time to change
let's end mental health discrimination

Stigma and Mental Illness
What is stigma?

Write a definition down in your books of:

- Stigma
- Discrimination
A definition of **stigma**: The experience of shame or disgrace that sets people apart and identifies them as being different or undesirable.

A definition of **discrimination**: Less favourable treatment of people, which might include being less able to access opportunities and resources.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YEacp1aHq0U
How many young people will experience a mental health problem in any one year?

A: 1 in 10 young people
B: 1 in 100 young people
C: 1 in 1000 young people
What are the most common mental health problems experienced by young people?

A: Schizophrenia
B: Depression and Anxiety
C: Anorexia
What is mental health?
Definition of mental health

“The capacity to live a full, productive life as well as the flexibility to deal with its ups and downs.

In children and young people it is especially about the capacity to learn, enjoy friendships, to meet challenges, to develop talents and capabilities.”

Source: Young Minds 1999
True or False?

1. Mental health problems make you weaker
2. You can recover from a mental health problem
3. I know someone with a mental health problem
4. There are ways you can help yourself feel better if you feel bad
How many people are affected by mental illness in Australia?

Mental illness is common in Australia with one in five Australians experiencing a mental illness within a 12-month period. Almost half (45%) of Australians aged 16-85 years will experience a mental illness at some stage in their lives. Prevalence of mental illness decreases with age. Prevalence (including substance use disorder) is greatest among 18-24 year olds (26%) while prevalence among people 75 years and over is 5.9%. Mental disorders are the third leading cause of disability burden in Australia, accounting for an estimated 27% of the total years lost due to disability. Major depression accounts for more days lost to illness than almost any other physical or mental disorder.
Different types of mental health problems

- **Depression** – lasting low mood, hopelessness, loss of energy
- **Anxiety disorders** – lasting sense of worry, panic, dread which is affecting someone’s ability to live their life as usual
- **Eating disorders** – may have an unrealistic view of their body shape and weight. Not just about dieting – can be related to low self esteem or coping with very difficult emotions or situations.
- **Self harm** – often a way of coping with emotional difficulties.
- **Psychosis** – change of reality. Sometimes hearing voices and seeing things that others don’t see or hear. May feel paranoid.
About 14% of Australians will be affected by anxiety disorders in a 12-month period. About 4% of people will experience depression in a 12-month period, and 20% will be affected in their lifetime. Postnatal depression affects between 10 to 20% of all new mothers to some degree. 3% of Australians are affected by psychotic illness such as schizophrenia and bipolar mood disorder at some point in their life. About one in 100 Australians will experience schizophrenia. Approximately 2% of Australians will experience some type of eating disorder at some stage in their life. Most of those affected (90%) are women. Between 2 and 5% of the population are affected by Borderline Personality Disorder at some stage of their lives, with women three times more likely to be diagnosed with this disorder than men.
Biological Risk Factors

Understand possible **biological risk factors**. There is no single cause for mental illness, but there are a variety of biological factors that are known to alter brain chemistry and cause hormone imbalances.

- **Genetic makeup.** Some mental illnesses, such as schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, and depression, are strongly linked to genetics. If anyone else in your family has been diagnosed with mental illness, you may be more vulnerable to developing one due simply to your genetic makeup.

- **Physiological damage.** Injuries such as severe head trauma, or exposure to viruses, bacteria, or toxins during fetal development, can lead to mental illness. Abuse of illegal drugs and/or alcohol can also cause or worsen mental illness.

- **Chronic medical conditions.** Chronic medical conditions, such as cancer and other long-term severe illnesses, can elevate your risk for developing mental illnesses such as anxiety and depression.
Understand possible environmental risk factors.

**Difficult life experiences.**
Highly emotional or distressing situations in life can trigger mental illness in a person. This can be concentrated in a moment, such as the loss of a loved one, or drawn out, such as a history of sexual, physical, or emotional abuse. Experience in combat or as an emergency responder can also trigger mental illness.

**Stress.**
Stress can worsen existing mental illness and can also cause mental illnesses such as depression or anxiety. Family conflicts, financial difficulties, and work concerns can all be sources of stress.

**Loneliness.**
Not having a strong support network, having few friends, and lacking healthy relationships can trigger or worsen mental illness.
Other Factors

- Gender
- Location (rural, remote, metropolitan)
- Culture
- Beliefs
Signs and Symptoms

Recognize mental warning signs and symptoms. Some mental illnesses are present from birth, but others develop over time or appear quite suddenly. The following are symptoms that can be warning signs of mental illnesses:

- Feelings of sadness or irritability
- Feelings of confusion or disorientation
- Feelings of apathy or loss of interest
- Excessive worrying and anger/hostility/violence
- Feeling afraid/paranoia
- Trouble coping with emotions
- Difficulty concentrating
- Difficulty handling responsibilities
- Seclusion or social withdrawal
- Sleeping problems
- Delusions and/or hallucinations
- Ideas that are strange, grandiose, or detached from reality
- Alcohol or drug abuse
- Significant changes in eating habits or sex drive
- Suicidal thoughts or plans
Why do people develop mental health problems

- Some people feel it is a chemical imbalance in the brain
- Some feel it is all about trauma (everyone has a personal story of trauma, abuse, grief, bullying, separation loss, etc)
- Some feel it is about lack of money or privilege
- There are a lot of views but it is important that someone’s personal view is listened to and respected
- There is no one answer
How can we prevent this?
The Stand Up Kid
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