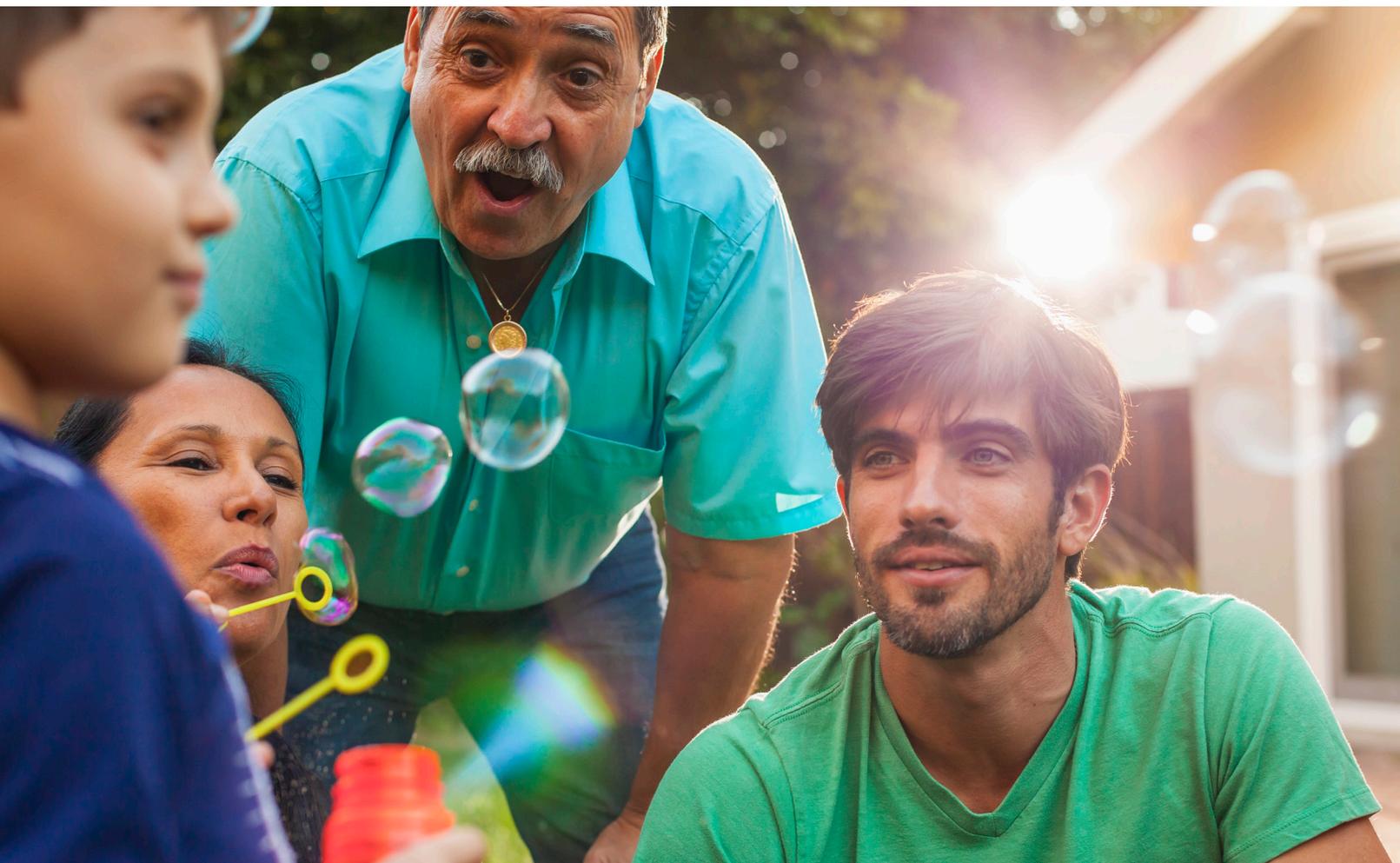




**JOIN THE VOICES FOR RECOVERY:
OUR FAMILIES, OUR STORIES, OUR RECOVERY!**



**“WHAT I KNOW IS THIS –
I HAD TO FIND SOMETHING
BEAUTIFUL IN THIS LIFE &
HANG ON FOR ALL I WAS
WORTH.”**

– BARBARA JEAN

Mental and/or substance use disorders affect millions of Americans and directly touch the lives of individuals, family members, neighbors, and colleagues. Families often deal with the complex dynamics of supporting a loved one in recovery while at the same time learning how to take care of their own well-being. Given the widespread impact and societal cost of these behavioral health conditions, it's important for communities to make prevention, treatment, and recovery support services available and accessible for all who need them.

