

# Mental Health: Myth vs. Fact



## Myth: Mental health problems won't affect me

**Fact:** Mental health problems are actually very common. Roughly:

- 1 in 8 people lives with a mental health issue
- At least 50% of the population will experience a mental health issue at some point
- 1 in 3 women and 1 in 5 men will experience major depression



## Myth: People with mental health problems are violent and unpredictable

**Fact:** The vast majority of people with mental health problems are no more likely to be violent than anyone else. In fact, people with severe mental illnesses are over 10 times more likely to be victims of violent crime than the general population.



## Myth: You can snap out of mental illness if you just try hard enough.

**Fact:** Mental health problems have nothing to do with being lazy or weak and many people need help to get better. Many factors contribute to mental health problems, including:

- Biological factors, such as genes, physical illness, injury or brain chemistry
- Life experiences, such as trauma or a history of abuse
- Family history of mental health problems



## Myth: I can't do anything for someone with a mental illness

**Fact:** Friends and loved ones can make a big difference. Only 44 percent of adults with diagnosable mental health problems and less than 20 percent of children and adolescents receive needed treatment. Friends and family can be important influences to help someone get the treatment and services they need.



## Myth: It is impossible to prevent mental illnesses.

**Fact:** Prevention of mental, emotional and behavioral disorders focuses on addressing known risk factors such as exposure to trauma that can affect the chances that children, youth, and young adults will develop mental health problems. Promoting the social-emotional well-being of children and youth leads to:

- Higher overall productivity
- Lower health care costs
- Better educational outcomes
- Improved quality of life
- Lower crime rates
- Increased lifespan
- Stronger economies
- Improved family life



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