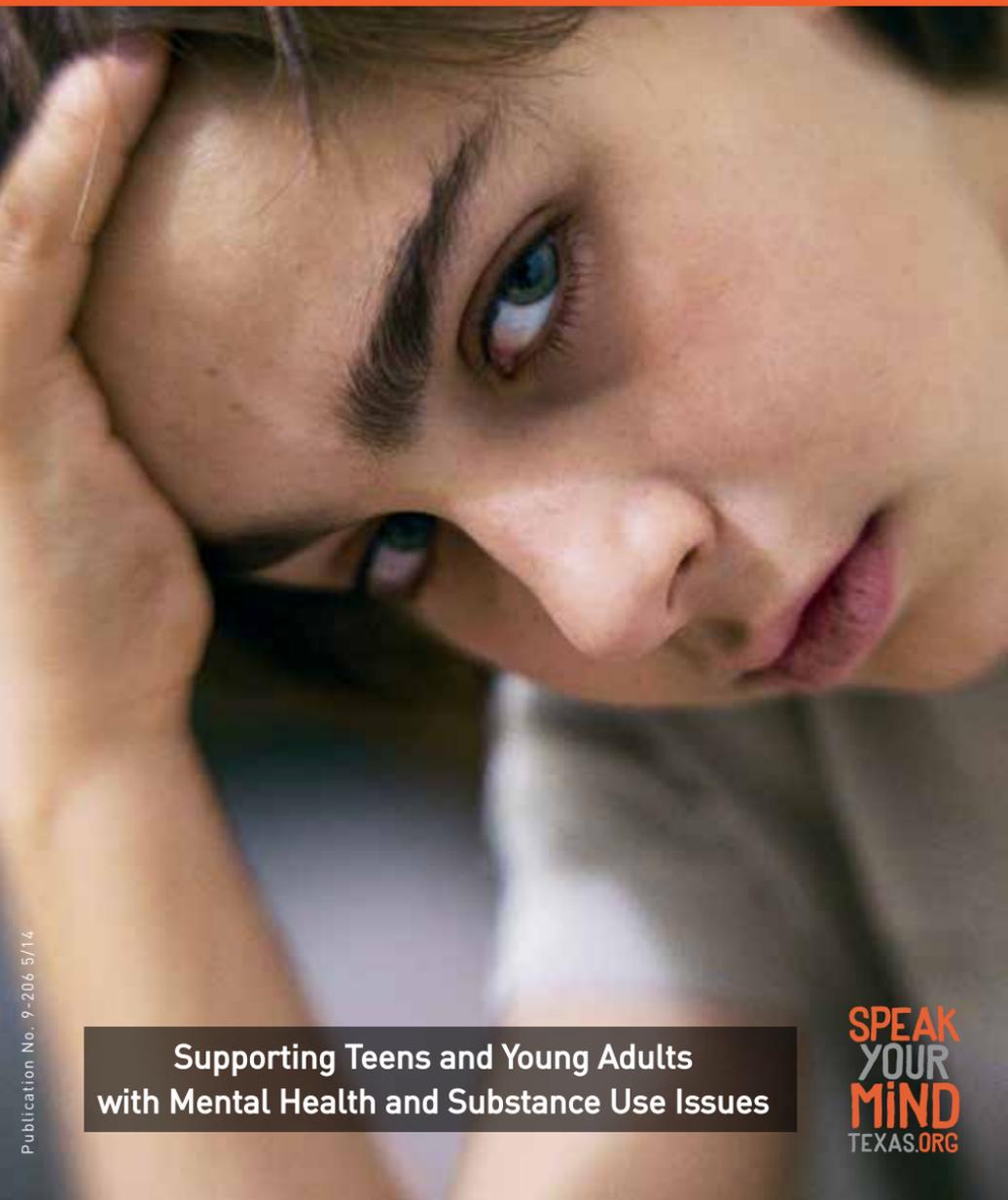


HELPING A YOUNG PERSON IN NEED



Supporting Teens and Young Adults
with Mental Health and Substance Use Issues

**SPEAK
YOUR
MiND**
TEXAS.ORG

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"SOMETIMES IT'S EASIER FOR
OTHERS TO SEE THE WARNING SIGNS.
PARENTS MAY HAVE BLINDERS ON."

