Mental Health and Substance Use Statistics

OBJECTIVE: When talking about Mental Health First Aid, use these data points to explain why there’s such a need for as many Americans as possible to take the course.

Mental Health First Aid

General
- Nearly one in five U.S. adults lives with a mental illness (44.7 million in 2016). (National Institute of Mental Health via the National Survey on Drug Use and Health and the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration)
- In 2016, an estimated 10.4 million adults (4.2 percent) in the U.S. had a serious mental illness (SMI). (National Institute of Mental Health via the National Survey on Drug Use and Health and the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration)

Suicide
- 44,965 Americans die by suicide every year. (American Foundation for Suicide Prevention)
- For every suicide, 25 people attempt suicide. (American Foundation for Suicide Prevention)
- There are 123 suicides a day on average. (American Foundation for Suicide Prevention)
- The overall suicide rate rose by 24 percent from 1999 to 2014. (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention)

Depression
- In 2016, an estimated 16.2 million adults (6.7 percent) in the United States had at least one major depressive episode. (National Institute of Mental Health via the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration)
- During 2013–2016, 8.1 percent of Americans aged 20 and over had depression in a given two-week period. (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention)
- About 80 percent of adults with depression reported at least some difficulty with work, home and social activities because of their depression. (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention)

Anxiety
- Each year, anxiety disorders affect 40 million adults in the U.S. aged 18 and older, or 18.1 percent of the population. (Anxiety and Depression Association of America)
- An estimated 31.1 percent of adults in the U.S. experience an anxiety disorder at some time in their lives. (National Institute of Mental Health via Harvard Medical School)
- Anxiety disorders are highly treatable, yet only 36.9 percent of those experiencing them receive treatment. (Anxiety and Depression Association of America)

Substance Use
- From 1999 to 2016, more than 630,000 people died from a drug overdose. (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention)
- Approximately 66 percent of the more than 63,600 drug overdose deaths in 2016 involved an opioid. (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention)
On average, 115 Americans die every day from an opioid overdose. ([Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](https://www.cdc.gov))

The number of heroin users in the United States jumped from 404,000 in 2002 to 948,000 in 2016; a 135 percent increase. ([CNN via National Institute on Drug Abuse](https://www.cnn.com))

In 2018, the U.S. surgeon general issued an advisory recommending that Americans carry the opioid overdose-reversing drug, naloxone. A surgeon general advisory is a rarely used tool to convey an urgent message. The last advisory issued by the surgeon general, more than a decade ago, focused on drinking during pregnancy. ([CNN](https://www.cnn.com))

An estimated one out of every eight Americans has an alcohol disorder. ([CNN via JAMA Psychiatry](https://jama-psychiatry.com))

**Infrastructure**

On average, only 3 percent of a government's health budget is spent on mental health programs. ([World Health Organization](https://www.who.int))

**Youth Mental Health First Aid**

**General**

One in five teens and young adults live with a mental health condition – half develop the condition by age 14 and three-quarters by age 24. ([National Alliance for Mental Illness](https://www.nami.org))

One in five American children ages three through 17 — about 15 million — have a diagnosable mental, emotional or behavioral disorder in any given year. Only 20 percent of these children are ever diagnosed and receive treatment; 80 percent — about 12 million — aren't receiving treatment. ([TODAY via Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](https://today.com))

**Suicide**

Suicide is the third leading cause of death in young people between the ages of 10 and 24, resulting in about 4,600 lives lost in the U.S. each year. ([CBS News](https://www.cbs.com) via Centers for Disease Control and Prevention)

From 1999 through 2015, 1,309 children aged 5 to 12 took their own lives in the United States ([CNN via Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](https://www.cnn.com))

A nationwide survey of U.S. high school students found that:

- 16 percent of students reported seriously considering suicide.
- 13 percent reported creating a plan.
- 8 percent reported trying to take their own life in the 12 months preceding the survey. ([Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](https://www.cdc.gov))

Each year, about 157,000 young people between the ages of 10 and 24 are treated in emergency departments across the U.S. for self-inflicted injuries. ([Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](https://www.cdc.gov))

