

The State of Mental Health in NC



Presented for Leadership North Carolina

MHA Serves Cabarrus and Mecklenburg Counties:

Vision:

Mental Health America of Central Carolinas is the leading voice to eliminate stigma and promote mental wellness for all.

Mission:

Mental Health America of Central Carolinas is dedicating to providing help, offering hope, and promoting mental wellness through advocacy, education and prevention.

**What is One Word That Comes to Mind
When You Think About Mental Health?**

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Three Areas Where Stigma Exists

PUBLIC

Discrimination
and Devaluation
by Others

SYSTEMIC

Reduced Access
to Care and
Resources Due
to Policies

SELF

Internalization
of Negative
Stereotypes

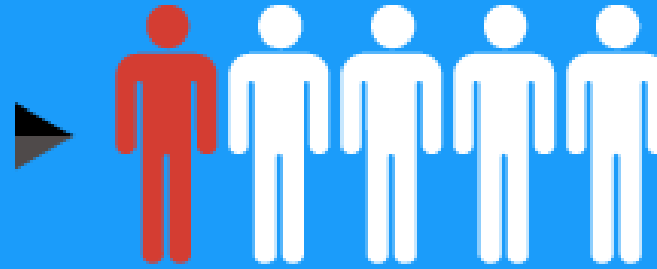
The Harmful Effects of Stigma

- Reluctance to seek help or treatment
- Lack of understanding by family, friends, co-workers or others
- Fewer opportunities for work, school or social activities or trouble finding housing
- Bullying, physical violence or harassment
- Health insurance that doesn't adequately cover your mental illness treatment
- The belief that you'll never succeed at certain challenges or that you can't improve your situation

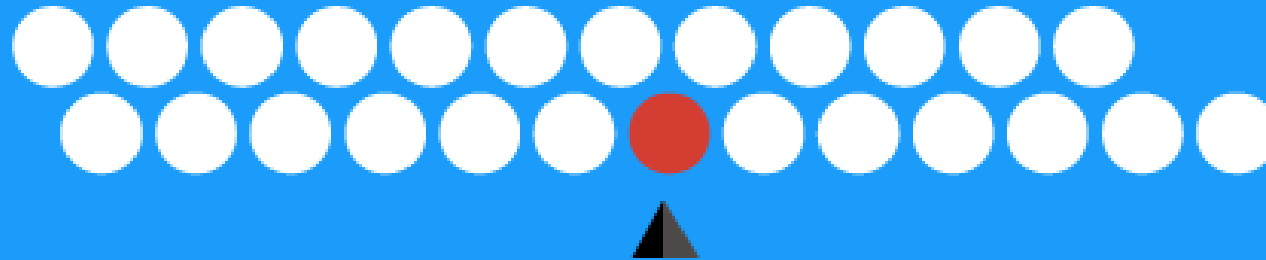
(Source: Mayo Clinic)

Mental Health by the Numbers...

1 in 5 adults experience mental illness.



Nearly **1 in 25** adults in America live with a **serious** mental illness.



Key Findings from MHA National's The State of Mental Health 2023

21% Of adults are experiencing a mental illness, equivalent to more than 50 million Americans

4.8% The percentage of adults reporting serious thoughts of suicide...more than 12.1 million

16% Of youth report suffering from at least one major depressive episode in the past year. More than 2.7 million youth are experiencing severe major depression

11% More than 5.5 million of adults with a mental illness are uninsured

60% Of youth with major depression do not receive mental health treatment

350 The number of individuals in the U.S. for everyone mental health provider

23% Of adults who report experiencing 14 or more mentally unhealthy days each month were not able to see a doctor due to costs

1 in 10 Youth with private insurance do not have coverage for mental or emotional difficulties-more than 1.2 million youth

How Does North Carolina Rank?

According to MHA National's 2023 State of Mental Health Report, North Carolina ranked 16 overall, which indicates a somewhat lower prevalence of mental illness and higher rates of access to care.

5th Prevalence of mental health and substance use issues for adults and youth

18th Adults with a prevalence of mental illness

24th Youth who have a higher prevalence of mental health and lower access to care

39th Access to care, including access to insurance, special education, and mental health workforce.

- Over half of adults with a mental illness received no treatment—in NC 51.10% or 762,000 North Carolinians don't receive treatment
- Adults with unmet needs—those seeking treatment and facing barriers—was 26.30% in NC or nearly 4,000 individuals. Cost is the biggest barrier.
- 61.70% of youth in our state did not receive needed mental health services.
- In NC, only 19.70% of youth with a Major Depressive Episode received consistent treatment.

More About Youth Mental Health

- More than ½ of NC Counties don't have a child health psychiatrist or don't have enough behavioral health workforce to work with children.
- One-third of the state's high schoolers said they felt alone.
- Less than ½ of NC high school students said they feel good about themselves.
- 1:750 is the national recommended ratios of one school nurse for every 750 students; the average NC ratio is 1:890.
- During the years of 2019 to 2021, the number of North Carolina youth experiencing one or more major depressive episodes increase 46%.

