

# Mental Health Facts

By Robin F. Goodman, Ph.D. & Anita Gurian, Ph.D.

Source: About Our Kids.org

<http://www.aboutourkids.org/aboutour/articles/mhfacts.html>

- Ten million children and adolescents suffer from a diagnosable psychiatric disorder.
- Children with untreated Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder drop out of High School 10 times more than other children.
- Three to 5% of teenage girls have a diagnosable eating disorder.
- Two million adolescents suffer from depression.
- With reported estimates of 5-20% of all children being diagnosed with Anxiety Disorders, they are the most common mental health problems children face.
- Ten thousand to twenty thousand youngsters are diagnosed with Pervasive Developmental Disorder annually.
- Five to 20% of all children have learning difficulties -- 1 in 5 children in every classroom.
- Only one out of every five children with a psychiatric disorder gets treatment.
- More than 3 million children suffer from Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder.
- One in 100 children is diagnosed with Bipolar Disorder or Schizophrenia.
- Although 90% of those diagnosed with anorexia are girls, boys now account for 4 to 10 percent of the patients with eating disorders.
- Approximately 50 to 60% of all children born in the 1990s will live in a home where there has been a divorce.
- More children suffer from psychiatric illness than from leukemia, diabetes and AIDS combined.
- Only 11% of students referred for mental health consultation in a community clinic ever made it to their first appointment- 90 % made it if there was a mental health clinic in the school.
- Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder is more prevalent in boys than girls, with estimated ratios ranging from 4:1 to 9:1
- Every year at least three million children are victims of Posttraumatic Stress Disorder.
- Anorexia and Bulimia have the highest death rate (about 5 to 10%) of any childhood psychiatric illness.
- Between 1980 and 1996, the suicide rate among children aged 10-14 years increased by 100%.
- Close to 50% of all adolescents who are clinically depressed also have an anxiety disorder.
- Children are more at risk of violence at home and on the streets than in school.
- Fewer than 10% of America's 80,000 public schools have comprehensive mental health services.

- Aggressive children comprise one-third of the referrals to child and adolescent clinics.
- Every 10 seconds a case of child neglect or abuse is reported in the United States, resulting in 1 million confirmed victims a year.
- Twenty to 40% of all adolescents with eating disorders will also have Obsessive Compulsive Disorder.
- Eighty-four percent of elementary school-age inner-city boys had heard guns being shot, 87% had seen someone arrested, and 25% had seen someone get killed.
- About 5-10% of the school-aged population refuse school at some time or another.
- Fifty-nine percent of those with Bipolar Disorder reported suffering their first symptoms during childhood or adolescence.
- Someone who experiences his first episode of depression in adolescence carries a 20% risk of developing a manic episode within 3-4 years.
- Twenty-four percent of high school students have seriously thought about attempting suicide.
- Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) runs in families: 15-20% of mothers, 20-30% of fathers and 25% of siblings of children with ADHD have ADHD.

#### About the Authors

Robin F. Goodman, Ph.D., Associate Professor, NYU School of Medicine, is Director of Bereavement Programs and [www.AboutOurKids.org](http://www.AboutOurKids.org). Her book publications include *The Day Our World Changed*, *Children's Art of 9/11*, and *Childhood Revealed: Art Expressing Pain, Discovery and Hope*. She also contributes to national television and print media.

Anita Gurian, Ph.D., Clinical Assistant Professor, NYU School of Medicine, is Editor of the *NYU Child Study Center Letter* and Executive Editor of [www.AboutOurKids.org](http://www.AboutOurKids.org). She is also the author of several books for parents and professionals.