



What is the Impact of Stigma?

Stigma hurts us all. It creates fear and anger and makes it more difficult to focus on the actual problem. Stigma can make people more likely to hide symptoms or illness, keep them from seeking health care immediately, and prevent individuals from adopting healthy behaviors. Stigma negatively affects the emotional, mental, and physical health of stigmatized groups and communities they live in. Stopping stigma is important to making all communities and community members safer and healthier and we can all play a part.

Ways to Prevent Stigma?



Individuals Can

Offer compassionate support to those experiencing stigma.



Communities Can

Speak out against negative behaviors and statements, including those on social media.



Health Care Organizations

Make sure that images used in communications and health education materials show diverse people and communities and do not reinforce stereotypes.

Stigma Vs. Discrimination

- **Stigma** refers to thoughts, attitudes, and beliefs
- **Discrimination** refers to the behaviors and actions taken because of stigma or biases. Groups who experience stigma may also experience discrimination such as,
 - Rejection or avoidance from others.
 - Getting denied healthcare, education, housing, or employment
 - Verbal and psychological abuse
 - Physical violence