

YOUNG & PEOPLE MENTAL HEALTH

SITUATION

1/5

ONE IN FIVE ADOLESCENTS IN EUROPE MAY EXPERIENCE AT LEAST ONE PSYCHOLOGICAL PROBLEM IN ANY GIVEN YEAR

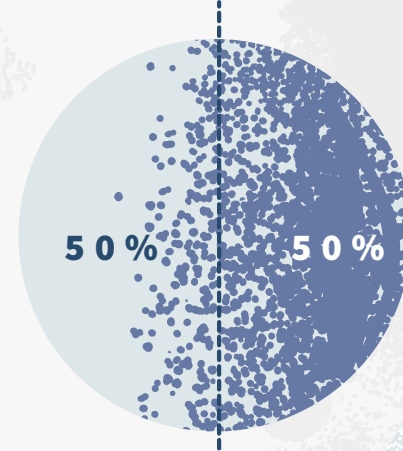


2ND

SUICIDE IS THE SECOND LEADING CAUSE OF DEATH IN 15-29 YEAR OLDS

50%

ABOUT HALF OF THE MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEMS AFFECTING INDIVIDUALS IN ADULTHOOD HAVE THEIR ONSET DURING ADOLESCENCE



YOUNG PEOPLE IN VULNERABLE SITUATIONS

EXPERIENCING UNEMPLOYMENT POVERTY SOCIAL EXCLUSION

ARE MORE LIKELY TO HAVE MENTAL ILL-HEALTH.

ALMOST ONE THIRD OF 16-29-YEAR OLDS IN EUROPE ARE AT RISK OF POVERTY OR SOCIAL EXCLUSION.



YOUNG PEOPLE ARE LESS LIKELY TO SEEK HELP

DUE TO STIGMA, LACK OF INFORMATION, LACK OF AWARENESS ABOUT MENTAL HEALTH AND DIFFICULTIES IN ACCESSING SERVICES SUCH AS HIGH COSTS, LONG WAITING TIMES OR DISTANCE TO SERVICES



THE GOOD NEWS IS THAT THERE IS POSSIBILITY OF PREVENTION OR RECOVERY FROM MENTAL ILL-HEALTH.

EVERYONE CAN LIVE WITH & MANAGE MENTAL ILL HEALTH, WHILE HAVING CONTROL OVER THEIR LIVES, IF THEY CAN ACCESS A RANGE OF SERVICES AND INFORMATION



RISK FACTORS

HIGH PERFORMANCE STANDARDS AND EXPECTATIONS

- Emphasis on performance and competition in education, leading to a high-pressure environment
- Pressure to conform with peers, exploration of sexual identity and pre-defined gender norms
- The transition from childhood to adulthood and from reliance on adults to independence
- High expectations of career success, particularly in the current economic climate
- Sense of failure when not meeting the standards set by others and themselves
- Instagram culture where success is seen as approval from as many people as possible and popularity is a key indicator of success

NEGATIVE MEDIA INFLUENCE

- Disparity between young people's lived reality and their perceptions or aspirations for the future
- Cyberbullying and negative exposure to hate speech and unfiltered prejudice (e.g. pill-shaming)
- Unobtainable images of perfect lives and standards of happiness are standard fare on social media platforms
- The 'glamourisation' of mental health problems, encouraging self-loathing, spreading misperceptions, encouraging the exploitation of vulnerable people, and preventing individuals from seeking support
- Widely available and accessible pornography, leading to addictions and poor sexual education as well as endorsement of rape culture

SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL RISK FACTORS

- Socio-economic conditions such as social exclusion, poverty and unemployment
- Quality of young people's home life, including parent behaviour and relationships, family mental health, and their relationships with peers
- Violence and bullying at home or in school
- Major life events (e.g. serious illness, bereavement, traumatic experiences)
- Concerns over their own security and future (e.g. climate change, costs of education/housing)

BARRIERS TOWARDS SEEKING HELP

- Lack of actual and perceived self-stigmatisation towards mental health problems
- Lack of understanding of mental health across diverse communities
- Low emotional competence to express feelings or linguistic barriers
- Negative attitudes towards seeking help (fear of hypochondria, perceived weakness or external judgement) or the belief that problems should be solved on their own

WHAT CAN BE DONE TO AVOID THESE RISKS?



DEVELOP POLICIES

Develop policies that address socio-economic determinants of mental health, including targeting young people in disadvantaged situations, school drop-outs and those facing unemployment

PROMOTE MENTAL HEALTH IN SCHOOLS

Make school environments act as platforms for promoting mental health literacy (e.g. through access to socio-emotional learning programmes focusing on self-development, antibullying and non-discrimination)

INVOLVE YOUNG PEOPLE

Involve young people, including young people with mental health problems, in the development of policies and practices that affect them

ENSURE ACCESS TO LEISURE

Ensure access to leisure time opportunities, such as youth centres, sports facilities or arts spaces, that are an important source of relaxation, stress relief and recovery support

INVEST IN SUPPORT

Ensure investments in community-based support and services, such as youth services or counselling in education, that are affordable and accessible to young people (e.g. open outside school hours, address their experiences)

CREATE SUPPORTIVE NETWORKS

Create supportive networks which include friends and families, youth workers, teachers, and mental health professionals

FOCUS ON PREVENTION

Focus on prevention of mental health problems and early intervention

MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS

Reduce stigma and misunderstanding on mental health through improved awareness raising and knowledge about mental health. Find out from MHE's infographic **WORDS MATTER** how to prevent negative stereotypes and stigma when talking about mental health

PROVIDE CAREER GUIDANCE

Provide adequate career guidance to prevent mismatches between expectations and labour market opportunities for young people

INDIVIDUAL PLACEMENT AND SUPPORT

The Individual Placement and Support (IPS) is an effective method for the (re)integration of people, including young people with mental health problems in employment: find out from MHE's **TOOLKIT** on the right to work



Mental Health Europe (MHE) is the largest European non-governmental network organisation committed to the promotion of positive mental health and wellbeing. We advocate for the improvement of care, social inclusion and the protection of the rights of (ex)users of mental health services, persons with psychosocial disabilities, their families and carers. We raise awareness to end mental health stigma and discrimination.

Sources
World Health Organisation, United Nations, European Commission, Eurostat, Eurofound, OECD, Structured Dialogue Cycle VI Thematic report on Youth Goal no. 5, Consortium of Action for Teens and LUCAS KU Leuven, U.S. National Institutes of Health's National Library of Medicine.



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