



News From the Prevention Department

October 2024

What is Stigma?

Stigma involves having a negative attitude, lack of respect, belief, or behavior towards a group of people because of their situation in life. We often hear of stigma surrounding substance use and mental health. Examples of stigma include, using shaming language, stereotypes, and discriminatory attitudes. Some ways that we can “shatter the stigma” are to openly talk about mental health and substance use, and to make an effort to learn more about these topics. When talking about these topics it is important to think of the words that we use. We all have biases that sometimes we are not even aware of. Stigma comes from peers, selves and the community. It is this same stigma that also has harmful consequences such as deterring people from seeking and participating in treatment.

Previously mentioned, was that we can educate ourselves and others. In the past few newsletters, we have provided many statistics and tips that are helpful for learning about substance use and mental health. Use what you have learned to educate others and use negative remarks and attitudes as an opportunity to intervene and express that negative attitudes only perpetuate the stigma.

You can also encourage equality between physical and mental illness. We commonly hear the phrase “treat diabetes as a medical disease and substance use deserves the same medical attention”. Treating substance use and mental health conditions as a disease helps us to show compassion and support for those struggling.

Finally, consider choosing empowerment over shame. Help others through their own journey. Acknowledging the substance use and learning from it and knowing that it has changed you and the others around you for the better. Shaming others or making others feel guilty for their disease only makes them feel worse. Being able to acknowledge the truth is part of the healing that takes place to move forward towards a healthier mind, spirit and body. The ability to be a functioning member of society gives meaning and purpose to life. Being purpose driven also helps develop a sense of identity and belonging.

A collective voice sounds like bravery, strength and persistence—the qualities we need to face mental illness and to fight stigma. No matter how you contribute to the mental health movement, you can make a difference simply by knowing that mental illness is not anyone’s fault, no matter what societal stigma says. You can make a difference by being and living stigma free.

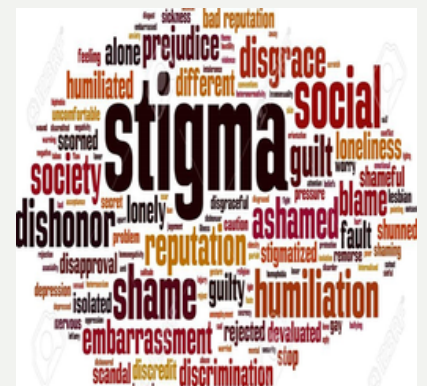
WHAT'S IN THIS MONTH'S ISSUE:

- Mental Health Awareness Week
- October is Substance Use Prevention Month
- Upcoming Events



Resources for help:

- 1-800-662-HELP (4357)
- [Findtreatment.gov](https://www.findtreatment.gov)
- Seneca Strong
- Native Connections
- Local AA Meetings
- CASA Trinity



SHATTER

MENTAL HEALTH STIGMA

Reducing Addiction Stigma through Language

What you say and how you say it can make your loved one feel supported and valued and increase their likelihood of recovery.

Instead of saying:	You should say:
✗ "addict" or "junkie"	✓ "person with substance use disorder"
✗ "alcoholic" or "drunk"	✓ "person with alcohol use disorder"
✗ "drug abuse"	✓ "substance use" or "medication misuse"
✗ "alcohol abuse"	✓ "person who misuses alcohol"

just a thought justathought.co.nz

Acknowledge

Recognise the stressors they're facing – "this seems like such a huge challenge to go through."

Give time

"Can I come and spend some time with you?"

Listen

Before going into 'solution-mode' or trying to 'focus on the positives', sometimes people just want to be heard.

Be there

Let them know they're not alone – "I will be here for you along the way."

Offer help

"What is one thing I could do to support you?"

Talk

Offer the chance to talk about it – "could it help to talk things through?"

10 ways to support someone experiencing mental distress

Physical touch

If appropriate, offer physical comfort – a hug or touch can boost oxytocin (our soothing hormone).

Allow

Support them to feel as they are feeling – "It's okay to not feel okay."

Let them know...

you believe in them – "you have the courage and strength to get through this."
...And importantly, remind them how much they're loved & how important they are.

Validate

"I can feel like this too" ...
"It makes sense why you're feeling like this."

Upcoming Events

NATIVE connections

Honor your journey.

OCTOBER 2024

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
29	30	1	2 CLUBHOUSE 2:45PM-7:00PM	3	4	5
6	7 CLUBHOUSE 2:45PM-7:00PM	8	9 CLUBHOUSE 2:45PM-7:00PM	10	11	12
13	14 CLUBHOUSE 2:45PM-7:00PM	15	16 CLUBHOUSE 2:45PM-7:00PM	17	18	19
20	21 CLUBHOUSE 2:45PM-6:00PM FAMILY NIGHT 6:00PM-7:00PM	22	23 CLUBHOUSE 2:45PM-7:00PM	24	25	26
27	28 CLUBHOUSE 2:45PM-7:00PM	29	30 CLUBHOUSE 2:45PM-7:00PM	31	1	2

← **RED RIBBON WEEK** →

← **RED RIBBON WEEK** →

Location: Allegany Seneca Clubhouse
983 R.C. Hoag Drive
Salamanca, NY 14779

Phone: 716-945-8413 Ext. 3649

Facebook: Seneca Native Connections

