Tennessee AWARE Initiative

Facts about Children’s Mental Health

Mental health disorders are the most common diseases of childhood.

Of the 74.5 million children in the United States, an estimated 17.1 million have or have had a psychiatric disorder\(^1\)—more than the number of children with cancer, diabetes, and AIDS combined.\(^2\)

**Half** of all mental illness occurs before the age of fourteen and **75 percent** by the age of twenty-four.

In spite of the magnitude of the problem, lack of awareness and entrenched stigma keep the majority of these young people from getting help.\(^3\)

Fewer than **half** of young people with mental illness receive adequate treatment.\(^4\)

Young people with mental illness are frequently absent from school, and many experience reductions in academic achievement.\(^5\)

Among students with disabling conditions, young people with mental illness are the **most likely** to drop out of school.\(^5\)

Only **one third** of young people with mental illness advance to postsecondary education.\(^5\)

More than **60 percent** of children in juvenile detention have a diagnosable mental illness.\(^5\)

Suicide is the **second leading cause of death** for young people (ages 10-19) in Tennessee. In Tennessee, there were 49 deaths among persons aged 10-19 recorded in 2014. (TDOH) \(^6\)

There is a **90 percent** recovery rate from mental illness. \(^5\)
In the chart below, Tennessee is compared to United States statistics regarding children's mental health concerns.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Children's Mental Health</th>
<th>TN</th>
<th>US</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mental health issues – Percentage of parents who reported that a doctor has told them their child has autism, developmental delays, depression, anxiety, ADD/ADHD, or behavioral/conduct problems (ages 2-17).</td>
<td>21.0%</td>
<td>17.0%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mental healthcare access – Percentage of children with emotional, developmental, or behavioral problems that received mental health care/counseling of some type during the past 12 months</td>
<td>9.4%</td>
<td>6.1%</td>
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<td>Depression – Percentage of youth (ages 12-17) who had at least one major depressive episode in the past year.</td>
<td>9.9%</td>
<td>11.0%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Depression – Percentage of youth (grades 9-12) who report feeling sad or hopeless (almost every day for two weeks or more in a row).</td>
<td>31.1%</td>
<td>31.5%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Suicides – Percentage of youth who reported they attempted suicide in the past 12 months.</td>
<td>8.3%</td>
<td>7.4%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Suicides – Percentage of youth who reported that they had made a plan about how they would attempt suicide (during the 12 months before the survey).</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>13.6%</td>
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<td>Suicides – Percentage of youth who seriously considered attempting suicide.</td>
<td>16.5%</td>
<td>17.2%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Suicides – Percentage of youth who reported they had attempted suicide that resulted in an injury, poisoning, or overdose that had to be treated by a doctor or a nurse.</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
<td>2.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. National Cancer Institute; American Diabetes Association; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
8. Behavioral Health Indicators for TN and U.S., Data Book 2015 - TDMHSAS

Figure 1. Youth Mental Health First Aid Power Point, National Council on Behavioral Health, 2015.