

# Say It Out Loud

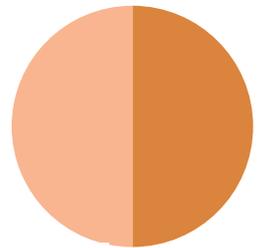
## Mental Health Conditions: The Facts

Mental health conditions are all around us and among us. By knowing more about them, we can encourage each other to speak up and build better lives.



One in five teens lives with a mental health condition.

50% of mental health conditions emerge by age 14 and 75% by age 24.



A high percentage of high school students living with mental health conditions drop out of school.

Suicide is the third leading cause of death for youth and young adults.

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Less than half of youth with mental health conditions receive treatment.

For more information on mental health conditions, visit [www.nami.org](http://www.nami.org).

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## The 10 Common Warning Signs of a Mental Health Condition

If you see these warning signs in yourself or a friend, take them seriously. Share your concerns with someone you trust and ask how you can help. Support is available and you are not alone.

- Feeling very sad or withdrawn for more than 2 weeks (e.g., crying regularly, feeling fatigued, feeling unmotivated)
- Seriously trying to harm or kill oneself or making plans to do so
- Severe out-of-control, risk-taking behaviors that can cause harm to self or others
- Sudden overwhelming fear for no reason, sometimes with a racing heart, physical discomfort or fast breathing
- Not eating, throwing up or using laxatives to lose weight; significant weight loss or weight gain
- Severe mood swings that cause problems in relationships
- Repeated use of drugs or alcohol
- Drastic changes in behavior, personality or sleeping habits (e.g. waking up early and acting agitated)
- Extreme difficulty in concentrating or staying still that puts a person in physical danger or causes school failure
- Intense worries or fears that get in the way of daily activities like hanging out with friends or going to classes

Citation: Jensen, Peter, et. al. (October 24, 2011). *Overlooked and Underserved: 'Action Signs' for Identifying Children with Unmet Mental Health Needs*. [Pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/early/2011/10/21/peds.2009-0367](http://Pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/early/2011/10/21/peds.2009-0367). August 14, 2014.

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## Taking it to the Next Level

Inspired by what you've heard today? Here are some easy ways to raise awareness that can make a huge difference for you and those around you.

Raise awareness on your own or with friends:

- Have a conversation with friends and family about the 10 common warning signs of mental health conditions.
- If you hear someone joking or making fun of mental illness, tell them it's not okay.
- Start a book or film club with your friends that focuses on



stories about mental health conditions. Try *Homeroom Diaries* by James Patterson.

Raise awareness in your school or community:

- Start a social media campaign by posting positive mental health messages to Twitter and Instagram. Use #sayitoutloud!
- Hang posters and positive mental health signs around your school and community spaces to let others know that they are not alone.
- Work with a NAMI Affiliate or NAMI State Organization to bring NAMI Ending the Silence to your school or community organization to inform others about mental health.
- Join a NAMI Walk in your community to show your support and that mental health matters.



For more information about raising awareness and getting involved, visit [www.nami.org](http://www.nami.org).

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## Early Warning Signs of Psychosis

If you see these warning signs in yourself or a friend, take action. Share your concerns with a trusted adult. Support is available and you are not alone. Early action helps to keep lives on track.

- Seeing, hearing or believing things that are not real (e.g. hearing voices or seeing someone who is not really there)
- Suspiciousness or extreme uneasiness with others
- Believing that external forces are controlling your thoughts, feelings or behavior
- Thinking you have special powers or are on a special mission from a higher power
- Strong and inappropriate emotions or having no emotions at all
- Spending much more time alone, a lack of interest in activities you previously enjoyed
- A significant and sudden decline in caring for yourself
- Difficulty thinking clearly, expressing yourself or concentrating

Psychosis may occur because of a mental or other physical illness, substance use, trauma or extreme stress. If you experience any of these signs, talk with a trusted adult. There is tremendous promise in addressing psychosis early. For more information on psychosis and mental health conditions, visit [www.nami.org](http://www.nami.org).