

Mental Health in California



Many Californians struggle with their mental health.

It is more important than ever to build a stronger mental health system that provides the care, support, and services needed to help people build better lives.

6,665,000

adults in California have a mental health condition. That's more than **7x** the population of **San Francisco**.



1 in 5 adults experience a **mental illness** each year.

More than **1 in 20 U.S. adults** experience a **serious mental illness** each year.



1 in 6 U.S. adolescents aged 12-17 experience a **major depressive episode** each year.

616,000 California adolescents experience a **major depressive episode** each year.

1,699,000

California adults have a **serious mental illness**.

1 in 5 of the more than **180,000 people** in California **who are unhoused** have a **serious mental illness**.



1 in 20 adults have **serious thoughts of suicide** each year.

1,491,000 California adults have **serious thoughts of suicide** each year.

CALIFORNIA
is facing a mental
health crisis.

1 in 9

adolescents aged 12-17 have **serious thoughts of suicide** each year.

411,000 California adolescents have **serious thoughts of suicide** each year.



14%

of youth aged 0-17 in California have **experienced 2+ adverse childhood experiences**, which are linked to mental illness and substance misuse in adulthood.

4,312

lives were **lost to suicide** in California in 2022.

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Almost
11,000,000 people in California live in a community without enough mental health professionals.

The need to address access to mental health care in California is urgent.

5x

more likely for a Californian to be **forced out-of-network** for mental health care than for primary care.

347,393

calls were made to California's **988 Suicide & Crisis Line** call centers in 2023.

1 in 814

ratio for school psychologists to students in California's K-12 public schools. This is **worse** than the recommended ratio of one school psychologist for every 500 students.

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1,698,000

adults in California reported needing mental health treatment but not receiving it between 2018-2019. **Cost is a prevailing factor** in not receiving treatment.

Californians deserve to get the mental health care they need, when they need it.



NAMI California is part of NAMI, National Alliance on Mental Illness, the nation's largest grassroots mental health organization dedicated to building better lives for the millions of Americans affected by mental illness. Learn more at namica.org. For data citations, visit nami.quorum.us/mhpolycstats/.

This fact sheet was compiled based on data available in March 2025.