THE BASICS

It's important to have a basic understanding about mental health disorders that are common among young people.

Mood Disorders. Mood disorders involve persistent feelings of sadness or periods of feeling overly happy. Sometimes moods may fluctuate from one extreme to another. Common mood disorders include depression and bipolar disorder.

Anxiety Disorders. Anxiety disorders include panic attacks, phobias, obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD), and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

Eating Disorders. Eating disorders involve extreme emotions, attitudes, and behaviors about food, weight, and self-image. Anorexia is when someone doesn't eat enough and becomes very thin. Bulimia is when someone overeats, then purges, such as by forced vomiting. People with bulimia may be of normal weight.

Personality Disorders. People with personality disorders have extreme and inflexible personality traits. They may have trouble perceiving and relating to situations and people. Two common disorders are antisocial personality disorder and borderline personality disorder.

Substance Use Disorders. A substance use disorder is the repeated use of alcohol or drugs. Substance use disorders make it difficult for people to meet family, work, or school obligations. Some people with a mental health disorder may also have a substance use disorder.

Psychotic Disorders. Psychotic disorders are when someone loses contact with reality and experiences hallucinations or delusions. For example, schizophrenia is a disorder that can be characterized by hallucinations or delusional thoughts.

Suicidal Thoughts and Behavior. Suicidal behavior involves thoughts of wanting to die or trying to kill oneself. People who are suicidal often experience feelings of extreme sadness and hopelessness.

MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEMS AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE ARE MORE COMMON THAN YOU MAY THINK

If you know a young person who is possibly experiencing a mental health issue or a drug or alcohol problem, you can help. But first you need to learn the facts.

Mental illnesses are more common than you may think. One in five Americans will experience a mental health issue during his or her lifetime, and one in 20 people will develop a serious mental illness.

Mental illnesses often strike early. Half of all cases start by age 14, and three-quarters by age 24.

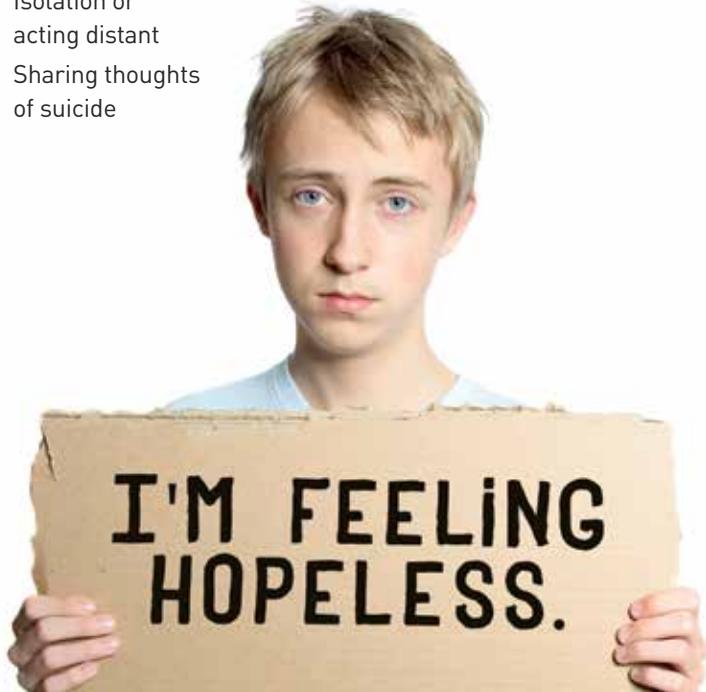
These aren't easy facts to take, but the good news is that there's help. And people who seek help can and do recover.

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“**MENTAL ILLNESS ISN'T WHO YOU ARE.
IT IS A DISEASE.**”

LEARN THE WARNING SIGNS OF MENTAL ILLNESS

Do you know how to tell if a young person is going through a crisis or needs help? Young people are often reluctant to talk about their problems. But that doesn't mean they're not expressing themselves. Keep your eyes open for the warning signs of mental illness, such as these:

- Frequent sadness or changes in mood or behavior
- Changes in eating and sleeping patterns
- Not wanting to go to school or work
- Fighting with family and friends
- Drug and alcohol abuse
- Hopelessness
- Feeling confused, angry, forgetful, edgy, or upset
- Wanting to hurt oneself or others
- Hearing voices
- Isolation or acting distant
- Sharing thoughts of suicide



FACT:

Addiction is a multifaceted and complex health issue. Research shows that prolonged use of drugs and alcohol may change your body and brain chemistry in a harmful way.

