

MENTAL HEALTH

SEPARATING MYTH FROM FACT

It's sometimes difficult to know the truth about mental health because there are so many myths about mental health disorders. Here are some common myths with some facts that prove them wrong.

MYTH Kids don't get mental health disorders.

FACT One in five children has a diagnosable mental health disorder. Just as some children have physical problems that affect their body like asthma or diabetes, some children have mental health disorders that affect their mind like AD/HD, depression, and anxiety.

MYTH Someone who sad, worried, or angry has a mental health disorder.

FACT All of these feelings are typical and a part of being human. But being angry *all the time*, constant worrying, or being sad for *weeks or months* may be a warning sign of a mental health disorder.

MYTH Some kids just won't pay attention.

FACT Some kids who have trouble paying attention may have a mental health disorder such as AD/HD (attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder). AD/HD makes it very difficult to pay attention. AD/HD affects 3 to 5 percent of school-age children.

MYTH People with mental health disorders aren't smart.

FACT Abraham Lincoln, the 16th President of the United States, did amazing things even though he lived with a mental health disorder called depression. Depression is an intense sadness that won't go away for weeks or months. 3 to 6 million U.S. kids have depression.

MYTH All people with mental health disorders are locked away in a "psych ward."

FACT Most people who receive the right treatment can lead happy, successful lives.

MYTH People with mental health disorders never succeed.

FACT Composer Ludwig van Beethoven, scientist Isaac Newton, and artist Michelangelo all accomplished great things even though they each struggled with a mental health disorder.

Have an idea for a story, poem, painting, drawing, poster, or photograph that has to do with mental health? **Open•Up**, a literary and visual art magazine created by and for youth ages 5-21, is now accepting submissions! Go to www.macmh.org for submission guidelines.



Minnesota Association for Children's Mental Health • www.macmh.org