

Mental Health Facts

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1. Having positive mental health means that you will not feel stressed or unhappy.
 - a. FALSE- A person with positive mental health can still feel stressed, anxious, or unhappy. When these feelings begin to have negative effects on a person's daily activities and relationships, it is a sign that the person has negative mental health.
2. Over 50% of mental health disorders appear by age 14.
 - a. TRUE- The onset of approximately 50% of all adult mental illness occurs by age 14 and 75% by age 24. Adolescents and young adults are at high risk for developing a mental disorder.
3. One in every 5 American adolescents is living with a mental illness.
 - a. TRUE- 20 percent of American youth have been diagnosed with mental illness. This statistic does not include youth who are experiencing mental illness but have not sought professional help and remain undiagnosed.
4. Depression is the most common mental health disorder among youth ages 12 to 17.
 - a. FALSE- Anxiety disorder is the most common mental health disorder among teens, at 31.9%. Depression is the second most common at 12.5%.
5. Anxiety disorder can have physical symptoms that mimic a heart attack.
 - a. TRUE- The symptoms of an anxiety attack and heart attack are very similar- rapid heartbeat, shortness of breath, dizziness, sweating, numbness, and nausea. If you are with someone exhibiting these symptoms and do not know their health history, assume they are having a heart attack and call 9-1-1 right away.
6. The difference between normal sadness and depression is that people with depression have thoughts of death and suicide.
 - a. FALSE- while thoughts of suicide are one symptom of depression, not all people with depression experience this symptom. The difference between normal feeling of sadness and depression is the duration. A person with depression may feel sad, irritable, or withdrawn for a prolonged period. Once these feelings last longer than 2 weeks, the person may be experiencing depression and needs to seek help from a mental health professional.
7. Substance Abuse is considered a mental health disorder.
 - a. TRUE- Substance Abuse Disorder is the repeated use of alcohol and/or drugs that leads to difficulty in fulfilling everyday responsibilities, physically dangerous situations, legal problems, or problems maintaining relationships. 11.4% of American youth ages 12-17 have substance abuse disorder.
8. Youth who live in poverty are at a higher risk for developing a mental health disorder.



- a. TRUE- 21 percent of low-income children ages 6 to 17 have a mental health disorder. 50% of the children in the child welfare system have a mental health disorder.
- 9. Youth who have parents who are divorced are not at a higher risker for mental health disorders than youth who have married parents.
 - a. FALSE- Divorce and marital conflicts in the home are high risk factors. Youth with divorced parents are more likely to develop depression, anxiety, and substance abuse disorders according to a report of the US Surgeon General.
- 10. People with mental health disorders often face discrimination.
 - a. TRUE- In a 2006 survey of American adults ages 16-24, 24% believed that those with mental health disorders were dangerous, and 66% believed that a person with a mental disorder cannot be successful in the workplace. Fear of discrimination is one major reason that people do not seek professional help for their negative mental health.