Every September, the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) (www.samhsa.gov), within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) (www.hhs.gov), sponsors **National Recovery Month (Recovery Month)** to increase awareness of behavioral health conditions. This celebration promotes the message that behavioral health is essential to overall health, prevention works, treatment is effective, and people can and do recover from mental and/or substance use disorders.

FOLLOW RECOVERY MONTH ON SOCIAL MEDIA

FACEBOOK WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/RECOVERYMONTH

YOUTUBE WWW.YOUTUBE.COM/RECOVERYMONTH

TWITTER WWW.TWITTER.COM/RECOVERYMONTH

The 2016 **Recovery Month** theme, “*Join the Voices for Recovery: Our Families, Our Stories, Our Recovery!*” highlights the importance of families, communities, and individuals sharing stories of recovery to encourage others to make a personal connection with the recovery movement. **Recovery Month** continues to celebrate and support communities, families, and individuals through outreach efforts, materials, and cross-promotion.

The **Recovery Month** website (www.recoverymonth.gov) provides printable materials, web, television, audio, and social media resources to help communities encourage individuals to seek treatment and recovery services.

- Share your recovery story and learn from others (www.recoverymonth.gov/personal-stories)
- Find and post recovery events in the community (www.recoverymonth.gov/events)
- Watch the *Road to Recovery* television series (www.recoverymonth.gov/road-to-recovery)
- Download web banners and flyers to promote **Recovery Month** (www.recoverymonth.gov/promote/banners-logos-flyers)

WHY SUPPORTING RECOVERY IS IMPORTANT

The prevalence of mental and/or substance use disorders is high. Among adults aged 18 or older, 43.6 million (18.1 percent of adults) had any mental illness in the past year.¹ Approximately 21.5 million people age 12 or older were classified with a substance use disorder in 2014.² In spite of their high prevalence, most Americans believe that recovery from a mental illness³ or a substance use disorder is possible.⁴ For many people, recovery:⁵

- Emerges from hope, which is fostered by friends, families, mentors, providers, colleagues, and others who have experienced recovery themselves;

- Occurs via many pathways, which may include professional clinical treatment, use of medications, support from families and in schools, services through homeless programs, faith-based approaches, peer support, and other approaches;
- Is holistic—meaning that recovery encompasses a person’s whole life including mind, body, spirit, and community;
- Is supported by relationships with peers and allies, and on social networks;
- Is culturally based and influenced;
- Is supported by addressing trauma, including physical or sexual abuse, neglect, domestic violence, war, disaster, or profound loss;
- Is inclusive of positive youth development theories and concepts;
- Involves individual, family, and community strengths and responsibilities; and
- Is fostered by respect.

These principles of recovery can help people establish a blueprint for their own journey. However, it’s important for people living with these conditions to become aware that they are not alone in their efforts. The right support system can help ensure that those in need are addressing the four key aspects of recovery:⁶

- **Health:** The person learns to overcome or manage his or her condition(s) or symptom(s)—and make informed, healthy choices that support physical and emotional well-being;
- **Home:** It is also important to have a stable and safe place to live;



- **Purpose:** A person in recovery participates in meaningful daily activities, such as a job, school, volunteer opportunities, family caretaking, or creative endeavors, and has the independence, income, and resources to participate in society; and
- **Community:** Relationships and social networks should provide support, friendship, love, and hope.

Anyone can be affected by mental and/or substance use disorders. This year's **Recovery Month** observance focuses on ways the recovery community can connect with four different audiences.

