

MONDAY
Mental Health


NPHW 2020

FOR SCIENCE
Mental illness affects 1 in 5 Americans.

FOR ACTION
Speak out to reduce the stigma of mental illness.

FOR HEALTH
Medicaid expansion means care for people with substance use disorders.

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 NATIONAL
PUBLIC HEALTH WEEK

Mental Health

One in five Americans experiences some form of mental illness, which has a ripple effect that doesn't just impact the individual but also touches families, communities and society overall.¹

In 2017, 58 percent of Vermont adults with any mental health condition were receiving treatment.²

Many people experiencing mental illness also have substance use disorders, are incarcerated or may be homeless.

Mental illness also affects 16.5% of youth ages 6-17. Suicide rates for children ages 10-14 nearly tripled from 2007-2017.³ Suicide is the second leading cause of death among Vermonters ages 10-24 and the eighth leading cause of death in Vermont.⁴

One in five Vermont middle school students report seriously thinking of killing themselves, and one in 10 teens have made a suicide plan.⁵

The Vermont Public Health Association believes that all Vermonters should have access to a seamless system of physical and behavioral health care services. Especially during difficult financial times, it is essential that core mental health services be maintained.

Work to uphold the Affordable Care Act, which expanded the availability of mental health services and coverage for care.⁶ People experiencing mental illness are more likely to receive prescriptions for opioids and are at a greater risk for developing drug dependence.⁷ Mental, neurological and substance use disorders contribute to worse health and early death. Treatment for mental health and substance misuse results in increased health spending and reduced earnings for families. Advocate and educate to reduce the stigma of mental illness, and learn how your communities can provide support.

As families and communities are presently trying to deal with the stress and anxiety of the COVID-19 pandemic, these policies designed to assure that everyone has access to comprehensive mental health care are even more urgent. In addition, individuals can access resources and information on self-care and supporting others in these uncertain times, visit the Vermont Department of Mental Health's website (<https://mentalhealth.vermont.gov/coronavirus-and-our-mental-health>) or the Center for Disease Control and Prevention's Website (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/managing-stress-anxiety.html>).

¹ [National Alliance on Mental Illness](#)

^{2, 4, 5} [Vermont Department of Health, 2017 Vermont Youth Risk Behavior Survey](#)

³ [National Alliance on Mental Illness](#)

⁶ [SAMHSA](#)

⁷ [Healthline](#)