

Residents told us, to live a healthy life, they need mental wellness

Mental health is a state of well-being in which every individual realizes their own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to their community.



"I had 5 or more people from my high school harm themselves and pass away. Many of them were bullied or didn't feel they were important."¹

"[We need] increased access to mental health - especially for seniors suffering from depression."¹

"...Life is so fast moving - not enough time to breath."¹

~ Quotes from Community Conversations with Boulder County Residents, 2017

28% of surveyed Boulder County high school students felt so sad or hopeless that they stopped their regular activities for 2 or more weeks.²

Some young people who face extra burdens, like stigma or disapproval feel sad or hopeless more often.

47% of surveyed lesbian, gay, bisexual or questioning high school students, 37% of females, and 37% of Hispanic students report feeling this way.²

17% of adults in Boulder County have been diagnosed with a depressive disorder.³



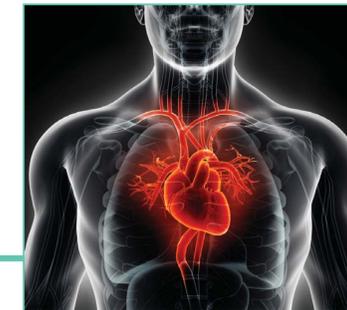
Our mental health can impact our physical health

Scientific evidence has shown that poor mental health is associated with many chronic diseases, including diabetes, heart disease, and cancer.⁴

25yrs

Early Death

People with severe mental health disorders live as much as 25 years less than that the general population.⁵



50%

Heart Disease

People with depression have a 50% higher risk of developing heart disease than the general population.⁷ More than 345 people in Boulder County die from heart disease each year.⁸

56

Suicide Death

An average of 56 people in Boulder County die due to suicide every year.⁶



25%

Substance Use

More than 1 in 4 adults living with serious mental health problems also experience a substance use problem.⁹



Our opportunities and environment can impact our mental health

A person's mental health, and many common mental disorders are shaped by social, economic, and physical environments at different stages of life.¹⁰



Education Opportunities

College graduates earn an estimated \$1 million more per lifetime than non-graduates.

41% of Boulder County residents, on average, **do not** have a college degree.¹¹



Employment Opportunities

The salary for many jobs in Boulder County barely covers the cost of the average rent of \$1,650 per month.

48% of people in Boulder County are employed in lower-paid professions.¹²



Cost of Living

In Boulder County, a family of four needs more than **\$75,900** to meet basic needs. This is more than double the federal poverty level.¹³

The high cost living in Boulder County can make it difficult to afford mental health care.



Access to Health Care

More than **78%** of people in Colorado without insurance say the cost of insurance is the primary reason they don't have it.

10% of Coloradans with insurance say they didn't get needed care because it was too expensive.¹⁴



We can improve mental health in Boulder County

There is work underway to improve mental wellness in Boulder County.



Solutions Underway

The Community of Hope Mental Health Assessment recommends improving access to services, reducing stigma, increasing early detection and health promotion, and improving access to assessment and treatment to reduce inappropriate incarceration.

Our Expertise

Mental health is fundamental to overall health and wellbeing. Due to the work on the topic over the past 5 years, Public Health has considerable knowledge and partnership with experts working to promote and improve mental health in Boulder County, particularly for young children, families, and youth. Together, community members and organizations have already defined ways to make an impact, together, in this area.

Our Opportunities

Public health plays a key role in improving mental health. Some of the ways to do this include providing support, encouragement, resources, and stability to help families face challenges together; providing resources to people who care for young children; creating marketing campaigns to reduce stigma; and advocating for policy and funding to promote mental health at all ages.

