



#GetLoud

about what mental health really is.

CMHA Mental Health Week

May 7-13, 2018

Fact Sheet for CMHA Mental Health Week: Get Loud about what mental health *really* is

Mental Health Week: May 7-13, 2018

This May 7-13 is the 67th CMHA Mental Health Week.

Since 1951, CMHA Mental Health Week has been raising awareness to end stigma associated with mental illness. In a sense, Mental Health Week has been a “mental illness awareness week.” This year, it goes even deeper. It goes to the very heart of what mental health really is.

Mental Health Week: Some history

It was 1951. A time before universal health care in this country. Long before social media. It was then that CMHA launched its first Mental Health Week. Stigma of mental illness was entrenched. Mental Health Week would go on to become an important awareness event in Canada, helping to end the discrimination, stigma and shame surrounding mental illness. CMHA is proud to be the organization that started the Mental Health Week tradition, a tradition that Canadians have embraced.

How we’re doing on reducing stigma:

We’re not there yet, but when you ask Canadians, we’re on our way to eliminating the stigma that is associated with mental illness. A recent survey found that:

- 57% of Canadians believe that the stigma associated with mental illness has been reduced compared to five years ago.
- 81% are more aware of mental health issues compared to five years ago.
- 70% believe attitudes about mental health issues have changed for the better compared to five years ago.

Mental Health Week in your community

Every year, Mental Health Week events and activities are hosted in CMHA community locations – there are more than 330 of them – from St. John’s to Prince George. These

events range from seminars and open houses to film screenings and art shows. Mental Health Week is a celebration of mental health, and an opportunity to raise awareness.

The #GetLoud campaign

Mental Health Week has become synonymous with CMHA's popular "Get Loud for Mental Health" campaign. Canadians have taken up the call, getting loud in their communities, on social media, and in the halls of power. Municipalities and provinces proclaim the Week. Even the Prime Minister "gets loud about mental health" during Mental Health Week.

A new twist on #GetLoud

This CMHA Mental Health Week, we are getting loud about what mental health *really* is.

Here's what mental health is not:

Mental health is not just the absence of mental illness.

So what is it?

Like physical health, mental health is something we all have.

Many of us know the statistic that 1 in 5 Canadians has a mental health issue every year. But that's not the whole story. Every one of us, all 5 in 5, have mental health. Whether or not you have a mental health "issue." The fact is that someone could be diagnosed with a mental illness and have great mental health, while someone without a mental illness may be struggling with theirs. Anybody can have poor mental health, and anybody can have great mental health.

Mental health is a state of being. Your self-esteem, your level of stress, even your distress. How you feel about yourself and other people. These are all part of your mental health. And mental health is key to your overall health.

We *all* have mental health and we should *all* be talking about it!

The new #GetLoud campaign: mentalhealthweek.ca

Check out this year's campaign: Get Loud about what mental health *really* is. You can find ways to get loud and get involved at mentalhealthweek.ca. You can get loud on social media using our tools. Check out the Mental Health Week site, and get loud by sending off a message to your MP: they need to hear about what mental health really is. You will also find ways to tune into your mental health, and learn how to keep it strong.

Some facts about mental health:

- 1 in 5 (or 20% of) Canadians experience a mental illness in any given year.ⁱⁱ

- 5 in 5 Canadians have a state of mental health.

Many Canadians who are not diagnosed with a mental illness experience poor mental health.

- In a 2016 surveyⁱⁱⁱ, almost 90% of Canadian post-secondary students, from across 41 campuses, reported feeling overwhelmed in the past year.
- In the same survey^{iv}, a majority of students said they had felt very lonely or very sad in the past year.
- According to the Government of Canada^v, 46% of Canadian workers say they feel at least a bit of stress on a daily basis.

How to keep your mental health strong:

Check out our Mental Health Week tips at mentalhealthweek.ca, because you can keep your mental health strong, and you can get it back.

What is CMHA?

This year, CMHA celebrates its 100th anniversary. Today, with a presence in more than 330 communities across every province, CMHA provides advocacy and resources to help prevent mental health problems and illnesses, support recovery and resilience, and enable all Canadians to flourish and thrive. CMHA actively supports mental health of Canadians throughout the year, in all aspects of daily life – at work, at school, on campus, at home and at play.

i Bell Canada (2015). Bell Let's Talk: The first 5 years (2010-2015). Retrieved from <http://letstalk.bell.ca/letstalkprogressreport>

ii Mental Health Commission of Canada (2013). Making the case for investing in mental health in Canada. <https://www.mentalhealthcommission.ca/sites/default/files/2017-03/Making%20the%20Case%20for%20Investing%20in%20Mental%20Health%20in%20Canada.pdf>

iii American College Health Association. American College Health Association-National College Health Assessment II: *Canadian Reference Group Data Report* Spring 2016. Hanover, MD: American College Health Association; 2016. <http://www.acha-ncha.org/docs/NCHA-II%20SPRING%202016%20CANADIAN%20REFERENCE%20GROUP%20DATA%20REPORT.pdf>

iv Canadian Reference Group Data Report (2016).

v Government of Canada (2016). *Psychological Health in the Workplace*. Retrieved from: <https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/services/health-safety/reports/psychological-health.html>