



Template Newsletter #2

Let's stop the silence surrounding mental illnesses

Mental illnesses are as common as white-colored cars and more common than being left-handed. Despite being one of the most common illnesses, there is still stigma attached to mental illnesses and many people struggle with talking openly about them.

"We are taught as children about mental illnesses like colds, broken bones or surgeries, but mental illnesses aren't discussed. Mental illnesses should be discussed like diabetes. It needs to be seen as a 'normal illness.'" ~ IMPACT Survey Respondent, 2018

Mental illnesses are just like a physical illness, and just as important. This is why we are part of this effort to stop the silence and the stigma of mental illnesses. This effort is part of a campaign called "Make It OK," which is all about reducing stigma by increasing understanding, changing negative perceptions and learning to talk openly and compassionately about this issue, so that people with a mental illness get the support and treatment they deserve.

It's OK to have a mental illness – many of us do

Nearly one in five Americans live with a mental illness. Unfortunately, people may delay seeking treatment or support because of stigma. The sooner people get treatment, the greater their chances of recovery.

It's OK because it is a medical condition – not a character flaw

Mental illnesses are medical conditions, just like cancer and diabetes. They cannot be overcome through "will power" or by just "pulling yourself up by your boot straps." They are not related to a person's character or intelligence.

It's OK because it's a treatable health condition – life can get better

A combination of treatment and support can be a part of an individualized treatment plan. Most mental illnesses can be treated effectively with medication, therapy, nutrition, physical activity and social support. Recovery is possible.

Together, we can Make It OK

Together, we can work to start talking more openly about mental illnesses and help erase the stigma. We encourage you to visit makeitok.org to find tools and resources to help learn more about mental illnesses, tips for "what to say" and "what not to say" and more.

If you haven't already, we encourage you to [take the pledge to Make It OK](#). By signing this pledge, you're taking a stand against mental illness stigma. Pass it on. Print it out. Tape it up. It can serve as a reminder to start more conversations and stop the stigma. Together, we can Make It OK.