PSA Campaign for Mental Health Problems and Awareness

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According to a national survey by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) there are an estimated 9.8 million adults aged 18 or older living with serious mental illness. Among adults, the prevalence of serious mental illness is highest in the 18 to 25 age group, yet this age group is also the least likely to receive services or counseling for mental health issues.

To help address this problem SAMHSA and The Advertising Council launched a new series of national public service announcements (PSAs) designed to encourage, educate and inspire young adults (18-25 years old) to step up and support friends and family they know are experiencing a mental health problem.

The importance of this effort is underscored by the new 2009 HealthStyles Survey, a collaborative effort by SAMHSA and Porter Novelli, which reveals that almost three-quarters (72 percent) of young adults between the ages of 18 and 24 believe that a person with mental illness would improve if given treatment and support. The study, however also shows that far fewer young adults (33 percent) believe that a person can eventually recover. Other findings include:

* Less than half (40 percent) of Americans believe a person with mental illness can be as successful at work as others.

* While almost two-thirds (65 percent) of young adults who know someone with a mental illness believe that treatment can help people with mental illnesses lead normal lives, only one in five (22 percent) young adults believes that people are generally caring and sympathetic to people with mental illness.

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