

# STIGMA AND MENTAL HEALTH

Stigma is still common around mental health conditions like major depression, bipolar disorder, and schizoaffective disorders.

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**For people with mental health conditions, stigma can:**



Make it harder to get medical care



Make it harder to share stories or discuss experiences



Hurt emotional and overall well being



Learn more and find resources at  
**DenverGov.org/  
WhatYouSayMatters**



# RESOURCES:

Interested in mental health treatment or educational resources? Learn more from our partners.

## Colorado Crisis Services

[coloradocrisiservices.org](http://coloradocrisiservices.org)

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For help with any mental health, substance use or emotional concern, call Colorado Crisis Services 24/7 at 844- 493-TALK (8255), or text TALK to 38255.

## OwnPath

[ownpath.co](http://ownpath.co)

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Find behavioral health care in Colorado that's meaningful for you.

## Office of Behavioral Health Strategies - DDPHE

[www.denvergov.org/BehavioralHealthStrategies](http://www.denvergov.org/BehavioralHealthStrategies)

3-1-1 (or 720-913-1311)

# SHARE THE MESSAGE:

Want to stop stigma in your community?



Learn more and find resources at  
**DenverGov.org/  
WhatYouSayMatters**

# WHAT YOU SAY MATTERS.

Stop stigma around mental health.

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Learn what to say at  
[DenverGov.org/WhatYouSayMatters](http://DenverGov.org/WhatYouSayMatters)



# WHAT IS STIGMA?

Talking about mental health is more common now, but stigma still hurts people living with mental health conditions. You can help change that.

Stigma is a negative attitude of, or treatment toward, someone because of unsupported beliefs, including stereotypes. In mental health, stigma can be:



Dismissing someone's condition, symptoms, or experiences



Perpetuating negative stereotypes about a condition



Treating someone with a mental health condition negatively

Stigma can come from anyone and isn't always on purpose. Friends, family, community members, healthcare workers, law enforcement, popular culture, and others can perpetuate stigma.

Understanding what stigma looks like can help you speak up against it.

# YOU CAN HELP!

Removing stigma around mental health conditions starts with awareness.

You can reduce stigma by changing some of the words and phrases that may be commonly used but can cause harm.

## LANGUAGE:

Language can perpetuate stigma. Being more aware of what you say and how it impacts others can help stop stigma.

Instead of ...	Say ...
"What's wrong with you?"	"How are you feeling?" "How can I support you?"
"Of course you're depressed. Everyone is."	"Having depression is real and you are not alone in this experience."
"She's acting really crazy."	"I don't understand what she's going through. I should check in."

## SUPPORT:

Try offering support, sympathy, and encouragement.

- Ask how someone feels
- Ask how you can help
- Ask about someone's experience rather than make assumptions

# BY THE NUMBERS:

In 2020, 14.2 million U.S. adults 18 or older were living with mental health conditions\*

In 2019, 16% of Denver residents reported needing mental health care but not receiving it.\*\*

Of those who didn't receive care, more than one-third said they were uncomfortable talking about personal issues as a reason.\*\*

Learn more about mental health stigma and how to fight it here:

[DenverGov.org/WhatYouSayMatters](https://denvergov.org/whatyousaymatters)

## SOURCES:

\*U.S. Department of Health & Human Services Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, 2020 National Survey of Drug Use and Health Issues.

<https://www.samhsa.gov/data/release/2020-national-survey-drug-use-and-health-nsduh-releases>

\*\*Colorado Health Institute, 2019 Colorado Health Access Survey.

<https://www.coloradohealthinstitute.org/research/colorado-health-access-survey-2019>