

MENTAL HEALTH AND AAPI COMMUNITIES

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Overview

- Overview on Mental Health (MH)
- Stigma, Mental Health and AAPI Communities
- Generational Gap and Mental Health
- AAPI Clients & Youth/Students
- COVID and Mental Health
- Mental Health Treatment Overview
- Role of Libraries in Recovery
- Resources
- Q&A



Mental Health vs. Mental Illness

Mental health: refers to our emotional state, our social well-being and how we feel about ourselves and interact with others.

Mental illness: refers to a wide range of disorders that affect mood, thinking and behavior. People with mental illness often experience distress and problems functioning at work, home and in social situations.



Mental Health Stigma in AAPI Communities

NAMI found that only 23.3% of AAPI adults with a mental illness received treatment in 2019.

- Barriers:
 - Language barrier and availability of interpreters
 - Lack of culturally relevant and integrated care
 - Stigma
 - “loss of face” – notion of shame for the family
 - Mental health is a weakness
 - Sign of poor parenting
 - Desire to protect the individual’s reputation and immigration status (if applicable)
 - Religious association of mental illness in a negative way
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Questions on MH Stigma

1. It is considered a sign of weakness for Latinos to admit mental health issues. Is it a universal truth for minorities?
2. How does internalized racism play into mental health of AAPI communities?
3. How do you navigate getting culturally responsive mental health assistance when you live in a community where you are the minority and resources are limited?



AAPI Clients

- Mind-Body connection
- Mental health issues can manifest in physical symptoms
- In treatment, somatic (physical) symptoms may be the major complaint (aches, pains).
 - Insomnia and fatigue
 - Headaches, stomachaches, body aches, vague pain
- Seek medical care before mental health care
- Reluctance to divulge and process emotional stressors
 - May deny feeling sad or losing motivation



Generation Gaps and Mental Health

- Accepting, Recognizing and Accepting Mental Health care with older generation
 - Strength Focus Approach
 - Familial Benefits of therapy
- Approach and Focus
 - Education, early detection, and preventative care
- Language Barriers
 - Technology
 - Bridging the gap



AAPI Youth and Mental Health

- API youth often feel pressure to excel academically or be perfect.
- Family obligations : translating for non-English speaking parents at doctor's appointments, caring for younger siblings, taking care of school business for self or siblings. May feel pulled between attending to family needs vs studying & own social needs.
- Adding to the stress is that Asians are not likely to talk about their psychological problems. They may feel shame for being psychologically “weak” or fear bringing shame to their family.
- Cultural and language barriers
- Recent Anti-Asian sentiment



Students and Mental Health

- Understand that API families/parents may not be on board initially with suggestions for the child/family to receive MH counseling. Stigma may result in defensiveness or they may be offended. Patience is key.
- Frame things in different ways. Instead of stating that student has “issues” and therefore needs help, it may be better to state how MH services can help student in their academics, social life, etc. Emphasize how MH services can enhance student’s innate abilities/capabilities.
- If referring to MH agency, ensure there are culturally competent clinicians that can involve parents.



COVID and Mental Health

- Social isolation was a very strong predictor of depression, anxiety and stress across the board
- In addition to exacerbating MH issues/symptoms that are already present, social isolation due to the pandemic can also further strengthen the internal stigma against MH and pose more barriers to seeking help
- Psychological reactions to pandemics include maladaptive behaviours, emotional distress and defensive responses. Increase in substance use, irritability/arguments, physical aggression.

