Mental Health in America

Some telling statistics about our nation's state of well-being

March 1, 2011 By David Evans

- More than a quarter of Americans will suffer from a psychological or substance abuse disorder this year.
- About 1 in 4 Americans will have a diagnosable mental illness in his or her lifetime.
- More than 5 percent of Americans have a psychological disorder that interferes with daily functioning, and 2.6 percent have a severe and persistent psychological disorder.
- Rates of mental illness are about the same for adults as for children and teens.
- Women are more likely than men to be diagnosed with depression, but men are more likely to attempt suicide.
- Fewer than half of those who need treatment for mental illness actually get the help, and most treatment received does not meet expert guidelines.
- Mental disorders lead to nearly $200 billion in lost wages each year in the United States, both from unemployment and the loss of other employment opportunities and career advancement.
- The aggregate cost of mental disorders in the 1990s was about 2.5 percent of the U.S. gross domestic product.
- Depression and other psychological disorders increase the likelihood of other serious medical conditions including heart disease.
- Left untreated, depression is as costly to the U.S. economy as heart disease.
- Mental health issues are the second leading cause of U.S. workplace absenteeism.
- Sales of anti-psychotic drugs for psychological issues topped $25 billion in 2008.
- Approximately 170 million antidepressant prescriptions were filled in 2005.

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