

Fast Facts about Mental Illness

- One in four adults experiences a mental disorder in any given year. One in 17 adults lives with serious mental illness such as schizophrenia, major depression or bipolar disorder.ⁱ
- One in 10 children has a mental health condition that causes significant impairment.ⁱⁱ
- One-half of all lifetime cases of mental illness begin by age 14, three-quarters by age 24.ⁱⁱⁱ
- Despite effective treatment, there are long delays (an average of 10 years) from the onset of mental illness to treatment.^{iv}
- Racial and ethnic communities are less likely to receive needed mental health care and, when they do receive treatment, more likely to receive poorer quality of care.^v
- Mental illness is the leading cause of disability in the United States and Canada for people aged 15-44.^{vi}
- Suicide is the third-leading cause of death for America's youth aged 15-24.^{vii}
- We lose one life to suicide every 15.8 minutes. The vast majority lived with undiagnosed or untreated mental illness.^{viii}
- About 25 percent of incarcerated adults and youth in the juvenile justice system live with serious mental illness.^{ix, x}
- Twenty-six percent of homeless persons live with severe mental illness—over four times the rate of the general population.^{xi}
- An estimated 131,000 veterans are homeless on any given night. 45 percent live with mental illness.^{xii}
- For people living with serious mental illness, life expectancy is 25 years less than that of other Americans.^{xiii}
- People diagnosed with schizophrenia die from heart disease, diabetes and other medical causes at a rate two or three times greater than the rest of the population.^{xiv}

ⁱ National Institute of Mental Health, *The Numbers Count: Mental Disorders in America*, (2008). www.nimh.nih.gov/health/publications/the-numbers-count-mental-disorders-in-america/index.shtml.

ⁱⁱ The National Advisory Mental Health Council Workgroup on Child and Adolescent Mental Health Intervention Development and Deployment. *Blueprint for Change: Research on Child and Adolescent Mental Health*, (2001).

ⁱⁱⁱ National Institute of Mental Health, *Mental Illness Exact Heavy Toll, Beginning in Youth*, (June 2005). www.nimh.nih.gov/science-news/2005/mental-illness-exacts-heavy-toll-beginning-in-youth.shtml.

^{iv} *Ibid.*

^v U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. *Mental Health: Culture, Race and Ethnicity. A Supplement to Mental Health: A Report of the Surgeon General*, (2001).

^{vi} *Ibid.*

^{vii} Centers for Disease Control, *National Center for Injury Prevention and Control*, data for 2006 at www.cdc.gov.

^{viii} American Association of Suicidology, *USA Suicide 2006: Official Final Data*, (2009).

www.suicidology.org/c/document_library/get_file?folderId=228&name=DLFE-142.pdf.

^{ix} James, D. and Glaze, L., *Mental Health Problems of Prison and Jail Inmates*, U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, (2006).

^x Skowrya and Coccozza, *Blueprint for Change: A Comprehensive Model for the Identification and Treatment of Youth with Mental Health Needs in Contact with the Juvenile Justice System*, National Center for Mental Health and Juvenile Justice, (2007). www.ncmhj.com.

^{xi} *Hunger and Homelessness Survey, A Status Report on Hunger and Homelessness in America's Cities*, The U.S. Conference of Mayors, (December 2008).

^{xii} U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, *Overview of Homelessness*. www1.va.gov/homeless/page.cfm?pg=1.

^{xiii} Parks, J. et al. (eds) *Morbidity and Mortality in People with Serious Mental Illnesses*, National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors (NASMHPD) Medical Directors Council, Alexandria, Va., (October 2006).

^{xiv} *Ibid.*