- **Military, veterans, and military families:** Members of the military value strength, resilience, and selfless service as an essential part of their military culture.⁷ However, military members are often placed in demanding environments, such as deployment and combat, which increases their chances of developing mental and/or substance use disorders. Service members may have a difficult time adjusting to life following deployment. Military families may face deployment-related stressors, such as family reunification and reintegration; the trauma of welcoming home a family member who returns with a combat injury or illness; or the ultimate tragedy of losing a family member. According to the 2011 Department of Defense Health Related Behaviors Survey of Active Duty Military Personnel, 3.9 percent of all military personnel reported suicidal ideation (i.e., suicidal thoughts) in the past year, and 0.5 percent reported a suicide attempt in that period. In addition, 25.6 percent of military personnel perceived the need for mental health counseling in the past year. SAMHSA educates individuals and communities about the potential impact of these stressors on military members and their families' behavioral health.
- **Lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) community:** As highlighted in SAMHSA's *Leading Change 2.0* report, members of the LGBT community are more likely to develop mental and/or substance use disorders. A number of factors—such as social-isolation, harassment, and discrimination—can increase the strain of everyday life for LGBT individuals and can increase the likelihood of using drugs and alcohol in order to cope with these issues. LGBT individuals are also at a greater risk for depression and suicide. In the largest national survey of transgender adults to date, the *National Transgender Discrimination Survey*, 41 percent of respondents reported having attempted suicide.⁸ It's crucial to increase awareness among the general public regarding the unique behavioral health disparities specific to the LGBT community, as well as strategies to promote health equity.
- **Victims of trauma:** Trauma is experienced by many American adults, youth, and children, and is especially common in the lives of people with mental and/or substance use disorders. Research has shown that traumatic experiences—such as verbal abuse, sexual abuse, rape, and domestic violence—are associated with both behavioral health and chronic physical health conditions, especially when people experience multiple traumatic events during childhood.⁹ Not only are people who have experienced trauma at increased risk for developing a substance use disorder, they may also be at higher risk for not seeking help; disclosing or recognizing their disorder may mean disclosing or recognizing the painful trauma in their past. According to the Adverse Childhood Events (ACEs) study, 54 percent of depression in women can be attributed to childhood abuse¹⁰ and two-thirds of all suicide attempts are attributed to ACEs.¹¹



TWO-THIRDS OF AMERICANS BELIEVE THAT TREATMENT AND SUPPORT CAN HELP PEOPLE WITH MENTAL ILLNESSES LEAD NORMAL LIVES.

National Mental Health Anti-Stigma Campaign. What a Difference a Friend Makes. The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. Retrieved January 29, 2015, from <https://store.samhsa.gov/shin/content/SMA07-4257/SMA07-4257.pdf>, p. 2.

- **Family members of those with mental and/or substance use disorders:** Family members are often the first to recognize that a loved one is experiencing a mental and/or substance use disorder. Research shows that family support plays a major role in helping to prevent mental and/or substance use disorders, identifying when someone has a problem,¹² and connecting people with the treatment resources and services they need to begin and stay on their recovery journey. Actively involved family members can also promote positive behavioral health because family members monitor each other's behavior, take responsibility for each other's well-being, and can offer or recommend assistance and support.¹³

Detailed information on the following groups and audience-specific resource links can be found in their respective "Targeted Outreach" sections in this toolkit.

SAMHSA RESOURCES

- **SAMHSA's Website** (www.samhsa.gov/): Provides numerous resources and helpful information related to mental health and substance use issues.
- **SAMHSA's Find Help Webpage** (www.samhsa.gov/find-help/): Provides various links and numbers to mental and/or substance use disorder treatment and recovery services locators.
- **SAMHSA's National Helpline, 1-800-662-HELP (4357) – or 1-800-487-4889 (TDD)** (www.samhsa.gov/find-help/national-helpline/): Provides 24-hour, free, and confidential treatment referral and information about mental and/or substance use disorders, prevention, treatment, and recovery in English and Spanish.
- **National Suicide Prevention Lifeline, 1-800-273-TALK (8255)** (www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org/): Provides a free, 24-hour helpline available to anyone in suicidal crisis or emotional distress.