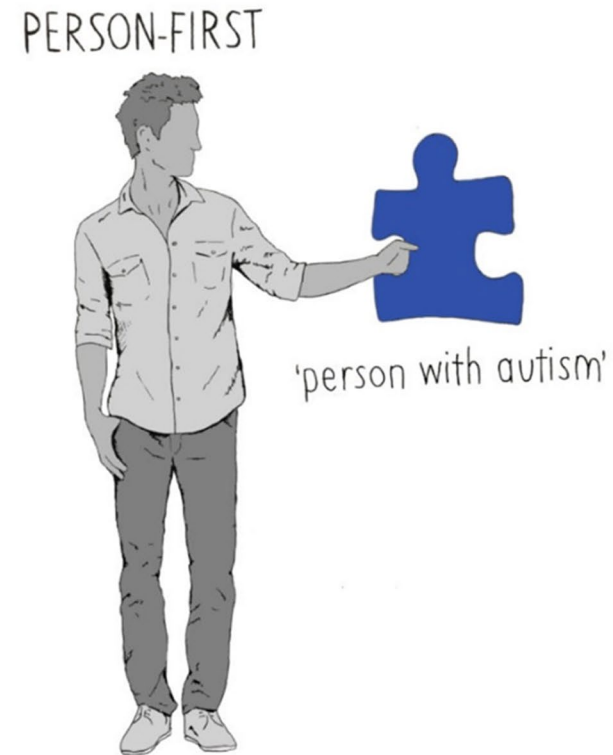
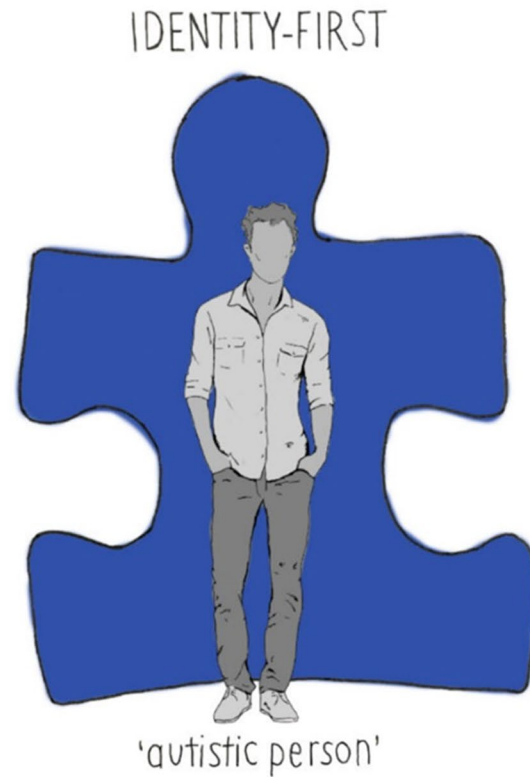
How Can We Improve in NC?

- Expansion of Medicaid can reduce disparities in access to care. Medicaid expansion has been found to reduce racial disparities in health care coverage particularly for Black and Hispanic adults and is associated with significant reductions in the percentage of adults with depression who are uninsured and who delay mental health care due to cost.
- 10 of the 12 states ranked 40 to 51 on the MHA Access to Care and Uninsured Adults measure had not expanded Medicaid. NC ranked 45th.

- Increase funding for school mental health, including more school psychologists and school nurses.
- Support the NC DHHS plan to pilot a telehealth program that would help connect students with child and adolescent psychiatrists.
- Support more mental health first aid and suicide prevention trainings for students and staff to help better identify and respond to signs of distress or a crisis in their friends and peers.

What Can We Do Improve Mental Wellness in NC?

Language is Important!



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Check Your Language

WORDS MATTER

HURTFUL

- The mentally ill, psycho, crazy, lunatic
- Schizophrenic, Bipolar

PEOPLE FIRST LANGUAGE

- People with mental health conditions
- A person living with Schizophrenia or Bipolar Disorder



Language is Important!

People often say:

 “COMMITTED SUICIDE”

Why this is stigmatizing...

The word “commit” holds a negative connotation as “commit murder” and “commit sins.”

Instead, try this:

 “DIED BY SUICIDE”

This is direct and avoids judgment.

LANGUAGE AROUND SUICIDE



Language is Important

Say This

"Death by suicide"

"Died by suicide"

"Completed Suicide"

Do Not Say This

"Committed suicide"

"Successful suicide"

"Unsuccessful/failed suicide"

Ways to Fight Stigma



- Talk Openly About Mental Health
- Educate Yourself And Others
- Be Conscious Of Language
- Encourage Equality Between Physical And Mental Illness
- Show Compassion For Those With Mental Illness
- Choose Empowerment Over Shame
- Be Honest About Treatment
- Let The Media Know When They're Being Stigmatizing
- Don't Harbor Self-Stigma

(Source: NAMI)

Increase Your Mental Health Literacy



Online Mental Health Screening Tools

Recognize these symptoms? Act before Stage 4 - take a screen at MHAScreening.org.

Changes in energy level and sleep patterns

Noticeable restlessness or irritability

Difficulties with concentration or decision making

Frequent thoughts of death or suicide



Feeling sad, empty, hopeless, worthless, or guilty

Loss of interest or pleasure in activities

Changes in appetite, eating habits, or weight



Free, Anonymous, Confidential
mhaofcc.org



THANK YOU!