

10 Percent of Older Teens Had Major Depressive Episode in Past Year



A new government report finds 10 percent of 16- and 17-year-olds had a major depressive episode in the past year. Almost 20 percent of young adults, ages 18 to 25, had any mental illness in the past year.

Four percent of young adults had a serious mental illness, according to the report by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA).

The report also found 3 percent of older teens had both a major depressive episode and a substance use disorder; 6.4 percent had any mental illness and a substance use disorder; and 1.6 percent had a serious mental illness and a substance use disorder.

Older teens and young adults with emotional and behavioral health problems are much more likely to have significant problems with school, employment and housing, the report found. Almost 8 percent of older teens who suffer from depression and have a substance use disorder do not have a stable place to live.

They moved an average of three or more times in the past year. Among older teens with depression and a substance use disorder who were enrolled in school, 13.5 percent struggled academically, with a “D” or lower average.

Young adults with a serious mental illness and a substance use disorder are less likely to graduate high school, compared with those without both disorders. They are also 1.4 times more likely to be unemployed. Young adults with a serious mental illness who receive treatment are more likely to graduate high school than those who do not receive any treatment.

“This new report demonstrates the critical need for treatment and other services that focus on older adolescents and young adults with mental and substance use disorders,” SAMHSA Administrator Pamela S. Hyde said in a news release.