**Teen Treatment Statistics**

Adolescence for many people is a wonderful, challenging time of life. On the one hand, it’s a time of emerging independence and identity, exploring new freedom and contexts. However, the changes during this time are many, and this can also bring about different challenges and struggles for teens. This is also a time when teens can have a mental health condition triggered, and also might begin using substances, which can lead to teen addiction and/or substance abuse.

Right now in the United States, about 1/5 teenagers has a diagnosable mental illness, such as Teen Anxiety, Teen Depression, Teen Bipolar Disorder, or Teen Eating Disorder. Of these, around 70% will wait between 8-10 years before telling anyone and/or receiving any sort of diagnosis and treatment. This delay between onset and treatment is one of the greatest vulnerabilities for teens, as symptoms continue to worsen over time, gradually affecting almost all areas of the teens’ lives. For instance, around 50% of teens with a mental illness drop out of school and about 70% of teens in juvenile detention have a mental illness and sadly, suicide is the 3rd leading cause of death for teens. Moreover, the likelihood of a teen abusing substance’s is drastically increased for those suffering with a mental illness, which often complicates teens’ symptoms and overall health, even further.



**Types of Treatment**

The most common types of adolescent mental health and substance abuse treatment include talk therapy approaches and medication, and most instances employ some combination of the two. Some of the different types of treatment available include: individual therapy sessions, family therapy, 12-step program therapy, peer group therapy, psychotherapy, behavioral therapy, and support groups. All of these therapeutic offerings can prove extremely helpful and truly life-changing for teens, regardless of how intimidating things may seem, at the start.

**Teen Treatment Statistics for Mood Disorders**

Teen Mood Disorders are defined as a psychological illness that’s connected with a teen’s moods, and are characterized by a persisting low mood which doesn’t alter, even over time. The most prominent cause for Teen Mood Disorders is a chemical imbalance in the brain, which causes disruption of properly functioning neurotransmitters. Mood Disorders affect about 11% of youth in the United States. Some examples of the most prevalent Mood Disorders among teens include Teen Bipolar Disorder and Teen Depression.

**Teen Treatment Statistics for Anxiety Disorders**

Teen Anxiety Disorders affect about 8% of teens ages 13-18 in the United States and are characterized by a constant state of anxiety, fear, and worry, which persists regardless of circumstances. Teens that have an Anxiety Disorder are so overwhelmed by their racing minds and anxious feelings that it disrupts nearly every aspect of their lives. Some of the most common types of Teen Anxiety Disorders include: Teen Generalized Anxiety Disorder, Teen Phobia, Teen Social Anxiety, Teen Obsessive Compulsive Disorder, and Teen Panic Disorder.

**Addiction Treatment Statistics**

Adolescence is also a time when many teens begin experimenting with alcohol and other substances and this can unfortunately lead to Teen Addiction. Teen Substance Abuse and Addiction is especially dangerous because teens’ brains are still developing; therefore, substances can have more serious and/or even permanent effects on teens’ brains. Because of this, often teens vastly underestimate the potential risk of trying a substance even once, as they don’t usually understand the full ramifications. There’s also a strong correlation between teens with addiction suffering from a mental illness, and vice versa. In fact, the majority of teens who receive treatment for addiction also show symptoms for a Co-Occurring Disorder, such as Teen Depression or Teen Anxiety. In these cases, it’s common for teens to turn to substances in order to self-medicate for the uncomfortable symptoms they’re experiencing or in other cases, a mental illness can actually be triggered by use of a substance.

**Technology and Teen Mental Health**

As technology such as the internet and social media continue to have an increasing presence in teens’ lives, it’s important to observe the relationship between teens’ use of technology and how it might be contributing to mental illness symptoms. While the internet and social media can obviously serve helpful and positive purposes in teens’ lives, they can also be vulnerable to develop bad habits and/or even addictions which have significant negative effects on their lives. For instance, teens can form an addiction to always checking their cell phones and/or investing too much of their self-worth in the way they are judged in their online profiles. This kind of constant obsessing over looking at a phone can create anxiety and chronic stress, which can be especially harmful for teens that are already struggling with a mental illness.

**Getting Treatment**

When considering the current environment and statistics of teen mental health in the United States, it’s imperative to recognize that there is treatment available for teens struggling with mental health and/or substance abuse disorders. As our knowledge and understanding of mental health and addiction continues to grow, so too does our ability to treat it effectively, which means helping teens gain substantial relief in a relatively short amount of time and it’s very possible for them to go on to live their healthiest, happiest lives. Even in circumstances where symptoms are advanced and teens are feeling overwhelmed, treatment will help. Feeling better is possible. And reaching out for help is truly the most important step.

If you are a parent or loved one of a teen who is struggling with a mental illness or addiction problem, please reach out and ask questions, get information, and don’t wait. Often in addressing the teen mental health state, experts continue to emphasize that the most important factor in treating adolescent mental health and substance abuse disorders is to decrease the time between onset and treatment, so that teens are not struggling alone for so long. Moreover, time and time again in our work with young people, they repeat the same regret, which is wondering why they waited so long to ask for help. Help is available today. Don’t wait.