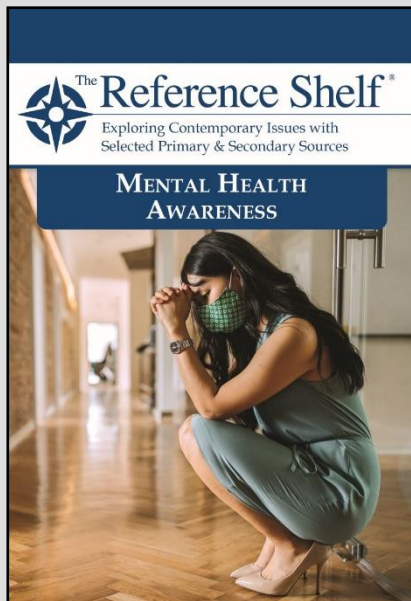


# Mental Health Awareness

## REVIEWS



Pub. Date: April 2021  
ISBN: 978-1-63700-292-6  
List Price: \$75  
Annual Subscription: \$345

“Mental Health Awareness is an excellent introduction to social and legal barriers affecting mental health and to promising research on new mental health treatments. Conveniently organized into topical sections, the book is a source for credible and recent information on this timely topic.

Section 1, “Barriers to Access” focuses on tangible barriers to mental health services, such as the lack of parity between mental health and physical health services. Many insurance companies do not currently provide treatment options for mental health services at levels comparable to those available for physical health. Legislation to require parity of coverage is now in process. Reforms in Medicaid reimbursement and coverage have also been proposed. To combat geographic and staffing obstacles to availability, telehealth services have been used successfully.

Section 2, “Behavioral Health in a Time of Crisis” provides a look at how the COVID pandemic exacerbated existing mental health issues while also fostering a climate in which people began open discussions of issues such as depression, anxiety, and suicide. Mental health issues were no longer a stigma, hidden in the dark. National organizations such as the National Alliance for Mental Health, the Centers for Disease Control, SAMHSA, and the APA were also instrumental in promoting mental health awareness and literacy.

Section 3, “The Ultimate Consequence,” explores suicide through examination of statistics, fact sheets, surveys, and other documents. The effects of suicide on various groups such as adolescents, veterans, ethnic groups, health care workers, first responders, and incarcerated populations is discussed. Strategies suggested for suicide prevention are improved awareness, screening, and reduction in the means of suicide such as access to firearms. Detrimental effects of substance abuse, especially for adolescents, is identified as a contributing factor in suicide attempts.

Section 4, “The Politics of Behavioral Health,” begins with the historical treatment of mental illnesses, which usually resulted in imprisonment or in admission to psychiatric hospitals. Creation of the National Institutes of Health and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention resulted in gradual improvements in mental health services. In addition, progressive legislation such as the Mental Health Justice Act recommended the use of trained mental health professionals for some 911 mental health crises as well as police ...

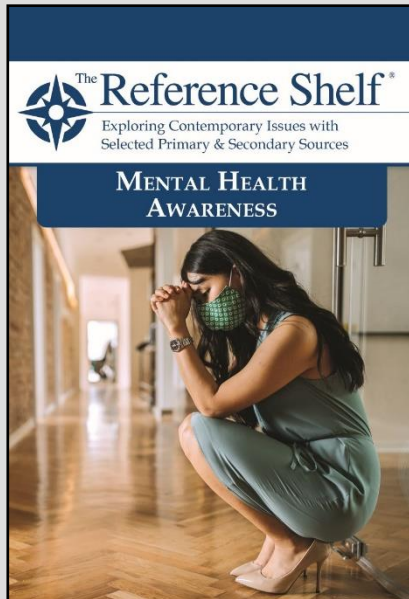
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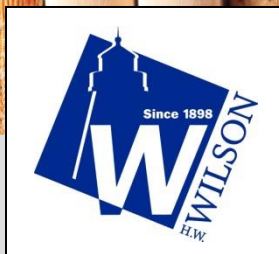
Research using psychedelics to treat mental health issues is one of the most compelling sections of the book. This topic is so important that it could easily have been expanded as a separate section to include other the use of other new treatments such as Virtual Reality. Psychedelics or sacred plant medicines have a long history of use by some indigenous groups. MDMA, psilocybin, and LSD are now being used to treat anxiety, depression, and post-traumatic stress (PTS). Research results using these psychedelic medicines have shown promising results for conditions for which traditional medicines and standard therapies have not proven effective.

Section 5, “Young People’s Problems,” details the responses of many school districts to mental issues brought about by the COVID pandemic. Current initiatives include approval of mental health days as excusable absences, providing greater availability of school counselors and psychologists, collaborating with social workers on mental health screening, and expanding suicide awareness programs

Mental Health Awareness provides an excellent overview of this important topic. Its content is appropriate for the general public as well as for college students majoring in social work, psychology, and education. The bibliography is excellent, and the inclusion of websites of mental health organizations such as the National Alliance on Mental Illness and Mental Health America is useful for additional information

**ATG Reviewer Rating:** I need this in my library. (I want to be able to get up from my desk and grab this book off the shelf, if it’s not checked out.)

**-Against the Grain, January 2023**



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