

Mental Health Awareness

Many people with mental illness often experience negative attitudes and the negative behaviors that they produce. This stigma spreads fear and misinformation, labels individuals and continues stereotypes. More than 60% of individuals with mental illness won't seek the help they need – stigma being one of the main reasons.

People experience stigma as barrier, which affects almost every aspect of their lives. It limits opportunities for employment, housing, education and can cause the loss of family members and friends. It can affect a person's self-image when he or she starts to believe the negative views held by others. The most common myth, is that people with mental illness are violent, dangerous and unpredictable. In truth, they are much more likely to be victims of crime, hate and discrimination.

Reducing the stigma of mental illness requires a change in behaviors and attitudes towards acceptance, respect and equitable treatment of people. Reducing stigma and discrimination is key to improving not only an individual's quality of life, but mental health systems in place. This happens by understanding mental illness is not anyone's choice and recovery is possible with appropriate treatment and supports. The more stigma that can be reduced, the better outcome for people and programs promoting mental wellness.