

## Mental Health and Wellness vs. Mental Illness

Mental health is a level of psychological, emotional and social well-being which allows you to function in your day to day activities. It can also be defined as an absence of mental illness.

Every person experiences stress, sadness, grief, difficult situations, and challenges at times in their life. When those experiences become overwhelming and impact your relationships, your school or job, your ability to carry on routine day to day activities or even your physical health it's time to get help. You may be experiencing signs of mental illness.

Mental illness may be caused by:

- Internal biological factors such as genetics, physical illness, injury, or brain chemistry
- External life experiences such as stress, grief, loss, trauma or a history of abuse
- Drug and/or alcohol abuse

Barriers to seeking help may include:

- Finances
- Not knowing where to turn
- Stigma or embarrassment

***Reach Out – It's O.K***

## Help is Available For You, A Friend or Family Member

- Talk to your healthcare provider
- Check with your health insurance plan for mental health providers and make an appointment
- If you are employed, contact your EAP (Employee Assistance Program) for a referral
- Talk to a pastor or spiritual advisor
- Call 2-1-1 for other local resources

### GET IMMEDIATE HELP

If you are in crisis and need immediate support or intervention or you feel someone may be a danger to themselves or someone else, local Crisis Services are available by calling

**509-783-0500**

**If the situation is potentially  
life-threatening, call 9-1-1  
or go to a hospital emergency room**

National resources are also available - you can call or go the website of the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline (1-800-273-8255). Trained crisis workers are available to talk 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. If you prefer to text, help is available: Text HOME to 741741

# MENTAL WELLNESS

Let's Talk

Add this number to your phone contacts

**Crisis Services**  
**509-783-0500**



**Benton-Franklin  
Community  
HEALTH  
ALLIANCE**



## ✓ How Are You Doing?

Signs of depression and anxiety (the most common mental health issues) are often overwhelming, last more than a few weeks, impact a person's daily activities or relationships, and may include:

- ☐ Trouble concentrating, remembering details, and making decisions
- ☐ Replaying events in your mind over and over
- ☐ Feelings of guilt or worthlessness
- ☐ Feelings of sadness, pessimism, helplessness and hopelessness, or "empty" feelings
- ☐ Persistent anxiousness, irritability or restlessness
- ☐ Insomnia, early-morning wakefulness, or sleeping too much
- ☐ Unusual, excessive or persistent fatigue
- ☐ Loss of interest in things once pleasurable, including sex
- ☐ Overeating or loss of appetite (unintended weight gain or weight loss)
- ☐ Aches, pains, or headaches that won't go away
- ☐ Digestive problems that don't get better
- ☐ Using substances (drugs, alcohol, food) or activities (pornography, video games, watching TV) to feel better or avoid stress and decisions
- ☐ Thoughts of harming yourself or others
- ☐ Suicidal thoughts or attempts

**If you, a friend or family member are experiencing these or other persistent changes or symptoms, discuss them with a health care provider or a mental health professional.**

## Get the Facts – Educate Yourself

**FACT:** One in five Americans experience mental health challenges in their lifetime. It can affect anyone - all ages, races, income levels and religions.

**FACT:** Research shows that one in five children between the ages of 13 and 18 have or will have a mental illness.

### Mental illness is NOT:

- ✓ A choice
- ✓ A sign of personal failure
- ✓ Due to spiritual weakness

**FACT:** Depression is not something a person can will away – a person cannot just "cheer up" or "shake it off." It is not just "the blues," but a serious medical condition impacting the biological functioning of our bodies.

**FACT:** Mental illnesses are a REAL medical illness, just like heart disease or diabetes.

**FACT:** Mental health issues are not always lifelong disorders. While not all symptoms may be alleviated easily or at all, with the right recovery plan, people can live productive and healthy lives.

**FACT:** Symptoms may go away, but this does not mean you're "cured." In order to sustain your mental health, you may need to continue treatment even after you feel better. Symptoms of a mental health condition can come and go.

**FACT:** Everyone has different treatment needs. There is no one right way to recovery.

**FACT:** Positive thought, religion, and spirituality can be a powerful tool in recovery, but shouldn't be the only form of treatment. The most effective treatment is one that is planned jointly by a person's licensed health provider and themselves.

**FACT:** A mental illness does not make a person broken or odd; they just have different experiences that not everyone has to face.

**FACT:** People with mental health conditions have jobs, go to school, have families, and are active members of their communities.

**FACT:** The truth is, living with a mental health condition makes you more likely to be a victim of violence rather than a perpetrator.

**FACT:** Everyone can help those living with mental illness.

## Improve and Maintain Mental Wellness

There are steps a person can take to improve and maintain mental health, including:

Get professional help if needed

- Learn positive coping skills
- Practice positive self-talk and affirmations

Maintain good health

- Stay physically active
- Eat a healthy diet (fruits & veggies)
- Get enough sleep (7-8 hrs each night)
- Meditate or practice mindfulness

Maintain positive social connections

- Help others - volunteer

