# MENTAL HEALTH

Among other things, a person's mental health influences their physical health, employment, educational achievement, family functioning, and community involvement. Conversely, physical health, employment, education, family functioning, social support, and community involvement affect mental health.

# **HIP Year 2020 Health Objectives related to Mental Health:**

# **Healthy Kids**

- Increase the proportion of high school students who report that they would ask their parent(s) or guardian(s) for help with personal problems from 78% to 85%.
- Reduce the proportion of middle school students who report ever having suicidal thoughts from 16% to 7%.

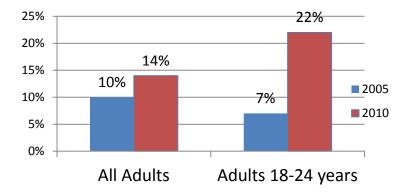
# **Healthy Adults**

- Increase the proportion of Asian adults who report having sufficient social support from 73% to 91%.
- Decrease the proportion of black adults reporting 15 or more poor mental health days per month from 16% to 7%.

## **Health Outcomes**

There is some evidence that mental health may be deteriorating among Washtenaw County residents. According to the HIP Survey, the proportion of Washtenaw County adults who experienced ten or more days of poor mental health in the past month increased nearly 50% between 2005 and 2010. Moreover, the number of young adults reporting ten or more poor mental health in the past month more than doubled.

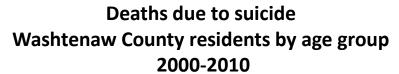
# Washtenaw respondents who report 10 or more "poor mental health days" per month

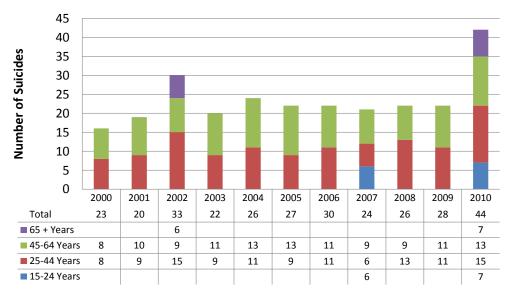


Source: HIP Survey, 2005, 2010

In Washtenaw, 16% of adults have been diagnosed with anxiety disorders and 22% have been diagnosed with depression. Those at highest risk for anxiety disorders include veterans, persons who have activity limitations, low-income residents, Ypsilanti residents, students, and young adults. Those at highest risk for depression include residents who are lower income, unemployed, white, have some college, or activity limitations. <sup>1</sup>

Suicide is one potential outcome for persons who have poor mental health. In Washtenaw County, there were 44 deaths due to suicide in 2010. This was up 60% over the previous year (see chart below). This increase appears to be driven by the greater number of suicides in persons 15-24 years as well as those 65 years and older.<sup>2</sup>





In the above table, a blank cell means the number is 5 or lower and so is not displayed.

Source: Michigan Department of Community Health and Washtenaw County Public Health

During April 2011 through June 2012, there were approximately nine hospital admissions per week for suicide attempts among county residents. Residents 10-14 years accounted for 40% of these admissions, and over half were associated with drug overdoses. Residents of Milan and Ypsilanti zip codes have the highest suicide attempt admission rates. Nearly 60% of the admissions were for females and 21% for blacks or African Americans, even though they only make up about 13% of county population.<sup>3</sup>

## **Health Factors**

#### **Health Behaviors**

Access to firearms increases the use of firearms in suicide attempts and completions. In Washtenaw County, 32% of adults reported firearms are kept in or around their home. Those more likely to report firearms in and around the home are residents of Western Washtenaw (63%) and adults who have served on activity duty in the military (62%).<sup>4</sup>

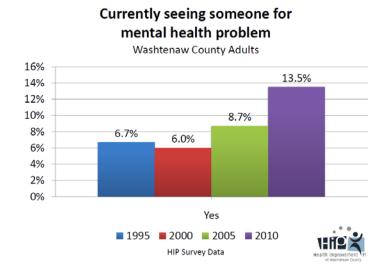
## Social and Economic Factors

Feeling supported by others may help people avoid or cope with mental health issues. The majority Washtenaw County adults (84%) report that they always or usually get the emotional support they need. Similarly, 80% said that they agree or strongly agree that people in their neighborhoods help each other out. Excluding those who live alone, 68% of county adults say that they eat meals with household members five to seven days per week. Eating meals together can be an indication of how supported people feel in their in family or social settings.<sup>5</sup>

Low-income residents were more likely to report being seen by a health professional for mental health reasons; 19% of those earning less than \$35,000 per year reported being seen in 2010, compared to a county average of 14%. Lower-income respondents were also more than twice as likely to report that they "seriously considered" suicide in the past year (12% compared to 5% on average in the county). <sup>6</sup>

### Clinical Care

There has been a marked increase in the proportion of Washtenaw County adults reporting that they are currently being seen by mental health professional. The proportion has doubled from nearly 7% in 1995 to nearly 14% in 2010.<sup>7</sup>



## **Physical Environment**

The "built environment" which includes things like buildings, parks, roads, and sidewalks can help to promote good mental health. Connecting with others, walking in neighborhoods for exercise, being in nature, or traveling to work and appointments – all of these can be influenced by the environment in which we live or spend time.

Significantly, Washtenaw County adults who have been diagnosed with depression are 16% less likely than those without depression to feel safe walking in their neighborhoods. They are also 20% less likely than those without depression to report having pedestrian sidewalks, walking paths, or trails in or near their neighborhoods.<sup>8</sup>

### **Data Sources:**

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> HIP Survey, 2010.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Michigan Department of Community Health and Washtenaw County Public Health.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> E-Code data from St. Joseph Mercy Health System and University of Michigan Health System, April 2011-June 2012.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> HIP Survey, 2010.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> HIP Survey, 2010.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> HIP Survey, 2010.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> HIP Survey, 2010.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> HIP Survey, 2010.