone you trust
- Calling the National Suicide Lifeline at  
(800) 273-TALK (8255)

# Educate Yourself

What to do if you see  
warning signs

# If you see the warning signs speak up



# **If you see the warning signs**

## Tell 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. There are many people who are available and willing to help. Here are some people you can reach out to:

- Friends and family
- Residential assistants/advisors
- Counseling
- Health care providers
- Faith-based leaders
- National Alliance on Mental Illness  
(NAMI)

# If you see the warning signs

## Share Your Concerns

Share your observations with a friend. Focus on being nonjudgmental, compassionate and empathetic. Show you genuinely care and are actively listening by asking follow-up questions. Use these “I” (instead of “you”) comments to get the conversation started:

- “I've noticed you're [sleeping more, eating less, etc.]... ”
- “I feel like you're [stressed out, angry, etc.]. Is everything ok?”
- “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?”

# If you see the warning signs

## Offer Support.

Ask the person what you can do to help.

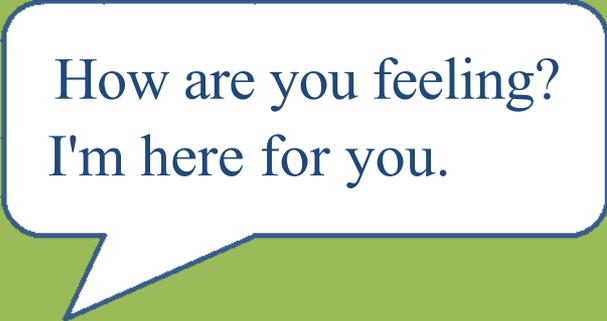
You can suggest specific things that might help like:

- How can I best support you right now? Is there something I can do or can we involve others who can help?
- Is there any information or resources I can find for you?
- 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?

# If you see the warning signs

**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
- Ask how you can be supportive
- Learn more
- Avoid using judgmental or dismissive language, such as “you'll get over it,” “toughen up,” “snap out of it”



How are you feeling?  
I'm here for you.

# If you see the warning signs

**Help is available** Become familiar with and offer information about the resources that can help make a difference, including:

- Counseling
- Support groups
- National hotlines that provide support, including the National Suicide Lifeline at (800) 273-TALK (8255) for crisis assistance

# If you see the warning signs

Remind your friend that mental health issues are common and treatable. Encourage your friend to get help. Do your research so you can offer the best support you can.