



**Canadian Mental  
Health Association**  
Simcoe County

# What is Mental illness & Mental Health



## Mental Health vs. Mental Illness

Many people use these terms interchangeably — but they mean different things

### Mental Illness

Disturbances in thoughts, feelings, or perceptions

Severe enough to affect daily life

Examples: Anxiety disorders, schizophrenia, depression, bipolar disorder

### Mental Health

A state of well-being we all have.

Like physical health, it requires care.

More than just surviving — it's thriving

Enjoying life

Finding purpose

Managing life's ups and downs

### Key Takeaway

1 in 5 Canadians experience a mental illness each year

5 in 5 of us have mental health, every day



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# Stigma, Homelessness & Addiction

**Stigma** = unfair judgment or shame

Example: Thinking someone struggling with addiction is “lazy”

**Not a choice:**

Homelessness and addiction often come from trauma, systemic barriers, or mental health challenges.  
Stigma hurts: Negative stereotypes create barriers to housing, care, and support

**Words matter: Use person-first, respectful language**

“Person experiencing homelessness

“Person with a substance use disorder”

“Person living with mental illness”



**Rethink assumptions: Lead with empathy, not judgment**

**Compassion changes outcomes**



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# What does the Canadian Mental Health Association do?

## Direct Client Support

- Case Management – Personalized care and planning
- Addiction Counselling – Guidance for substance use recovery
- Psychotherapy – Professional mental health therapy
- Peer Support – Lived-experience mentorship

## Community & Outreach

- Engagement in encampments, shelters, and neighborhoods
- Police & Crisis Mobile Response – Rapid support on-site
- 24/7 Crisis Line – Immediate support anytime

## Specialized Programs

- Assertive Community Treatment (ACT) Teams – Intensive support for high-need clients
- Justice Programs – Assistance for those involved with the legal system
- Crisis Beds – Short-term safe spaces

## Education & Awareness

- Mental health education and community awareness initiatives



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# how to help

*Sometimes the best  
help is just being there  
to listen*



# Talk to Us



**Crisis support is  
available **24/7**  
1-888-893-8333**

**[www.cmhastarttalking.ca](http://www.cmhastarttalking.ca)**



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