

# Mental Health, Substance Use and Suicide Prevention Awareness

**What is Mental Health?**

**Two most common types of mental illness in the United States:**

- 1.**
- 2.**

**One in four people in the world will be affected by mental health issues in their lifetime.**

**Mental illness and addiction are not caused by a weakness in character.**

**A person can become addicted to opioid medication even when prescribed by a doctor.**

**Studies show most people with mental illness get better, and many recover completely!**

### **Warning signs of a potential mental health issue**

- Withdrawing from people and activities
- Low energy and fatigue
- Numbness, sadness, and hopeless feelings
- Unusually confused, angry, upset, agitated, worried, or scared
- Uncontrollable, disturbing thoughts, or compulsions
- Sleep changes
- Appetite and/or weight changes
- Trouble performing everyday tasks
- Severe mood swings
- Hearing voices
- Thoughts of harming self or others

### **Warning signs of suicide**

- Feeling as if 'nothing matters'
- Giving away possessions
- Saying 'goodbye'
- Increased depressive symptoms
- Sudden cheerfulness following depression
- Owning/buying a gun
- Talking about doing it

### **Warning signs of a potential substance use concern**

#### **Emotional**

- Sudden mood changes
- Aggression/anger
- Anxiety/fearful
- Paranoia/hallucination
- Hyperactivity
- Irritability/agitation
- Low mood/hopeless
- Denial

#### **Behavioral**

- Unable to sit still
- Low motivation/energy
- Withdrawn from others/usual activities
- Unreliable/untruthful
- Change in friends, hobbies, hangouts
- Financial concerns

- Legal involvement
- Relationship issues
- Use despite consequences

### **Physical**

- Weight loss/gain
- Sleep changes
- Signs of withdrawal (cravings, sweating, shakes, chills)
- Bloodshot eyes
- Smaller/larger pupils
- Slowed/slurred speech
- Slowed reactions
- Unsteady gait
- Tolerance
- Unusual smells

### **Why get help?**

#### **Fighting mental health stigma**

- Talk openly about mental health
- Educate yourself and others on mental health
- Be conscious of the language you use
- Encourage equality between physical and mental illness
- Have empathy for those with mental illness
- Choose empowerment over shame

### **Don't harbor self-stigma**

#### **Ways you can help others**

- The power of listening
- The power of normalizing
- The power of increasing hope

#### **Getting help**

- Primary care doctors
- Your Employee Assistance Program

- National Institute of Mental Health
- NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness)
- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)

### **In emergency situations...**

- Maintain a calm composure
- Call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-8255
- Call the EAP
- Call 911 or 9-911
- Notify management and security

## **Self care and resiliency**

- Manage your stress daily
- Exercise
- Sleep
- Eat well
- Laugh
- Foster gratefulness

## **One thing I will do today to care for my mental health:**

### **Additional information**

#### **Technology addiction**

Defined: A serious problem involving the inability to control use of various technologies (Internet, smartphones, tablets and social networking sites). Like other addictions, technology addiction can range from moderate to severe and users can experience 'highs' during use and 'withdrawal' when cut off. Also similar to other addictions, it's not just the amount of time spent 'online' that defines an addict but also how excessive use adversely affects someone's mental and physical health, daily life, relationships and academic or job performance.

#### Warning signs of technology abuse or addiction:

- Spend a lot of time alone with their computer or smartphone.
- Compulsively accessing their device (checking/sending messages, gaming, uploading pictures).
- Become defensive when confronted with their behavior.
- Appear to be more socially isolated, moody or irritable.
- Seem to be establishing "a second life," with new and different friends met online.
- Talk about their time on the computer constantly; draw meaning in their life from this activity.
- Loss of interest in activities that don't involve a computer, phone or gadget.
- Signs of work or school performance suffering, e.g., fired, grades slipping, or household responsibilities neglected.

