



# MENTAL HEALTH MATTERS

A MONTHLY NEWSLETTER FROM ATLANTIC BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

MINORITY MENTAL HEALTH MONTH | JULY 2022

## Understanding Mental Health in Diverse and Underrepresented Communities

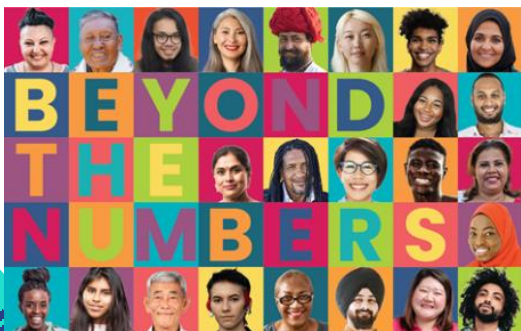
July is recognized as [Bebe Moore Campbell National Minority Mental Health Awareness Month](#)

It was created in 2008 to bring awareness to the unique struggles that underrepresented groups face in regard to mental illness in the U.S. [Bebe Moore Campbell](#) was an American author, journalist, teacher, and [mental health advocate](#) who worked tirelessly to shed light on the mental health needs of the Black community and other underrepresented communities.

To continue the visionary work of Bebe Moore Campbell, each year organizations such as National Alliance of Mental Illness (NAMI) and Mental Health America (MHA) develop public education campaigns dedicated to addressing the mental health needs of Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC), and the Latinx/Hispanic Community. Atlantic Behavioral Health (ABH) is proud to partner with them to educate and raise awareness about ways we can all work to end stigma and advocate for access to mental health treatment for all.



The issues are #BeyondTheNumbers and ABH is #Together4MH!



Atlantic Health System  
Behavioral Health



#Together4MH

Mental health conditions do not discriminate based on race, color, gender or identity. Anyone can experience the challenges of mental illness regardless of their background. However, background and identity can make access to mental health treatment much more difficult. [Bebe Moore Campbell National Minority Mental Health Awareness Month](#) was established in 2008 to start changing this.

[nami.org/minoritymentalhealth](http://nami.org/minoritymentalhealth)

# Histories of Mental Health Inequity for Black, Indigenous, & People of Color

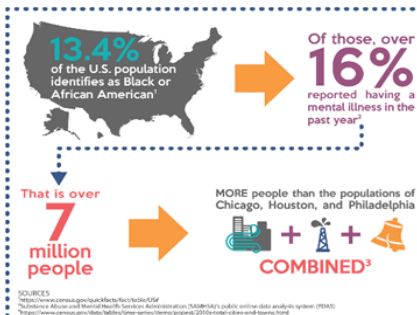
"Mental Health America recognizes that Black, Indigenous, and people of color have rich histories that go #BeyondTheNumbers. While there are stories of resilience born out of oppression, persecution, and abuse, there is immeasurable strength in each of these cultures. In an increasingly diversified America, we acknowledge the specificity of individual and group experiences and how it relates to their beliefs and well-being."

This month we celebrate these communities and will shine a light on the triumphs and challenges they face in caring for mental health. Getting good mental health care can be challenging for all people. For people in some communities, it can be even harder.

Major reasons why minority communities are dealing with mental health issues in higher rates other than the cultural stigma attached to mental health:

- Prejudice or discrimination from health care providers and/or companies.
- Inability to find quality care if the first provider does not work out.
- Lack of information about how to find the right services for mental health issues.
- Lack of access to providers that speak the native language of minorities.
- Lack of coverage or inability to afford the cost associated with mental health treatment.
- Lack of resources when it comes to taking time off work, getting reliable transportation to treatment facilities, and access to knowledgeable physicians who can guide individuals in the right direction.

*Mental Health in Minority Communities | Novum Psychiatry*



## Black Community

"Overall, mental health conditions occur in Black and African American (B/AA) people in America at about the same or less frequency than in white Americans. However, the historical Black and African American experience in America has, and continues to be, characterized by trauma and violence more often than for their white counterparts and impacts emotional and mental health of both youth and adults." [Black and African American Communities and Mental Health | Mental Health America \(mhanational.org\)](#)



## Latinx Community

The Latinx/Hispanic community is made up of diverse individuals oftentimes set apart by their country of origin or ancestral history. For the Latinx/Hispanic community, mental health and mental illness are often stigmatized topics resulting in prolonged suffering in silence. This silence compounds the range of experiences that may lead to mental health conditions including immigration, acculturation, trauma, and generational conflicts. Additionally, the Latinx/Hispanic community faces unique institutional and systemic barriers that may impede access to mental health services, resulting in reduced help-seeking behaviors. [Mental Health Challenges and Support: Latinx Communities - NAMI California](#)