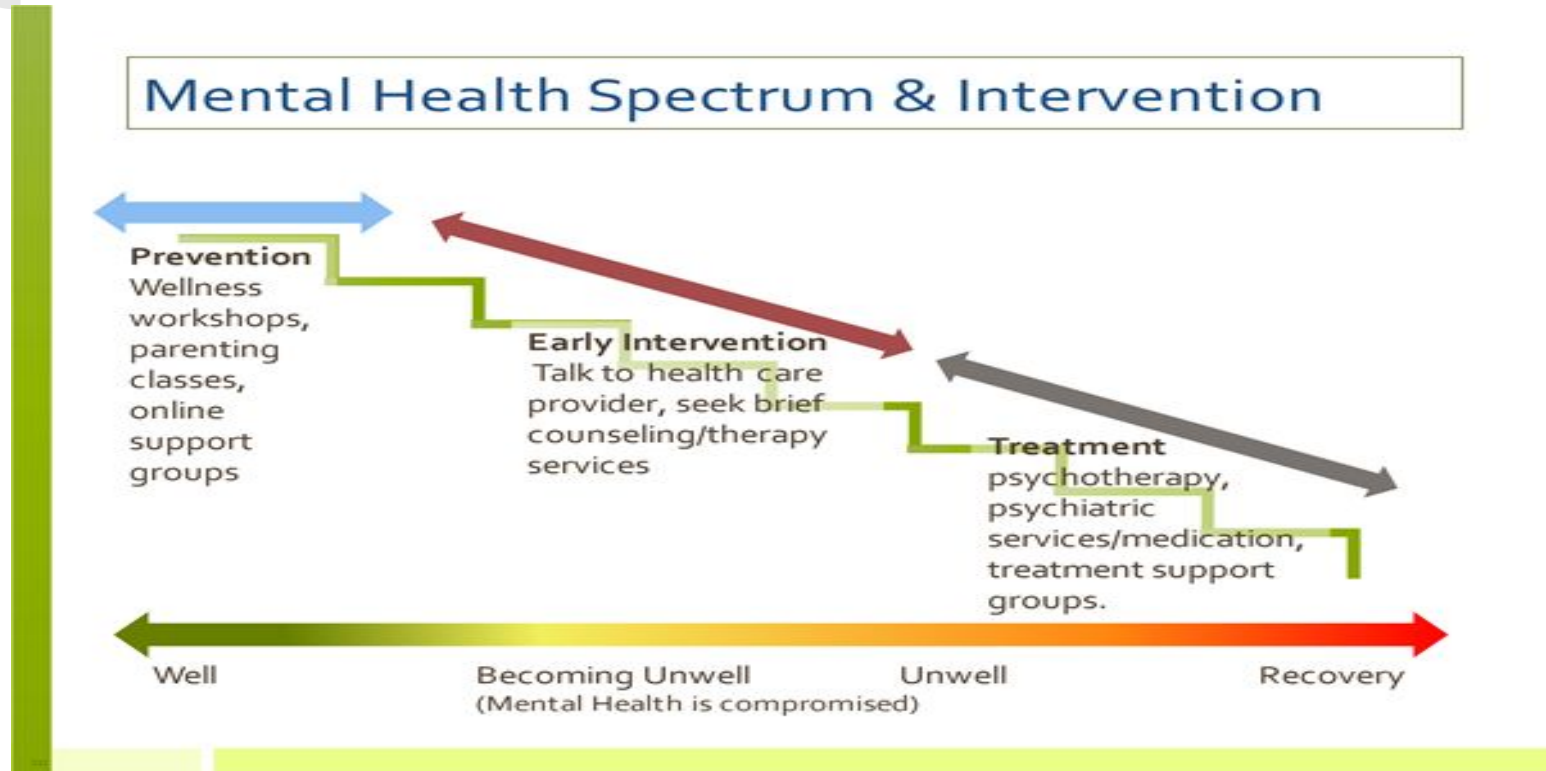


Trauma

An event, series of events, or set of circumstances that is experienced by an individual as physically or emotionally harmful or life threatening and has lasting adverse effects on the individual's functioning and mental, physical, social, emotional or spiritual well-being.

SAMHSA, 2014

Mental Health Treatment Options





Role of Libraries in MH Wellness

- Libraries can be a great place for Prevention Services
- Offer support/listening ear
- Connect with a local mental health agency
- Have flyers, handouts, brochures available in multiple languages for local mental health agencies, mental health education and other social services.
 - www.hatecrimebook.com
 - <https://www.changedirection.org/tools/>
 - <https://www.nami.org/About-Mental-Illness/Mental-Health-by-the-Numbers/Infographics-Fact-Sheets>
- Host workshops
- Have available Emergency numbers



Local & National Resources

Los Angeles County Help Line: (800) 854-7771 (available 24/7)

•**Crisis Text line**: Text **LA** to **741741** to Connect with a trained crisis counselor to receive free crisis support via text message.

•**Emotional Support Warm Line** with Trained Active Listeners – available 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. daily (option 2 when calling the Help Line for covid-19 related stress and anxiety)

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 800-273-TALK (8255)

24-hour, toll-free, confidential suicide prevention hotline available to anyone in suicidal crisis or emotional distress.

Lifeline Crisis Chat: www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org (available 24/7)

Text "START" to 741-741

National Asian American Pacific Islander Mental Health Association (NAAPIMHA)

<https://www.naapimha.org/>

Resource on Mental Health Care & Signs



Resource on Mental Health Signs





Q&A