

**TALK
ABOUT
MENTAL
HEALTH.**

**IT'S OK TO NOT
BE OK!**

Make It **OK**



Healthiest State
INITIATIVE

MAKE IT OK TO NOT BE OK. END THE STIGMA!



Make It **OK**



Healthiest State
INITIATIVE



Mental illnesses are OK

It's OK to have a mental illness – many of us do.

One in five Americans experience a mental illness each year. On average, people live with the symptoms of a mental illness for 10 years before seeking treatment, largely due to the stigma. The sooner people get treatment, the greater their chances of recovery.

It's OK because it's a physical ailment – not a character flaw.

Mental illnesses are biological conditions that can be treated, just like cancer and diabetes. They cannot be overcome through “will power” and are not related to a person's character or intelligence.

It's OK because it's treatable – life can get better.

The best treatments for serious mental illnesses today are highly effective. In fact, more than 70 percent of symptoms are reduced and people feel better when following their treatment plans.



MakeItOK.org/IOWA



Stop the silence – Make It OK

Mental illnesses are a touchy subject, creating voids in conversation. Here are some tips to help you.

Stop the silence. If someone shares with you that they're experiencing a mental illness, they are opening up to you in a big way. Ask questions, show concern and avoid awkward silences.

Be nice. It sounds simple enough, but try to say the right things with openness, warmth and caring.

Listen. In your conversation, try to do more listening and less searching for a solution.

Keep in contact. Offer to be available by phone, text, email or meet up in person. Just be there.

Don't ignore it. Don't be afraid to ask about someone's well-being if you think they might be hurting. Trust your judgment.

Offer support. Everyone is different, and may want very specific help or no help at all. Either way, ask and be open to the answer.



Learn what to say to Make It OK

Talking about mental illnesses can be difficult. Here are some tips:

do say:

- “Thanks for opening up to me.”
- “How can I help?”
- “I’m sorry to hear that. It must be tough.”
- “I’m here for you when you need me.”
- “I can’t imagine what you’re going through.”
- “Can I drive you to an appointment?”
- “How are you feeling today?”

don’t say:

- “It could be worse ...”
- “Just deal with it.”
- “Everyone feels that way sometimes.”
- “We’ve all been there.”
- “You’ve got to pull yourself together.”
- “Maybe try thinking happier thoughts.”
- “Oh man, that sucks.”