



SEVEN IMPORTANT THINGS WE CAN DO TO REDUCE STIGMA AND DISCRIMINATION

1. Know the facts.

Educate yourself about mental health problems. Learn the facts instead of the myths. Visiting our website is a great place to start!

2. Be aware of your attitudes and behaviour

We've all grown up with prejudices and judgmental thinking. But we can change the way we think! See people as unique human beings, not as labels or stereotypes. See the person beyond their mental illness; they have many other personal attributes that do not disappear just because they also have a mental illness.

3. Choose your words carefully

The way we speak can affect the way other people think and speak. Don't use hurtful or derogatory language.

4. Educate others

Find opportunities to pass on facts and positive attitudes about people with mental health problems. If your friends, family, co-workers or even the media present information that is not true, challenge their myths and stereotypes. Let them know how their negative words and incorrect descriptions affect people with mental health problems by keeping alive the false ideas.

5. Focus on the positive

People with mental health and substance use problems make valuable contributions to society. Their health problems are just one part of who they are. We've all heard the negative stories. Let's recognize and applaud the positive ones.

6. Support people

Treat people who have mental health problems with dignity and respect. Think about how you'd like others to act toward you if you were in the same situation. If you have family members, friends or co-workers with substance use or mental health problems, support their choices and encourage their efforts to get well.

7. Include everyone

In Canada, it is against the law for employers and people who provide services to discriminate against people with mental health and substance use problems. Denying people access to things such as jobs, housing and health care, which the rest of us take for granted, violates human rights.

People with mental health and substance use problems have a right to take an equal part in society. Let's make sure that happens

Access this document and many other anti-stigma resources at
<http://www.mendthemind.ca/stigma/seven-important-things-we-can-do-reduce-stigma-and-discrimination>