



Welcome to the inaugural issue of the **Washtenaw County HIP Surveillance Brief**, a new resource to help inform and guide your agency's activities to address the HIP Focus Areas! The briefs are published by the **Washtenaw County Public Health Department** as part of the Health Improvement Plan initiative. Future topics will include physical activity, healthy eating, and tobacco prevention.

Overview

Depression can be a serious illness and it is more than just feeling "blue" for a few days. Depression involves feeling "hopeless" or "down" for weeks at a time. Symptoms also include feeling guilty, worthless, losing interest or pleasure in activities that were previously enjoyed, and suicidal thoughts.

Causes of depression may include biochemical imbalances, learned behaviors, genetic predisposition, traumatic events, loss, and/or excessive stress. It is frequently accompanied by substance abuse or anxiety disorders. "Protective factors", (i.e., factors that help prevent or reduce the effects of depression) include positive social and emotional support, access to psychological and physical medical care, and learned coping skills. Depression is highly detectable and treatable. Once diagnosed, it can be effectively treated with medication and psychotherapy.

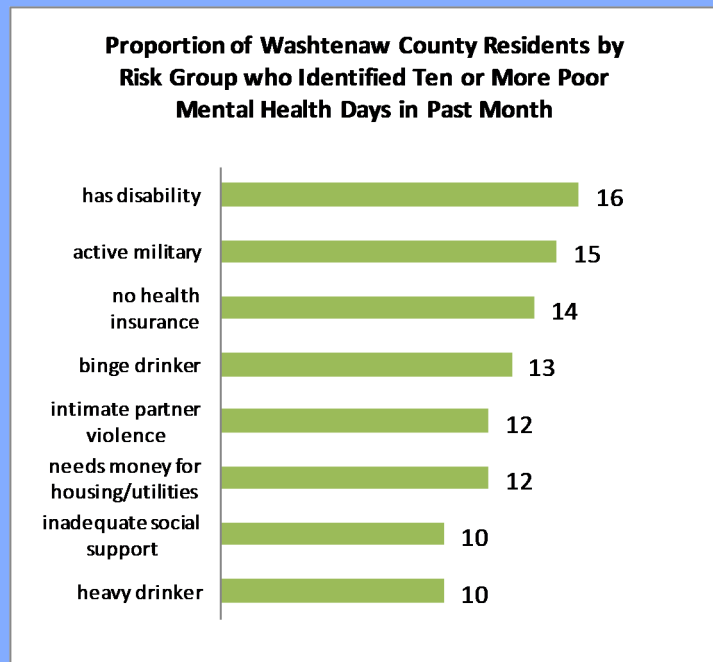
Trends in depression

Approximately 10% of persons in the U.S. have some form of depression during any single year. Depression is the leading cause of disability for U.S. residents ages 15-44, and by 2020 will be the single leading cause of disease-burden globally. Various kinds of depression exist, including major depressive disorder, dysthymia (chronic depression), and bipolar disorder. They are collectively categorized as **mood disorders**.

People with depression often report an excessive number of days with poor mental health (including stress, depression or emotional problems). In Washtenaw County, 10% of adults reported having ten or more "poor mental health days in the past month" (PMHDPM). According to 2005 HIP survey data (see Figure 1), persons who are "dissatisfied or very dissatisfied" with life, have a disability, have been active military, or are binge drinkers are most likely to have ten or more PMHDPM.

To learn more about HIP, access HIP data electronically, or become a partner, please go to <http://hip.ewashtenaw.org>.

Figure 1: Selected Results from the 2005 Health Improvement Plan Survey



Definitions:

Binge drinker: 5 or more drinks on one occasion in last 30 days.

Heavy drinker: Men - an average of > 2 drinks/day; Women - an average of >1 drink/day.

“What works”: best practices

Intervention studies regarding depression prevention are limited but focused on: general population (“universal”), those at higher risk (“selective”), and those already diagnosed with depression (“indicated”). The [U.S. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Agency \(SAMHSA\)](http://www.samhsa.gov) and the [World Health Organization \(WHO\)](http://www.who.int) have examined many depression prevention interventions, found at http://www.who.int/mental_health/evidence/en/prevention_of_mental_disorders_sr.pdf and <http://www.nrepp.samhsa.gov/>.

“Effective” and “promising” interventions identified by WHO and SAMHSA commonly focus on: 1) preventing depressive symptoms; 2) reducing the impact of inadequate parenting, child abuse, and bullying; 3) reducing other conditions that often occur along with depression (such as post-traumatic stress syndrome or substance abuse); 4) reducing suicide risk; and 5) increasing “protective factors” (i.e., coping skills, resiliency, and social support). Examples include:

Intervention Level	Strategy	Programs
Universal (general population)	Improve behavior management, child social skills	<i>I Can Problem Solve</i> , 1997, Shure and Spivack, 1988
Universal	Exercise program for elderly	Li, et al, 2001
Selective (those at higher risk)	High school based program	<i>Coping with Stress Course</i> (Clarke, et al., 1995)
Indicated (those with depression)	Child oriented anxiety program	(Lowry-Webster, Barrett & Dadds, 2001).

Two local resources

Prevention and Community Response Services, a unit of **Washtenaw County Public Health**, provides an array of services that foster increased psychological well-being of individuals, groups, and organizations, with a focus on high-risk populations. Services include psychological crisis intervention and referral following traumatic or disaster events, trainings, materials development, and consultation in areas such as Critical Incident Stress Management. Call 734-544-6700 or visit <http://publichealth.ewashtenaw.org>

Advocacy Action Tip!

Encourage your legislators to agree to a final bill ensuring behavioral health care coverage at the same level as medical care that can pass both Congressional Chambers and be signed by the President!

Go to:

<http://www.dbsalliance.org/>

Michigan Prevents Prodromal Progression (M3P) provides confidential assessment and early assistance for young people between 12 and 25 years of age in the Washtenaw County area who are at risk for mental illnesses. By getting help early, a person’s chances for staying in school, working, maintaining friendships, and planning for the future greatly improve. **The M3P Program** provides education and treatment for young people and their families and conducts research about the effects of early identification in offsetting the progression of mental illness. Visit www.preventmentalillnessmi.org or call 734-434-2630.

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Selected 2020 HIP objectives related to depression

HEALTHY KIDS

- Increase from 76% to 85% the proportion of middle school students with a “C” average or lower who have at least one supportive adult in their lives .

HEALTHY ADULTS

- Decrease the proportion of Black adults with 15 or more poor mental health days per month from 16% to 7%.
- Increase the proportion of Asian American adults who have sufficient social support from 73% to 91%.

For a better understanding of mental health in our county, read [Mind Matters: A Public Health Approach to Mental Illness and Well-Being](#) available at <http://publichealth.ewashtenaw.org>, click on [Fact Sheet and Reports](#).

