



MENTAL AND/OR SUBSTANCE USE DISORDERS: FAST FACTS



“IT WAS VERY STRESSFUL FOR BOTH OF US, AND FOR SEVERAL YEARS WE HAD A ROLLER COASTER OF A RIDE WITHIN OUR MARRIAGE AND OUR RELATIONSHIP.”

— STACEY

Every September during the **National Recovery Month (Recovery Month)** observance, the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) (www.samhsa.gov), within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) (www.hhs.gov), releases the National Survey on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH).

NSDUH is the primary source of information on the prevalence and impact of mental and/or substance use disorders across the country. The survey provides valuable statistics that can add context and credibility to outreach efforts. It also helps individuals and organizations promote **Recovery Month** events. In addition, NSDUH provides concrete data for media coverage of mental and/or substance use disorders as a public health issue.

State-specific statistics (www.samhsa.gov/data/population-data-nsduh) are also a good way to illustrate the local prevalence of behavioral health conditions.

The following facts from the 2014 NSDUH report and other data sources highlight that behavioral health is essential to health, prevention works, treatment is effective, and people recover from mental and/or substance use disorders. Facts and statistics are provided for the following audiences: families, veterans and active duty service members, LGBT youth, and trauma survivors.

This data can also be supplemented by researching local statistics in your city or state.



MORE THAN 44,000 AMERICANS DIED IN 2013 AS A RESULT OF SUICIDE—MORE THAN 1 PERSON EVERY 12.8 MINUTES.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Injury Prevention and Control. Web-based Injury Statistics Query and Reporting System (WISQARS). (2013) http://www.cdc.gov/injury/wisqars/pdf/leading_causes_of_death_by_age_group_2013-a.pdf

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH PREVALENCE IN THE UNITED STATES

- Among adults aged 18 or older, 43.6 million (18.1 percent of adults) had any mental illness in the past year.¹
 - *Any mental illness is defined as an individual having any mental, behavioral, or emotional disorder in the past year that met Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-IV) criteria (excluding developmental and substance use disorders).*²
- Among adults aged 18 or older, 9.8 million (4.1 percent of adults) had a serious mental illness in the past year.³
- More than 41,000 Americans died in 2013 as a result of suicide—more than 1 person every 12.8 minutes.⁴
- Suicide was the second leading cause of death for two different age groups, individuals aged 15 to 24 and 25 to 34.⁵
- Among people aged 12 or older, 21.5 million people (8.1 percent of this population) were classified with substance dependence or abuse in the past year.⁶
- An estimated 8.7 million, or 22.8 percent, of underage persons (aged 12 to 20) were current drinkers in 2014, including 5.3 million, or 13.8 percent, binge drinkers and 1.4 million, or 3.4 percent, heavy drinkers.⁷
- More than 7.9 million U.S. adults reported having co-occurring disorders. This means that in the past year they have had any mental illness and a substance use disorder.⁸ The percentage of adults who had co-occurring mental illness and substance use disorder in the past year was highest among adults aged 18 to 25 (29.3 percent).⁹

PREVENTION WORKS, TREATMENT IS EFFECTIVE, AND PEOPLE RECOVER

- By 2020, mental and substance use disorders will surpass all physical diseases as a major cause of disability worldwide.¹⁰
- The first behavioral health symptoms typically precede a mental and/or substance use disorder by two to four years, offering a window of opportunity to intervene early and often.¹¹
- According to research that tracks individuals in treatment over extended periods, most people who get into and remain in treatment stop using drugs, decrease their criminal activity, and improve their occupational, social, and psychological functioning.¹²
- Two-thirds of Americans believe that treatment and support can help people with mental illnesses lead normal lives.¹³



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Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Injury Prevention and Control. Web-based Injury Statistics Query and Reporting System (WISQARS). (2013) http://www.cdc.gov/injury/wisqars/pdf/leading_causes_of_death_by_age_group_2013-a.pdf

SPECIAL POPULATIONS AFFECTED BY BEHAVIORAL HEALTH CONDITIONS

FAMILY SUPPORTS

- Research shows that family supports play a major role in helping to prevent mental and/or substance use disorders, identifying when someone has a problem,¹⁴ and connecting those in need with treatment resources and services they need to begin and stay on their recovery journey.¹⁵
- Having actively involved family members can also promote positive behavioral health since family members monitor each other's behavior, take responsibility for each other's well-being, and can offer or recommend assistance and support.¹⁶

