

# What is a Stigma-Free Zone?

1 in 4 adults experience a diagnosable mental disorder in a given year, yet more than half will not seek treatment. Why? The main reasons cited are shame and fear of judgment from friends, family, and co-workers. In other words, there is a STIGMA associated with mental diseases.

However, they are diseases like any other. It is our goal to build a society where people are free of stigma and can get the help they need.

We can build that society by banding together as a community, breaking down the walls, and showing others how they can do the same.

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## Prevalence of Mental Illness

Approximately 1 in 5 adults in the U.S.—43.7 million, or 18.6%—experiences mental illness in a given year.<sup>1</sup>

Approximately 1 in 5 youth aged 13–18 (21.4%) experiences a severe mental disorder at some point during their life. For children aged 8–15, the estimate is 13%.<sup>1</sup>

Among the 20.7 million adults in the U.S. who experienced a substance use disorder, 40.7%—8.4 million adults—had a co-occurring mental illness.

## Social Stats

70% of youth in juvenile justice systems have at least one mental health condition and at least 20% live with a serious mental illness.<sup>1</sup>

Half of all chronic mental illness begins by age 14; three-quarters by age 24. Despite effective treatment, there are long delays—sometimes decades—between the first appearance of symptoms and when people get help.<sup>1</sup>

## Consequences of Lack of Treatment

Mood disorders, including major depression, dysthymic disorder and bipolar disorder, are the third most common cause of hospitalization in the U.S. for both youth and adults aged 18–44.<sup>1</sup>

Over one-third (37%) of students with a mental health condition age 14–21 and older who are served by special education drop out—the highest dropout rate of any disability group.<sup>1</sup>

1. National Alliance on Mental Illness. *Prevalence of Mental Illness*. Retrieved January 16, 2015, from <http://www.nami.org/Learn-More/Mental-Health-By-the-Numbers>

**“Don’t Let Stigma Stop You Or Your Family From Seeking Help.”**

**Join The Hills Valley Coalition To Promote Stigma Free Mental Health.**

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Coalition**  
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