

The BACCHUS Network™, Ad Council and SAMHSA Partnership

The BACCHUS Network™ is proud to announce its partnership with The Ad Council and the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) in the creation and distribution of this Mental Health Awareness Manual. Through our partnership, 1,000 colleges in The BACCHUS Network™ will receive this valuable educational campaign with many resources to assist them in building programs that educate our campus communities. By promoting mental health awareness on college campuses, we hope to reduce stigma and improve the overall health and wellbeing of college students.

For additional information on SAMHSA, please visit www.samhsa.gov

SAMHSA Campaign: What a Difference a Friend Makes

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) launched the Mental Health National Anti-Stigma Campaign to encourage, educate, and inspire people between 18 and 25 to support their friends who are experiencing mental health problems. The prevalence of serious mental health conditions in this age group is almost double that of the general population, yet young people have the lowest rate of help-seeking behaviors. This group has a high potential to minimize future disability if social acceptance is broadened and they receive the right support and services early on.

The opportunity for recovery is more likely in a society of acceptance, and this initiative is meant to inspire young people to serve as the mental health vanguard, motivating a societal change toward acceptance and decreasing the negative attitudes that surround mental illness. Mental health recovery is a journey of healing and transformation, enabling a person with a mental health problem to live a meaningful life in a community of his or her choice while striving to achieve his or her full potential. Education and increased awareness are important means of moving toward greater equality for all individuals. The SAMHSA Mental Health National Anti-Stigma Campaign is one component of addressing the mental health needs of young adults.

For more information on SAMHSA's National Anti-Stigma Campaign visit: www.whatadifference.org

Reducing the Stigma Associated with Mental Illness

For many people, the term “mental illness” is equated with stereotypes of people who cannot function in society. These myths must be dispelled to eliminate the fear around talking about disorders and increase utilization of services. It is time to take action and remove the misunderstandings about mental illness and those living with mental health problems. There are many things colleges and universities can do to reduce the stigma associated with mental illness. There is hope and help.

- 80–90% of people with depression respond positively to treatment.
- 80–90% of people with bipolar disorder can be treated effectively with medication and psychotherapy.
- Only about 25% of young adults 18–24 believe that a person with a mental illness can actually recover.
- 85% of Americans believe that people with mental illnesses are not to blame for their conditions.
- 26% of Americans agree that people are generally caring and sympathetic toward individuals with mental illnesses.

In reality, recovery is an expected norm with mental illness. We have a lot of education that needs to take place when it comes to understanding mental illness.

What is Stigma and Why Does It Exist?

Stigma is defined as the shame or disgrace attached to something regarded as socially unacceptable. Because mental illness has been so misunderstood for so long, people diagnosed with mental disorders have often been treated unfairly and made to feel like outcasts. Movies, news, and even jokes about the disorders have created the negative stereotype that those with mental illnesses live unproductive lives. Nothing could be further from the truth.

With proper treatment and support, people living with mental illness lead productive lives. They attend school, have careers, and enjoy close relationships with family and friends. They make valuable contributions to our society.

The stigma associated with mental illness has a negative impact, not just on those living with mental health problems, but also on our whole society. The stigma discourages many people from seeking help for their mental health issues. People with mental illness experience discrimination in school, work, healthcare, and at home¹. This lack of help and support may impede their ability to achieve at school or work and the ability to enjoy a fulfilling life.

