

# Mental Health in Asian Communities

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# What is this topic about?

Mental health includes our emotional, psychological, and social wellbeing. It refers to how people think, feel, and behave; it can affect daily living, relationships, and our physical health.

There is stigmatization around mental health in many communities, especially the Asian community.

# Treatment Issues

- Language barriers make it difficult for Asians to access mental health services
- Stigma/taboo around the topic of mental health
  - Tend to dismiss, deny, or neglect their symptoms
- Lack of awareness & services that are accessible
- Turns to personal connections for help like family members, religious authorities, friends, etc instead of professional help!
  - Sometimes, these people might discourage taking care of your mental health/aren't that supportive

# Who the Stakeholders

- Asians & Asian Americans!
  - Constantly strive to be the best
  - Considered to be a bad thing if you are mentally unstable
    - As a result, a lot of Asians/Asian Americans who struggle with mental health don't seek for support
    - Leads to them supressing/bottled up emotions = VERY UNHEALTHY >:(



# 19,000,000+

Identity as Asian American or Pacific Islander in the U.S. (making up 6.1% of the total U.S. population as of 2019)

# 15%

Report having a mental illness in the past year, means that more than 2.9 million Asian Americans experienced mental illness in 2019

# 17.3%

Of Asian Americans will be diagnosed with a psychiatric condition at some point of their life





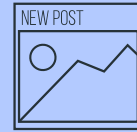
# Interview Questions!



1. What do you think mental health is, and why is it important to take care of our mental health?
2. What does stigma look like?
3. What are cultural factors that influence the mental health of Asian Americans?
4. Why do you think Asians/Asian Americans don't seek help for mental illness?
5. How do we overcome these barriers and challenge the stigma around mental health?

# Testimonials Pt. 1

1. Mental health is emotional, psychological, and social well-being. It is important to take care of our mental health because it also impacts other areas of our health as well, for example depression can affect our sleep cycle, therefore affecting our sleep health.
2. Stigma looks like ignorance, biases, stereotypes, lack of understanding, discrimination, and negative attitudes.
3. I think Asian/Asian Americans don't seek help for mental illness because of mental health stigma present in their culture. In Asian culture, mental health isn't acknowledged as a component of a person's overall wellness, therefore they believe it's not a real issue to seek help with.
4. From a public health professional's point of view, to overcome barriers to seeking mental health is developing and implementing culturally and linguistically relevant services for a specific population because one size does not fit all. Catering to a target population's specific needs addresses unique barriers of each community, such as, if a population does not speak English, an intervention must have mental health workers who can speak the language and are culturally competent in order to serve that community. In order to challenge the stigma of mental health, one way is to to normalize mental health conversations with each other. Another is to address our own biases and ignorance about mental health. In terms of school health, definitely offer health education around mental health at campuses.



# Testimonials Pt. 2

1. Mental health is our emotional well-being. Taking care of our mental health is as important as taking care of our physical health. It affects our daily lives and the way we perceive the world.
2. Stigma is harmful shame or blame caused by false unfair and negative beliefs that some people have out things that they don't understand, like mental illness.
3. It can be sometimes hard for Asian/Asian Americans to not seek help for mental health illnesses because they usually grow up in a household who beliefs that mental health can be "shaken off" or believe that it is just a phrase... it can also be perceived as "weak" or an "embarrassment to the family."
4. We can overcome the stigma of mental health by posting about it on social media.





# Testimonials Pt. 3

1. I think that mental health is something that affects your brain. An example can be a lot of stress that will cause you to have a mental breakdown. It is important to take care of our mental health because if we become too stressed out, we break down.
2. I don't know what stigma is.
3. They look down on you and expect better from you so you can't really open up about your mental health. Also, I think there are stereotypes of mental health being a bad thing.
4. I think Asians don't get help because they are afraid that people will judge them or make it harder for them to talk about it.
5. We can encourage (but not force) them to get help from a therapist or a psychiatrist.



# Action Steps!



Mental health professionals can call for more bilingual services



Public information efforts (posting, educating)



Provide affordable access to mental health services for Asian Americans

# Thanks for listening!

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