**Depression**

In 2016, an estimated 2.2 million adolescents aged 12 to 17 in the U.S. (9 percent) had at least one major depressive episode with severe impairment. ([National Institute of Mental Health](https://www.nimh.nih.gov))
• 64.1 percent of youth with major depression do not receive any mental health treatment. (Mental Health America)

Anxiety
• Anxiety disorders affect one in eight children. (Anxiety and Depression Association of America)
• Researchers found a 20 percent increase in diagnoses of anxiety in youth aged 6-17 between 2007 and 2012. (The Washington Post via the National Survey of Children’s Health)
• Nearly one-third of all adolescents aged 13 to 18 will experience an anxiety disorder during their lifetime. (The Washington Post via National Institutes of Health)

Substance Use
• 5.13 percent of American youth report having a substance use or alcohol problem. (Mental Health America)

Eating Disorders
• One or two of every 100 students will experience an eating disorder. (Kids Health)
• 20 million women and 10 million men have a clinically significant eating disorder at some point in their lives. (U.S. News via the National Eating Disorders Association)

Public Safety
• Between 7 and 19 percent of police officers have symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). (Indianapolis Star via National Alliance on Mental Illness)
• Nearly one in four police officers thinks of suicide at some point in their life. (National Alliance on Mental Illness via 2009 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention report)
• In 2017, 140 police officers died by suicide, more than the 129 officers who died in the line of duty. (USA Today)
• A Washington Post analysis revealed that nationwide, police shot and killed 124 people in 2015 who were having a mental or emotional crisis. (The Washington Post)
• In 2014, almost 10 percent of police calls involved someone with a mental illness. (National Public Radio (NPR))
• Nearly 15 percent of men and 30 percent of women booked into jails have a serious mental health condition. (National Alliance on Mental Illness)
• 1.2 million individuals living with mental illness are in jail and prison each year. (Mental Health America)

Higher Education
• Suicide is the second leading cause of death among college-age students. (Huffington Post via Centers for Disease Control and Prevention)
• When the Associated Press asked the 100 largest U.S. public universities for annual suicide statistics, 43 said they don't track suicides. (CBS News)
• Research shows that nearly one in five university students are affected with anxiety or depression. ([The Conversation](https://theconversation.com) via the American College Health Association)

• In spring 2017, nearly 40 percent of college students said they had felt so depressed in the prior year that it was difficult for them to function, and 61 percent said they had “felt overwhelming anxiety” in the same time period, according to a survey of more than 63,000 students at 92 schools. ([Time](https://time.com) via [American College Health Association](https://www.acsh.org))

**Fire/EMS**

• A survey of 7,000 North American firefighters revealed:
  o 19 percent have had thoughts of suicide.
  o 27 percent have struggled with substance use issues.
  o 59 percent have experienced family and relationship problems. ([NBC Washington](https://nbcwashington.com))

• Statistical evidence shows 37 percent of fire and EMS professionals have considered suicide; nearly 10 times greater than the general population. ([U.S. Fire Administration](https://www.usfa.gov))

• In 2017, 103 firefighters died by suicide; more than the 93 firefighters who died in the line of duty. ([USA Today](https://usatoday.com))

**Veterans**

• Approximately 18.5 percent of service members returning from Iraq or Afghanistan have post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) or depression. ([Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration](https://samhsa.gov))

• Twenty veterans die by suicide each day. ([U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs](https://www.va.gov))

• Nearly one in four active duty members showed signs of a mental health condition, according to a 2014 study. ([National Alliance on Mental Illness](https://nami.org) via JAMA Psychiatry)

**Older Adults**

• About 15 percent of adults aged 60 and over have a mental disorder. ([World Health Organization](https://www.who.int))

• An American Journal of Geriatric Psychiatry survey found 27 percent of older adults assessed by aging service providers met the criteria for a diagnosis of major depression. ([Mental Health America](https://www.mhan.org))

• More than 1 million people aged 65 or older had a substance use disorder in 2014, including 978,000 older adults with an alcohol use disorder and 161,000 with a substance use disorder. ([Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration](https://samhsa.gov))