- **SAMHSA's Behavioral Health Treatments and Services Webpage** (www.samhsa.gov/treatment/): Provides information on common mental illness and substance use disorders and how SAMHSA helps people access treatments and services.
- **SAMHSA's Homelessness Resource Center** (homeless.samhsa.gov/): Provides resources about homelessness, mental illness, substance use, co-occurring disorders, and traumatic stress.
- **SAMHSA's Recovery and Recovery Support Page** (www.samhsa.gov/recovery/): Provides information on how recovery-oriented care and recovery support systems help people with mental and/or substance use disorders manage their conditions.
- **SAMHSA's Veterans and Military Families Webpage** (www.samhsa.gov/veterans-military-families/): Offers information about SAMHSA's efforts to ensure that American service men and women and their families, can access behavioral health treatment and services.
- **SAMHSA's Wellness Page** (www.samhsa.gov/wellness-initiative/): Promotes the improved wellness of people with mental and/or substance use disorders by engaging, educating, and training providers, consumers, and policy makers.

This list is not exhaustive of all available resources. Inclusion of websites and resources in this document and on the **Recovery Month** website does not constitute official endorsement by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services or the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration.

¹ Center for Behavioral Health Statistics and Quality, *Behavioral Health Trends in the United States: Results from the 2014 National Survey on Drug Use and Health*, NSDUH Series H-50, HHS Publication No. (SMA) 15-4927. Rockville, MD: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, 2015, p. 1.

² Center for Behavioral Health Statistics and Quality, *Behavioral Health Trends in the United States: Results from the 2014 National Survey on Drug Use and Health*, NSDUH Series H-50, HHS Publication No. (SMA) 15-4927. Rockville, MD: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, 2015, p. 2

³ U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. (2006). National Mental Health Anti-Stigma Campaign: What a Difference a Friend Makes (SMA07-4257), p. 2. Retrieved from store.samhsa.gov/shin/content/SMA07-4257/SMA07-4257.pdf.

⁴ Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. (2008). Summary report CARAVAN® survey for SAMHSA on addictions and recovery. Rockville, MD: Office of Communications, SAMHSA.

⁵ SAMHSA Blog. (2012). SAMHSA's *Working Definition of Recovery* Updated. Retrieved from blog.samhsa.gov/2012/03/23/definition-of-recovery-updated/.

⁶ SAMHSA Blog. (2012). SAMHSA's *Working Definition of Recovery* Updated. Retrieved from blog.samhsa.gov/2012/03/23/definition-of-recovery-updated/.

⁷ U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. Community Provider Toolkit: Serving Veterans through Partnerships. Retrieved from: www.mentalhealth.va.gov/communityproviders/military_culture.asp#sthash.hSdl4A9a.ALBBGphi.dpbs.

⁸ Jaime M. Grant, Ph.D., Lisa A. Mottet, J.D., and Justin Tanis, D. Min. With Jody L. Herman, Ph.D., Jack Harrison, and Mara Keisling (2010), National Transgender Discrimination Survey Report on Health and Health Care, Findings of a Study by the National Center for Transgender Equality and the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force.

⁹ Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, Trauma and Violence. Retrieved from www.samhsa.gov/trauma-violence.

¹⁰ Chapman DP, Anda RF, Felitti VJ, Dube SR, Edwards VJ, Whitfield CL. Adverse childhood experiences and the risk of depressive disorders in adulthood. *Journal of Affective Disorders* 2004;82:217-225.

¹¹ Dube SR, Anda RF, Felitti VJ, Chapman D, Williamson DF, Giles WH. Childhood abuse, household dysfunction and the risk of attempted suicide throughout the life span: Findings from Adverse Childhood Experiences Study. *JAMA* 2001;286:3089-3096.

¹² Velleman, R. D. B., Templeton, L. J. and Copello, A. G. (2005), The role of the family in preventing and intervening with substance use and misuse: a comprehensive review of family interventions, with a focus on young people. *Drug and Alcohol Review*, 24: 93-109. doi: 10.1080/09595230500167478.

¹³ Center for Substance Abuse Treatment. Substance Abuse Treatment and Family Therapy. Rockville (MD): Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (US); 2004. (Treatment Improvement Protocol (TIP) Series, No. 39.) Chapter 1: Substance Abuse Treatment and Family Therapy. Available from: www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK64269/.