

Stigma and help-seeking for mental health among college students

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Overview

- Focus on stigma in suicide prevention policies
- What is stigma? Terms and concepts
- Models of help-seeking behavior
- Stigma and help-seeking: brief overview
- Healthy Minds Study data
- Applications at Tufts University

Policy focus on stigma

National goals:

“...develop and implement strategies to reduce the stigma associated with mental illness, substance abuse and suicidal behavior and with seeking help for such problems.”

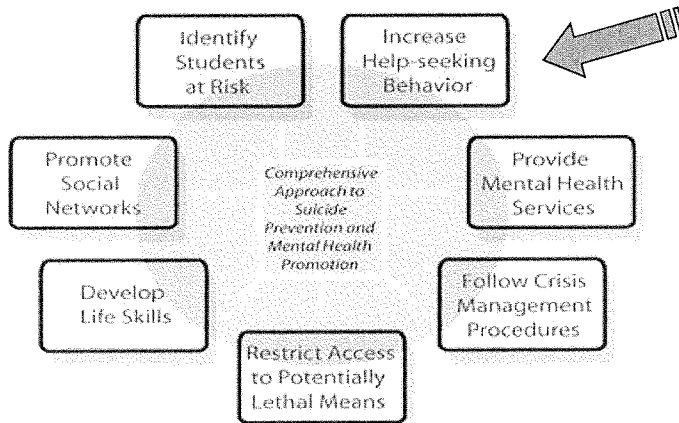
(National Strategy for Suicide Prevention, U. S. Public Health Service, 2001)

Campus goals:

“...stimulate campus-wide cultural change that de-stigmatizes mental health, removes barriers, and encourages help-seeking behavior.”

(Framework for Developing Institutional Protocols for the Acutely Distressed or Suicidal College Student, The Jed Foundation, 2006)

Stigma and help-seeking: “The bubble chart”



(*Comprehensive Approach to Suicide Prevention and Mental Health Promotion*
The Jed Foundation/Suicide Prevention Resource Center, 2006)

What do we mean by stigma?

Based on socially determined notions of what is or is not “normal” or “ordinary” in particular social contexts.

Stigma is defined as “an attribute that is deeply discrediting.”

Not the attributes themselves, but the *meaning* of those attributes that determines stigma.

(Goffman, 1963)

Mental illness stigma

General public widely endorses stigmatizing attitudes about mental illness

(Corrigan 2000; 2004)

Public stigma about mental illness is substantial for a range of disorders and has changed little since 1950.

(Phelan et al, 2000)

Public stigma has been shown to have significant influence on individuals' own views.

(Corrigan, 2004)

Healthy Minds Study 2007

Examined how both *perceived stigma* and *personal stigma* are independently associated with help-seeking behavior.

Eisenberg, Downs, Golberstein & Zivin (under review)

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For more information

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