VETERANS AND ACTIVE DUTY SERVICE MEMBERS

- In 2013, there were 62,000 veterans who chose to seek substance abuse treatment at a publicly-funded, non-Veterans Affairs, treatment facility.¹⁷ The most commonly abused substances among these veterans were alcohol (65.4 percent), heroin (10.7 percent), and cocaine (6.2 percent).¹⁸
- Veterans who had been admitted to a substance abuse treatment facility were more likely than nonveterans to report alcohol as their primary substance of abuse (65.4 percent compared to 37.4 percent).¹⁹
- Approximately 18.5 percent of service members returning from Iraq or Afghanistan have post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) or depression, and 19.5 percent report experiencing a traumatic brain injury (TBI) during deployment.²⁰
- Veterans experience a significantly higher suicide risk when compared to the general American population, and are at greatest risk of committing suicide within 3 years after leaving military service.²¹

LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL, AND TRANSGENDER (LGBT) YOUTH

- A disproportionate number of LGBT youth experience homelessness each year in the United States; and homeless LGBT youth have particularly high rates of mental health and substance use problems, suicidal acts, violent victimization, and a range of HIV risk behaviors.²²
- Adolescents in grades 7-12 who self-identify as lesbian, gay, and bisexual are more than twice as likely to have attempted suicide as their heterosexual peers.²³
- Studies have shown that suicide attempts among transgender people can range from 16 to 32 percent.²⁴

TRAUMA SURVIVORS

- In the United States, 61 percent of men and 51 percent of women report exposure to at least one lifetime traumatic event.²⁵
- About two-thirds of the U.S. population reported experiencing at least one personal traumatic event before the age of 18,²⁶ and one in four children were exposed to at least one form of family violence during their lifetimes.²⁷

This list is not exhaustive of all available resources. Inclusion of websites and other resources mentioned in this document and on the **Recovery Month** website does not constitute official endorsement by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services or the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration.



¹ Center for Behavioral Health Statistics and Quality, Behavioral Health Trends in the United States: Results from the 2014 National Survey on Drug Use and Health, NSDUH Series H-50, HHS Publication No. (SMA) 15-4927. Rockville, MD: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, 2015, p. 1.

² American Psychiatric Association. (1994). Diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders (DSM-IV)(4th ed.). Washington, DC: Author.

³ Center for Behavioral Health Statistics and Quality, Behavioral Health Trends in the United States: Results from the 2014 National Survey on Drug Use and Health, NSDUH Series H-50, HHS Publication No. (SMA) 15-4927. Rockville, MD: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, 2015, p. 2.

⁴ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Injury Prevention and Control. Web-based Injury Statistics Query and Reporting System (WISQARS). (2013)

⁵ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Injury Prevention and Control. Web-based Injury Statistics Query and Reporting System (WISQARS). (2013) www.cdc.gov/injury/wisqars/pdf/leading_causes_of_death_by_age_group_2013-a.pdf

⁶ Center for Behavioral Health Statistics and Quality, Behavioral Health Trends in the United States: Results from the 2014 National Survey on Drug Use and Health, NSDUH Series H-50, HHS Publication No. (SMA) 15-4927. Rockville, MD: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, 2015, p. 2.

⁷ Center for Behavioral Health Statistics and Quality, Behavioral Health Trends in the United States: Results from the 2014 National Survey on Drug Use and Health, NSDUH Series H-50, HHS Publication No. (SMA) 15-4927. Rockville, MD: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, 2015, p. 1.

⁸ Center for Behavioral Health Statistics and Quality, Behavioral Health Trends in the United States: Results from the 2014 National Survey on Drug Use and Health, NSDUH Series H-50, HHS Publication No. (SMA) 15-4927. Rockville, MD: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, 2015, p. 32.

⁹ Center for Behavioral Health Statistics and Quality, Behavioral Health Trends in the United States: Results from the 2014 National Survey on Drug Use and Health, NSDUH Series H-50, HHS Publication No. (SMA) 15-4927. Rockville, MD: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, 2015, p. 33.

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- ¹² National Institute on Drug Abuse. Principles of Drug Addiction Treatment: A Research-Based Guide (Third Edition), How effective is drug addiction treatment? Retrieved February 12, 2015, from www.drugabuse.gov/publications/principles-drug-addiction-treatment-research-based-guide-third-edition/frequently-asked-questions/how-effective-drug-addiction-treatment.
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