



MCFARLAND RADAR (Relevant Alcohol & Drug Awareness Resources) COALITION

AODA PREVENTION

NEWSLETTER

MAY 2022

National Prevention Week

National Prevention Week is an annual health observance dedicated to increasing public awareness of, and action around, substance abuse and mental health issues. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration chose May to host the National Prevention week as it was near the start of the summer which is an important time for school, communities, and prevention professionals to re-focus on prevention. In a survey conducted by SAMHSA, it found that adolescents and full-time college students most often use substances for the first time during June or July. By timing the National Prevention week in May it still provides a timely opportunity for schools and organizations to host prevention-themed events and activates before the school year ends, and thus raising awareness about these important issues among students and their families.



Three Goals of National Prevention Week:

- Involve communities in raising awareness of substance use and mental health issues by implementing prevention strategies and showcasing effectiveness of evidence-based prevention programs.
- Foster partnerships and collaborations with federal agencies and national organizations dedicated to improving public health
- Promote and spread quality substance use prevention and mental health promotion resources and publications.

National Prevention Week

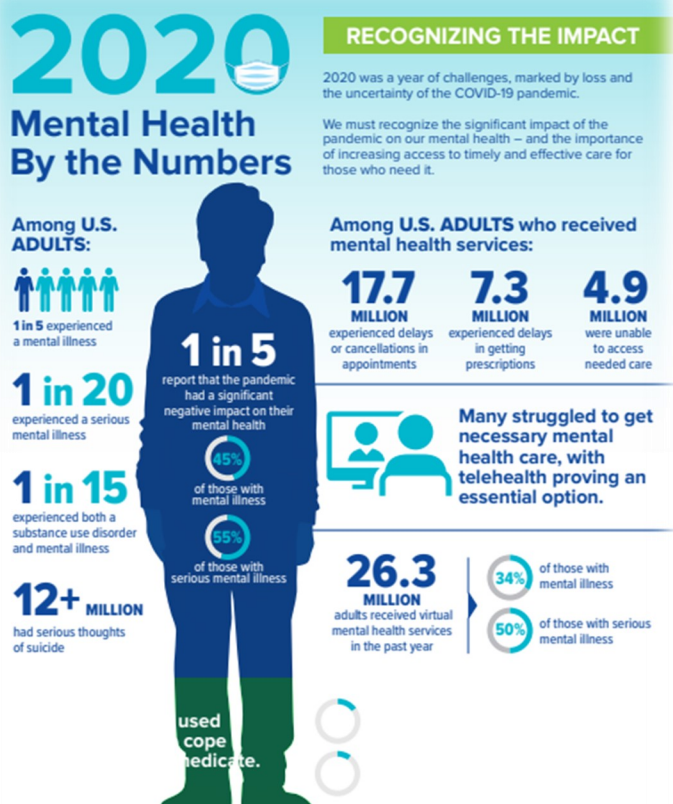
(May 8th-14th)

- Monday, May 9: Strengthening Community Resilience: Substance Misuse and Overdose Prevention
- Tuesday, May 10: Preventing Substance Use and Promoting Mental Health in Youth
- Wednesday, May 11: Preventing Suicide: Everyone Plays a Role
- Thursday, May 12: The Talent Pipeline: Enhancing the Prevention Workforce
- Friday, May 13: Prevention is Everywhere: Highlighting Efforts Across Settings and Communities
- Saturday, May 14: Celebrating Prevention Heroes

May is Mental Health Awareness Month

Mental Health Month was established in 1949 to increase the awareness of mental health and wellness in Americans' lives, and to celebrate recovery from mental illness. A pioneer in the establishment of this awareness month was Clifford Whittingham Beers who was the founder of the National Committee for Mental Hygiene, later renamed to the National Mental Health Association. Beers and several members of his family suffered from mental illnesses and were often hospitalized or placed in institutions, where mistreatment was rampant. With helping pioneering an awareness month, several other national organizations followed suit in an effort to find better treatment for and end the stigma surrounding mental illnesses and disorders, as well as increase empathy and compassion for those with mental illnesses and their loved one.

The theme of Mental Health Awareness Month 2022 is "Together for Mental Health." The idea behind the theme is for the world to combine their voices to advocate for mental health care and access to mental health services.



