



## NEGATIVE OUTCOMES

# Mental Illness in Young Adults

## INDICATOR

Percent of young adults, aged 18-25, who have any mental illness.

|                    |   |
|--------------------|---|
| <b>Numerator</b>   | Number of young adults with a diagnosis of any mental illness |
| <b>Denominator</b> | Young adults aged 18 to 25                                    |

## DESCRIPTION

This metric shows the percent of young adults with any mental illness, which is defined as having "a diagnosable mental, behavioral, or emotional disorder, other than a developmental or substance use disorder."

## IMPORTANCE

Tracking prevalence of mental illness across time may also help identify how policies and programs affect rates of treating or preventing mental illness in a population. The National Survey on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH) is the most comprehensive national survey to ask about mental illness for the purposes of gathering a statewide estimate, and has comprehensive survey methodology in place to ensure quality.

## LIMITATIONS

- Knowing the number of young people with a diagnosable mental illness increases an understanding of the breadth of the issue of children's mental health in Wisconsin.
- The NSDUH does not include homeless populations, non-civilians, or those in institutions such as jails or hospitals.
- Tracking prevalence is particularly unreliable for difficult-to-diagnose diseases such as most mental illnesses, and is likely to be under-diagnosed and under-reported.
- NSDUH does not provide information about severity of mental illness.

## ADDITIONAL ANALYSES

### Wisconsin Analyses

Rates of mental illness are higher for 18-25 year old in Wisconsin at 22.4%, compared to 18.1% of individuals 26 and older who are diagnosed with a mental, behavioral, or emotional disorder. In 2014/2015, 5.3% of 18-25 year olds in Wisconsin had a serious mental illness.

### National Analyses

Rates of mental illness are higher for 18-25 year old in the US at 20.9%, compared to 17.5 of individuals 26 and older who are diagnosed with a mental, behavioral, or emotional disorder. In 2014/2015, 4.9% of 18-25 year olds in the US had a serious mental illness.

| YEAR:      |       | 2014/2015   |             |
|------------|-------|-------------|-------------|
| WI         | US    | Best        | Worst       |
| 22.4%      | 20.9% | 16.4%<br>MS | 28.0%<br>NH |
| PAST YEAR: |       | 2013/2014   |             |
| WI         | US    |             |             |
| 20.1%      | 19.8% |             |             |

## SOURCE

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. (2015). 2014-2015 NSDUH State Prevalence Estimates [Data table]. Retrieved from <https://www.samhsa.gov/samhsa-data-outcomes-quality/major-data-collections/state-reports-NSDUH-2015>.