LEARN THE WARNING SIGNS OF SUBSTANCE ABUSE

Some people who have a mental illness may also abuse drugs or alcohol. It's important to know the warning signs of substance abuse:

- Sudden weight loss or gain
- Unhealthy appearance
- Frequently missing school or work
- Money problems
- Changes in friends, hangouts, or hobbies
- Getting into fights, accidents, or breaking the law
- Striking change in personality or behavior



FACT:

People who talk about suicide or say they want to die really could take their own life and need your attention.

SUICIDE PREVENTION

In Texas, suicide is the second leading cause of death among people ages 15 to 34. Nearly one out of seven high school students in Texas makes a suicide plan. Pay attention to warning signs such as these:

- A sad or hopeless appearance
- Dramatic mood changes such as rage, anxiety, or agitation
- Withdrawing from friends or family
- Talking about wanting to die or not having a reason to live
- Researching suicide methods
- Changes in sleeping patterns
- Seeking revenge or participating in risky activities

If you know a young person who might be suicidal, help them call the **National Suicide Prevention Lifeline** immediately. Help is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week at **1-800-273-TALK (8255)**. You can also find help online at www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org. For additional information and resources, visit the DSHS suicide prevention website at www.dshs.state.tx.us/suicideprevention or the Texas Suicide Prevention website at www.texasuicideprevention.org.



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“YOU DON’T HAVE TO BE A COUNSELOR TO HELP. YOU HAVE TO BE SOMEONE WHO CARES.”

GETTING BETTER IS POSSIBLE

Most people with mental health problems can recover, but treatment and recovery take time. Recovery is a journey, and the first step is getting help.

HOW CAN YOU HELP A YOUNG PERSON?

Young people going through a mental health crisis need to be taken seriously and desperately need to talk to someone. Adults need to be available to listen.

Keep in mind that young people may be afraid to talk. They may not know where to begin. They may be ashamed, so it’s up to adults to take the first step. Ask questions. If they don’t immediately open up, ask again or encourage them to talk to someone else. They need to know they can trust you before talking about their problems.

Here are some ways you can help:

- Tell them you’re concerned
- Let them know you care
- Be warm, trustworthy, and nonjudgmental
- Let them know you’re available to listen whenever they need to talk
- If you don’t have all the answers, let them know you can find out

Once you get a young person to talk, help connect them to treatment and recovery resources. Do you know a doctor or counselor who could help? If not, call 2-1-1 and find out what resources are available in your community.



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“WITH THE RIGHT TREATMENT, WITH
THE RIGHT THERAPY, AND WITH TIME,
THERE IS HOPE AND LIFE DOES GET BETTER.”

GETTING TREATMENT AND STARTING RECOVERY

Everyone is unique. That means everyone’s road to recovery will look different. But there are several common factors for getting treatment:

Professional Help. Mental health and substance use disorders are health issues. They require help from a doctor or a licensed mental health professional. People with mental health problems need to be accurately diagnosed. Only a professional can do that. Professionals can recommend treatments such as medications, counseling, or a combination of both.

Support Groups. People dealing with a mental health issue often find it helpful to get support from others with the same problem. There are support groups for eating disorders, drug and alcohol addictions, suicide attempt survivors, and other mental health disorders. Many support groups follow a 12-step recovery process.

Family and Community Supports. Having a support network of friends and loved ones is another important part of recovery. Other key supports include teachers, coaches, youth group leaders, and religious and faith communities.

HOW TO GET HELP IN TEXAS

Mental Health

2-1-1

www.dshs.state.tx.us/mhsa-mh-help

Substance Abuse

1-877-9-NO-DRUG (877-966-3784)

www.dshs.state.tx.us/mhsa-sa-help

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline

1-800-273-TALK (8255)

www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org

For more information on mental health and substance use issues and services in Texas, please visit SpeakYourMindTexas.org.

FACT:

Studies show that most people with mental illness get better, and many recover completely.

FACT:

No one is weak for asking for help. In fact, asking for help when you need it is a sign of strength. It’s also the first step to recovery. Mental health issues are health issues and require treatment.