Mental Health and Substance Use

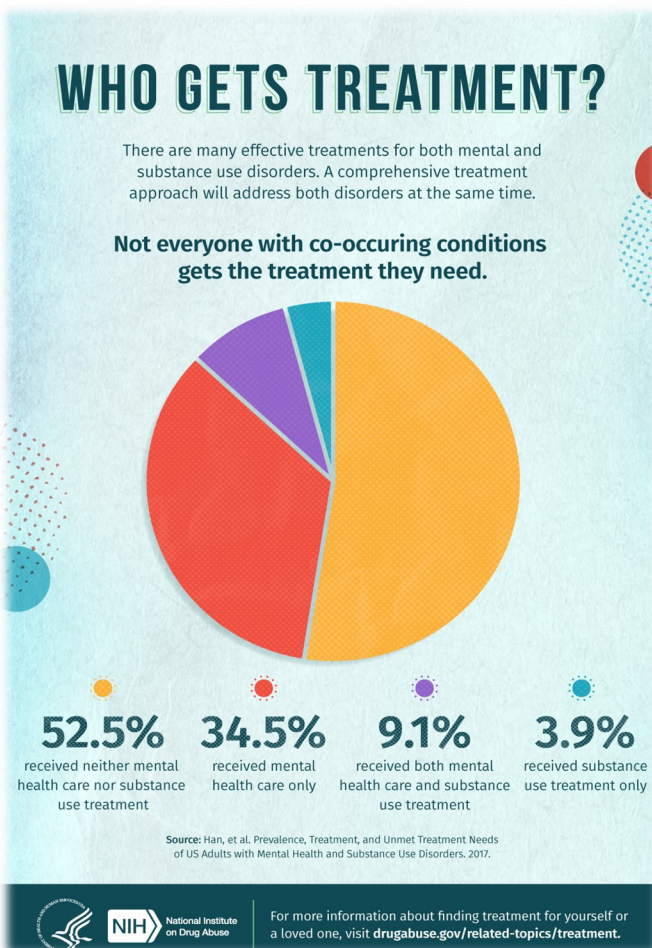
Is drug addiction a mental illness?

Yes. Addiction changes the brain in fundamental ways. It changes a person's normal needs and desires and replaces them with new priorities connected with seeking and using a drug. This could result in compulsive behaviors that weaken the ability to control impulses, despite the negative consequences.

When it comes to mental health and substance, it is often times both can co-occur at the same time. This is called comorbidity. Comorbidity is when a person has two or more disorders at the same time or one after the other. It is important to note that it can be difficult to determine which one caused the other or which one came first.



Why do mental illnesses and addiction co-occur?



1. Common risk factors can contribute to both mental illness and substance use disorders. Research has suggested that there are many genes within certain individuals that can contribute to the risk of developing both a substance use disorder and a mental illness. Genes can also influence how a person responds to a drug—whether using the drug makes them feel good. Environmental factors, such as stress or trauma, can cause genetic changes that are passed down through generations and may contribute to the development of mental illnesses or a substance use disorder.
2. Mental illnesses can contribute to drug use and substance use disorders. Some mental health conditions have been identified as risk factors for developing a substance use disorder. For example, some research suggests that people with mental illnesses may use drugs and alcohol as a form of self-medication. While some drugs may help with symptoms related to mental health, they can sometimes make the symptoms worse.
3. Substance use may change the brain in ways that make a person more likely to develop a mental illness.

How to maintain good mental health

- Finding balance between positive and negative emotions:
 - Staying positive doesn't mean that you never feel negative emotions, such as sadness or anger. You need to feel them so that you can move through difficult situations. They can help you to respond to a problem. But you don't want those emotions to take over.
- Taking a break from negative information:
 - Know when to stop watching or reading the news. Use social media to reach out for support and feel connected to others but be careful. Don't fall for rumors, get into arguments, or negatively compare your life to others.
- Practicing gratitude, which means being thankful for the good things in your life:
 - It's helpful to do this every day, either by thinking about what you are grateful for or writing it down in a journal. These can be big things, such as the support you have from loved ones, or little things, such as enjoying a nice meal. It's important to allow yourself a moment to enjoy that you had the positive experience.
- Taking care of your physical health, since your physical and mental health are connected. Some ways to take care of your physical health include:
 - Being physically active. Exercise can reduce feelings of stress and depression and improve your mood.
 - Getting enough sleep. Sleep affects your mood. If you don't get a good sleep, you may become more easily annoyed and angry. Over the long term, a lack of quality sleep can make you more likely to become depressed. So it's important to make sure that you have a regular sleep schedule and get enough quality sleep every night.
 - Healthy eating. Good nutrition will help you feel better physically but could also improve your mood and decrease anxiety and stress.
- Meditation, which is a mind and body practice where you learn to focus your attention and awareness. Meditation usually involves:
 - A quiet location with as few distractions as possible
 - A specific, comfortable posture. This could be sitting, lying down, walking, or another position.
 - A focus of attention, such as a specially chosen word or set of words, an object, or your breathing
 - An open attitude, where you try to let distractions come and go naturally without judging them



McFarland is a small community south of Madison in Dane County. In January of 2017, a group of concerned citizens came together to discuss substance abuse problems in the McFarland area. The McFarland RADAR is a result of these meetings

We are comprised of local representatives from schools, businesses, churches, village administration as well as parents, and youth—all working together to promote healthy lifestyles

For more information go to: <https://www.radarmc.com/>



For time, day and place of meetings, please contact Cathy Kalina at CathyK@fsmad.org

The McFarland RADAR (RADAR stands for Relevant Alcohol & Drug Awareness Resources) Coalition works to develop, implement and support environmental strategies to reduce substance abuse.

We believe by working together, we can nurture social and environmental changes to make the McFarland area a safer and healthier place, brightening the future of our children, youth and families.

McFarland RADAR Mission Statement

“The mission of McFarland’s RADAR Coalition is to promote healthy lifestyles in the McFarland area through alcohol and drug abuse prevention and education efforts.”

HOW CAN YOU HELP?

We are asking you to give the gift of time. Make a difference in the lives of our youth and our community by

1. Working with us in providing support for planning, project management and awareness campaigns
2. Helping with coalition events, conferences, workshops, and fairs held throughout the year.
3. Being a voice for change in our community, it is time to come together and be that force for change in the McFarland area.