

STRONG ENOUGH TO **FREE** your **FEELS**

Understanding Mental Health in Boys & Young Men

Boys and young men often face unique challenges when it comes to recognizing mental health concerns and seeking support. Despite young men and men (ages 15-34) dying by suicide at **significantly higher rates** than young women and women in the same age range, men are **less likely** than women to receive mental health treatment.

Source: NAMI & AFSP

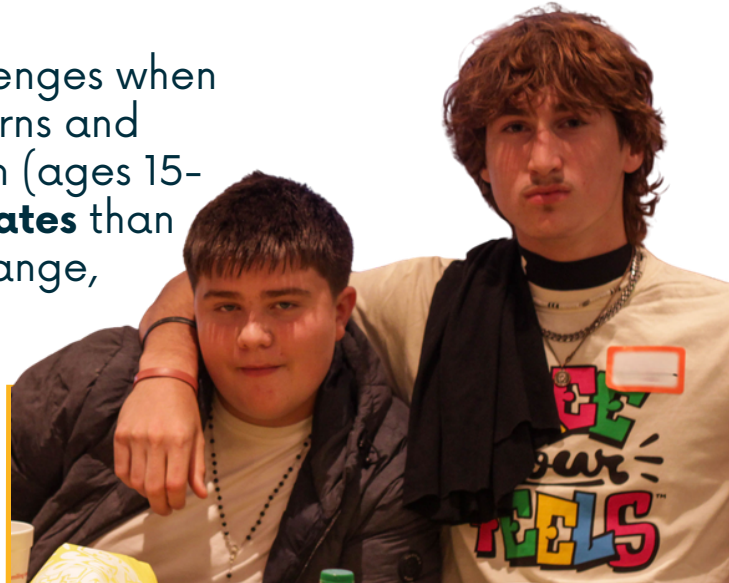


50% of all lifetime mental health conditions begin by age 14

Early support and intervention matter!

Source: NAMI

Families, schools, and communities all play a role in fostering resilience by providing positive relationships, trusted support systems, and access to mental health resources. By reminding boys and young men that they do not have to face challenges alone, we can help them build healthy coping skills, strengthen their well-being, and thrive.



SUPPORT CAN COME FROM MANY PLACES:

- trusted friends
- parents/caregivers
- coaches
- teachers
- mentors
- counselors
- community organizations
- mental health professionals

URGENT 24/7 SUPPORT

988 SUICIDE & CRISIS
LIFELINE

Text, call, chat online to a trained support person!

The words we use matter. Encouraging boys and young men to express emotions, ask for help, and seek support can help reduce stigma and promote positive mental health.

HARMFUL:

"Boys don't cry"

"Man up"

"Don't act like a girl"

"Don't talk about your feelings."

ENCOURAGING:

"It's ok to cry"

"You don't have to handle this alone."

"Kindness, empathy, and vulnerability are strengths."

"Your thoughts and feelings matter."

When boys and young men feel safe expressing their emotions, they are more likely to seek support, build resilience, and thrive.

Mental health is an important part of overall health, and supporting the emotional well-being of boys and young men starts with creating environments where they feel safe, valued, and heard. Encouraging open conversations about emotions, challenging harmful stereotypes, and promoting help-seeking behaviors can help reduce stigma and ensure young men receive the support they need.

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RESOURCES:

THE **BOYS** INITIATIVE

The Boys Initiative helps boys and young men succeed by providing support, resources, and education focused on their mental health, learning, and overall well-being. The organization works to ensure boys have the tools and support they need to thrive.



National Alliance on Mental Illness

NAMI Teens provides mental health information, resources, and support to help teens better understand their mental health, seek help when needed, and support themselves and others.



CHRIS 180 offers a wide range of trauma-informed programs and services that support children, youth, adults, and families at different stages of life. Through mental health counseling, family support services, housing programs, foster care and adoption services, and community-based programs

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