## Asian Community

It's important to recognize that the term "AAPI" (Asian American and Pacific Islanders) encompasses a wide range of countries, ethnicities, nationalities, and identities. Many different communities within AAPI label face their own unique challenges: from the trauma faced by those who survived wars in Laos, Cambodia, and Vietnam; Japanese Americans who remember the internment camps of the WW2 era; or the anxiety felt by the children of first-generation immigrants to reconcile their cultural heritage with American life. The struggles faced by Filipinx Americans vary from the experiences of Indian Americans (not to be confused with Native Americans). Additionally, Native Hawaiians, who are grouped into the category of AAPI as Pacific Islanders, still experience generations of historical trauma from the colonialization of the islands of Hawaii. [Asian American/Pacific Islander Communities and Mental Health | Mental Health America \(mhanational.org\)](#)

## What Is the Data Telling Us?

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Mental Health America has witnessed unprecedented numbers of people who come to its website ([www.mhascreening.org](http://www.mhascreening.org)) to take a voluntary, free, anonymous mental health screening. **From January to December 2020, a total of over 2.6 million people completed a mental health screen.** Of the 1,093,519 screens for anxiety and depression where race/ethnicity was reported a few of the trends suggest:

- Rates of **moderate to severe anxiety** continue to be much higher than the 2019 average for screeners of every race/ethnicity. The largest increases in the proportion of people scoring for moderate to severe anxiety between 2019 and 2020 was for screeners who identified their race as Other (4.67% increase) and Asian or Pacific Islander screeners (4.53% increase).
- The proportion of people scoring with **moderate to severe symptoms of depression** was highest among screeners who identified with more than one race in 2020 (90%). The percentage of people scoring with moderate to severe symptoms of depression in December 2020 was higher than the 2019 average for every racial/ethnic group.
- Since the end of May 2020, **nearly every racial/ethnic group has been experiencing consistently higher rates of suicidal ideation** than the 2019 average (excluding Native American or American Indian screeners and screeners who identified as another race/ethnicity...).
- For all racial/ethnic groups, **loneliness or isolation** was most likely to be selected as one of the top three things contributing to the individual's mental health concerns at the time of taking a screen.

### Self-Care Tips for Good Mental Health

- **Three Part Check in:**
  - Check in with your body
  - Check in with your emotional state
  - Check in with where your thoughts are going
- Challenge yourself to **stay connected** to loved ones and community
- **Remember the basics:**
  - Good sleep
  - Good food
  - Exercise
- **Self-Care is not selfish** it is necessary!
- **Consult with your primary care provider** if you have concerns about your mental health



### Strength Over Silence

#### Stories of Courage, Culture and Community

[In this ongoing docuseries](#), NAMI highlights perspectives on mental health across backgrounds and communities. Through candid and courageous stories of lived experience, these mental health champions share their resilience and recovery, emphasizing the importance of culture and identity in the mental health movement.

<https://www.nami.org/Get-Involved/Awareness-Events/Minority-Mental-Health-Awareness-Month/Strength-Over-Silence>



### Take Action! What Can You Do?

You can take action to support a community approach to addressing the mental health needs of BIPOC individuals. Whether you identify as a member of these communities or want to be a stronger ally, the following steps help promote mental health and increase access to care.

1. **Examine the current structures and ask questions:** Consider the various barriers to accessing mental health care like cost and stigma.
2. **Push for accessibility in traditional health care:** Call for expanded language services. Support culturally responsive provider training. Expanded public educational resources.
3. **Empowering Your Own Communities:** Each community can take action to look at strengths and barriers to accessing mental health care. Look to partner with churches, community leaders and health care providers to challenge internal stigmas and create services that are specifically relevant to your community.

*If you feel you or someone in your household may harm themselves or someone else:*

**National Suicide Prevention Lifeline:** 1-800-273-TALK (1-800-273-8255). The Online Lifeline Crisis Chat is free and confidential. **July 16th changes to 9-8-8**  
**National Domestic Violence Hotline:** 1-800-799-7233 and TTY 1-800-787-3224

*If you need to find treatment or behavioral health providers in your area:*

<https://www.samhsa.gov/find-treatment>  
[cdc.gov/mentalhealth/stress-coping](https://cdc.gov/mentalhealth/stress-coping)  
APA.org (American Psychological Association)  
NAMI.org (National Alliance on Mental Illness)  
Mhanational.org

**Atlantic Behavioral Health ACCESS Center:**

888-247-1400

**Atlantic Behavioral Health Crisis Intervention Services 24/7 Hotlines:**

Chilton Medical Center: 973 – 831 – 5078  
Hackettstown Medical Center 908 – 454 – 5141  
Morristown Medical Center: 973 – 540 – 0100  
Overlook Medical Center: 908 – 522 – 3586  
Newton Medical Center: 973 – 383 – 0973