

Merced County's Ending the Stigma Campaign

"Mental illness is
nothing to be
ashamed of, but
stigma and bias
shame us all."

BILL CLINTON

**Ending the Stigma
theme:**

**“Mental Health is
Part of
All Our Lives”**

**2 million children, adults
and seniors in California are
affected by a potentially
disabling mental illness
every year.**

- MHSA

Never give up on
someone with a
mental illness.

When "i" is
replaced by "we",
"illness" becomes
"wellness".



What is Mental Illness?

Mental illness is a health condition characterized by changes in thinking, mood, behavior or some combination of the three. This condition is associated with distress and/or a lessened ability to function.

What are some causes of mental illness?

- Long-term and acute stress
- Biological factors such as genetics, chemistry and hormones
- Use of alcohol, drugs and other substances
- Cognitive patterns such as constant negative thoughts and low self-esteem
- Social factors such as isolation, financial problems, family breakdown, grief, loss or violence

Who has mental illness?

Mental illness can affect individuals of any age, gender, race, religion, or income.





**Many individuals with
mental illness will
experience stigma and
discrimination because of
their condition**

What is Stigma?

An attempt to label a particular group of people as less worthy of respect than others.



What is Stigma?

To diminish or devalue someone based on a perceived negative attribute, such as having a mental illness.



What does Stigma have to do with Mental Illness?

Stigma leads to....

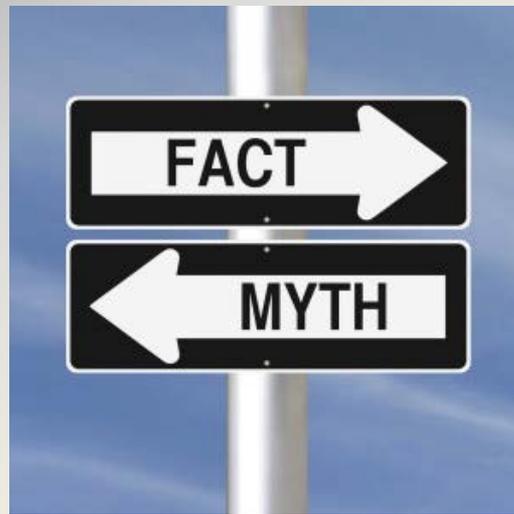
- Prejudice and discrimination against people with mental illness (daily interaction, employment, housing)
- People living with mental illness feel afraid or ashamed to seek treatment
- Fear, mistrust, and violence against people living with mental illness
- Family and friends turning their backs on people with mental illness

stigmafree

See the person, not the illness.

WORDS MATTER.

**Language has the power
to stigmatize and demean
or respect and uplift.**



**Stigma and discrimination
are perpetuated by the
misconceptions about
mental health**

Myth vs. Fact

MYTH	FACT
Mental health problems don't affect me.	Mental Health problems affect one in four people (children, TAY, adults and older adults)
People with mental health problems are violent and unpredictable.	People with severe mental illnesses are over 10 times more likely to be victims of violent crime than the general population.
People with mental health needs cannot tolerate the stress of holding down a job.	People with mental health problems are just as productive as other employees. Employers who hire people with mental health problems report good attendance and punctuality as well as motivation, good work, and job tenure on par with or greater than other employees.
People with mental health problems can snap out of it if they try hard enough.	Recovery requires treatment and support to address contributing factors such as: <ul data-bbox="991 1118 1841 1210" style="list-style-type: none">• Biological factors, life experiences, family history of mental health problems

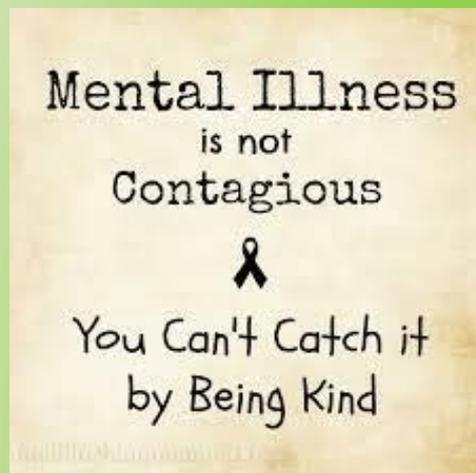
How to Fight Stigma

- Treat people with dignity and respect
- Use respectful language
 - ❖ Be mindful of your words
 - ❖ Educate that people are living with mental illness
 - ❖ Never use words like crazy, lunatic, psycho, retarded



How to Fight Stigma

- Educate about mental health
 - ❖ Talk openly and spread the word that mental health problems can affect all of us: friends, neighbors, co-workers and family members.
 - ❖ Share that mental illness is a treatable condition and that people do recover.



How to Fight Stigma

- Become an advocate
 - ❖ Speak out and challenge negative stereotypes portrayed in the media.
 - ❖ Inform your community about the truth of mental illness and the resources available.



How to Fight Stigma

- **Foster an inclusive environment**
 - ❖ **Include mental health issues in discussions about acceptance of diversity, just as you would discuss cultural diversity, religious beliefs, physical disability, and sexual orientation.**

It's pronounced...
[MEN-tl IL-nis]
not
[KREY-zee]

Fight Stigma

***Make the
Pledge to end
mental health
stigma and
discrimination***





**1,455 Pledge Ribbons
signed so far**



Remember: Mental Health is Part of All Our Lives

