

# KEY MESSAGES

Feel free to supplement these key messages with the assorted statistics and tips included on the fact sheets.

## GENERAL

- For Mental Health Month this year, Mental Health America is encouraging individuals to look around and look within. From your neighborhood to genetics, many factors come into play when it comes to mental health conditions. We encourage everyone to consider how the world around them affects their mental health.
- Mental Health America's 2023 Mental Health Month toolkit provides free, practical resources, including information about how an individual's environment impacts their mental health, suggestions for making changes to improve and maintain mental well-being, and how to seek help for mental health challenges.
- Your surroundings can impact if, how, and when your needs are met, which in turn affects your mental health. However, you can take steps to change your space and protect your well-being.
- If you constantly feel worried or sad about where you live, one of the quickest and easiest ways to determine whether you are experiencing symptoms of a mental health condition is to take a mental health screening at [mhascreening.org](https://mhascreening.org).

## HOUSING STABILITY AND HOME ENVIRONMENT

- Having safe, stable, and healthy home conditions set the foundation for achieving and maintaining good mental health.
- For many people, not having a true "home base" to consistently return to can leave them feeling distressed, disconnected, or isolated. Stable housing allows individuals to develop routines and connections to their local community, which are beneficial for mental health.
- Wherever you call "home," it should give you feelings of comfort, support, and calmness. If not, there are things you can do to your space to help you be more productive, reach your goals, and improve your mental health.

## COMMUNITY

- The area, or ZIP code, that you live in plays a significant role in how healthy you are.
- A strong sense of community within neighborhoods protects mental health through shared support, resources, and joy.
- Challenges like gentrification, community violence, and lack of access to resources can negatively impact mental health. While many of these can be out of your control, being an advocate for change and making healthy community connections can bring hope.

## NATURE

- Spending time in nature is linked to many positive mental health outcomes, including improved focus, lower stress, better mood, reduced risk of developing mental health conditions, and a sense of connection to yourself, community, and purpose.
- Being around nature doesn't have to mean hiking in a forest. It can be walking in a park, bringing a plant inside, or sitting in your backyard.