

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF MENTAL ILLNESS AMONG YOUTHS

Lack of self-awareness and ability to recognize changes in one's own feelings, behaviors, and personality

Excessive sadness or hopelessness

Problems concentrating, learning, and staying still

Confused thinking

Suicidal thoughts

Out-of-control or severe risk-taking behaviors

Extreme mood changes, including uncontrollable "highs" and "low" periods

Prolonged and intensified feelings of anger and irritability

Inability to carry out regular, daily activities due to their mental health

Excessive tiredness, fatigue, or low energy

Misuse of substances, including drugs and/or alcohol

Significant weight loss or weight gain

Withdrawal from friends, family, and social activities

Loss of interest in once-loved activities and hobbies



Most mental illnesses develop between adolescence and young adulthood. According to the National Alliance on Mental Illness, 75 percent of mental health disorders begin by age 24. Recognizing symptoms and starting treatment early is very important.



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CAUSES OF MENTAL ILLNESS AMONG YOUTHS

History of trauma, abuse, or neglect, especially during childhood

An early loss of a significant loved one, such as a parent

Prenatal exposure to drugs and alcohol, viruses, or toxic chemicals

Severe psychological trauma as a child, such as emotional, physical, or sexual abuse

Substance abuse (drugs and/or alcohol)

Stressful life situations, such as financial problems, divorce, or a death

History of a previous mental illness

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+256393252849
for more info
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Substance abuse in the family and/or at a young age

Certain infections, which have been linked to brain damage and mental illness

Having few friends or few healthy relationships, leading to loneliness and isolation

Unhealthy habits, like poor nutrition or lack of sleep

Imbalance of natural chemicals in the brain

Disruption in early fetal brain development

Negative feelings like low self-esteem, inadequacy, anger, loneliness, and anxiety

Brain damage caused by serious injury or trauma

A chronic medical condition, such as diabetes or cancer





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SELF-HELP TIPS FOR IMPROVING MENTAL HEALTH



Doing something enjoyable.



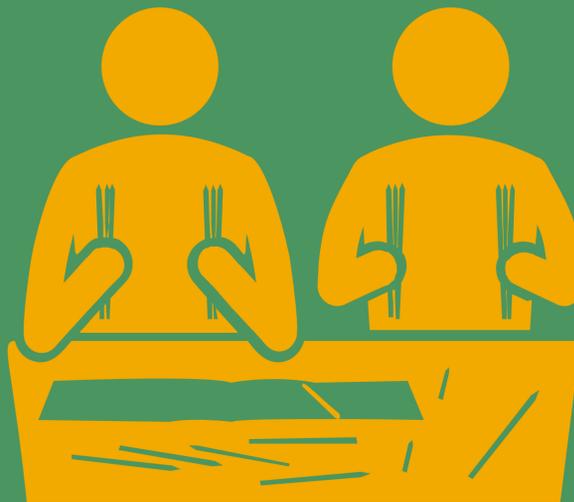
Exercising regularly



Speaking regularly with trusted friends and family



Eating healthy food



Engaging in creative activities, for singing, dancing or song writing



Practising relaxation techniques



Setting small goals



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