

What You Need to Know About Mental Illness

Did You Know...

- According to the Surgeon General, one in every five Americans experiences a mental disorder in any given year and half of all Americans have such disorders at some time in their lives.
- These illnesses of the brain affect all of us, regardless of age, gender, economic status or ethnicity.
- About one in 17 lives with a serious mental illness such as schizophrenia, major depression or bipolar disorder
- One in five U.S. service members who served in Iraq or Afghanistan suffers from major depression or combat stress (PTSD)
- One in ten children and youth has a serious mental illness condition
- About half of students with a serious mental illness in special education drop out of high school – the highest dropout rate of any disability group
- Fewer than one-third of adults and one-half of children who live with mental health needs receive any level of treatment in any one year
- Only one in three adults who lives with a serious mental illness is employed, even though most want to work
- 26% of the homeless population lives with a severe mental illness

- One out of every five community hospital stays involves a primary or secondary diagnosis of mental illness
- About 20-25% of jail and prison inmates and youth involved with juvenile justice live with a serious mental illness
- We lose one life to suicide every 15.8 minutes. The suicide rate for older adults is 50% higher than the national rate as a whole

Does Your Pastor Know...

- One in four persons sitting in our pews has a family member struggling with mental health issues
- Many individuals with a mental health issue go **first** to a spiritual leader for help
- Studies show that clergy are the **least** effective in providing appropriate support and referral information
- Our faith communities **can** be a caring congregation for persons living with a mental illness and their family members

People with mental problems are our neighbors. They are members of our congregations, members of our families; they are everywhere in this country. If we ignore their cries for help, we will be continuing to participate in the anguish from which those cries for help come. A problem of this magnitude will not go away. Because it will not go away, and because of our spiritual commitments, we are compelled to take action. (Rosalynn Carter)

Rev. Susan Gregg-Schroeder
Coordinator of Mental Health Ministries
www.MentalHealthMinistries.net