

2020 National Public Health Week: Mental Health



What is Mental Health?

Mental illnesses are health conditions involving changes in emotion, thinking or behavior (or a combination of these). Mental illnesses are associated with distress and/or problems functioning in social, work or family activities.ⁱ Everybody has a different experience with mental illness, and mental health can present in a variety of ways.

Mental Health of Maine

Adolescents

- In 2019, 24.8% of middle schoolers reported feeling so sad or hopeless almost every day for 2 weeks or more in a row that it stopped them from doing usual activities; 32.1% of high schoolers reported the same.ⁱⁱ
- In 2019, 46.3% of middle schoolers reported being bullied on school property; 23.3% of high schoolers reported the same.ⁱⁱ
- In 2019, 16.4% of high schoolers seriously considered attempting suicide during the last 12 months.ⁱⁱ
- Nationally, Maine has the highest state-level prevalence of youth with at least 1 mental health disorder (27.2%).ⁱⁱⁱ Approximately half of those affected (47.2%) are not receiving treatment or counseling from a mental health professional.^{iv}



Adults

- Between 2014-2015, an annual average of 43,000 adults aged 18 years and older had serious thoughts of suicide in the past year.^{iv}
- Between 2014-2015, an annual average of 54,000 adults experienced Serious Mental Illness in the past year.^{iv}

Services

- Statewide, there are 203 facilities (including hospitals, outpatient offices, community health centers, and medical centers), 14 Residential Treatment Centers (RTCs) for Children, 41 RTCs for adults, and 95 outpatient facilities available to treat mental illness.^v
- 39,407 Mainers received help from inpatient, residential, outpatient services in 2016.^{iv}
- 72.4% of facilities have no crisis intervention team.^{iv}

Maine Resources

- **Maine Crisis Line: 888-568-1112** (Available 24/7)
- [National Alliance on Mental Health](#): Support groups for individuals and families, mental health first aid, crisis intervention team.
- [211 Maine](#): A 24/7 hotline partnership between the United Way and Maine's Department of Health and Human Services. The hotline provides connections to a range of services.

Take Action

- Reach out and check on your loved ones and community members. Read and share such resources as the World Health Organization’s [Mental Health Considerations During COVID-19 Outbreak](#) and the U.S. CDC’s [tips on managing anxiety and stress](#).
- Advocate and educate to reduce the stigma surrounding mental illness and learn how your communities – the places where you live, learn, work and play – can provide support to people experiencing mental illness.
- Support funding of mental health and support services at the community and state level.
- Advocate to uphold the Affordable Care Act, which expanded the availability of mental health services and coverage for care (thanks to the Affordable Care Act’s Medicaid expansion, about 1.6 million Americans living with substance use disorders have gained insurance coverage.^{vi})
- Support telemedicine and other efforts that connect people experiencing mental illness to medical and supportive services.^{vii} Partner with community stakeholders to overcome transportation barriers to care, such as coordinating ride-sharing services or helping residents navigate transit services.^{viii}
- Advocate for supportive, evidence-based public health policies, such as easier access to naloxone and continued coverage parity for mental health and addiction care, and the use of a public health approach to suicide prevention.

ⁱAmerican Psychiatric Association. 2020. What is mental illness? <https://www.psychiatry.org/patients-families/what-is-mental-illness>.

ⁱⁱMaine Integrated Youth Health Survey. 2019. Maine’s youth health data results. https://data.mainepublichealth.gov/miyhs/2019_reports_results.

ⁱⁱⁱWhitney, DG, Peterson, MD. 2019. US national and state-level prevalence of mental health disorders and disparities of mental health care use in children. *JAMA Pediatr*. <https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jamapediatrics/fullarticle/2724377?guestAccessKey=f689aa19-31f1-481d-878a-6bf83844536a>.

^{iv}SAMHSA (2015). Behavioral Health Barometer Maine. Vol. 4. https://www.samhsa.gov/data/sites/default/files/Maine_BHBarometer_Volume_4.pdf.

^vU.S. Department of Health and Human Services. National Mental Health Services Survey. 2016. https://www.samhsa.gov/data/sites/default/files/2016_National_Mental_Health_Services_Survey.pdf.

^{vi}Abraham AJ, Andrews CM, Grogan CM, D’Aunno T, Humphreys KN, Pollack HA, and Friedmann PD. 2017. The Affordable Care Act transformation of substance use disorder treatment. *American Journal of Public Health* 107, 31-32.

^{vii}Langarizadeh M, Tabatabaei MS, Tavakol K, Naghipour M, Rostami A, Moghbeli F. Telemental health care, an effective alternative to conventional mental care: A systematic review. *Acta Inform Med*. 2017;25(4):240–246.

^{viii}Rural Health Information Hub. 2016. Transportation to support rural healthcare. <https://www.ruralhealthinfo.org/topics/transportation#strategies>.