



Mental Health Toolkit

Mental Health Information and Resources
Faculty



Your mental well-being is important

At Santa Clarita Community College District, your health and well-being are very important. You, as an individual, matter. And the benefits flow outward: A healthy “you” can translate into a happy, healthy community, inside and outside the company – a healthy “us.”

Mental well-being is especially important, of course, because it influences everything – your physical, emotional and financial health.

Studies have shown that a huge number – three out of four employees – in companies struggle with an issue that affects their mental well-being, either from time to time or on a regular basis. Despite those numbers, nearly two-thirds of people impacted don’t receive care to protect their mental well-being! The lack of proper care puts us at higher risk for suffering from other chronic medical conditions, living a lower quality of life, and being less effective at everything we do.

Let’s turn that around. Let’s agree that asking for and seeking help is not only OK, but essential.

I invite you to get to know how our benefits programs can help you or someone you care about – whether that’s a friend, family member, or coworker – live their best life.



Understanding mental health



Mental health conditions

Mental health issues can take many forms, and include Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder, Borderline Personality Disorder, Eating Disorders, Post-traumatic Stress Disorder and other related conditions. For the purposes of this toolkit, we will be focusing on the common mental health conditions faced in the workplace. These conditions can affect your mood, thinking, and behavior. Researchers don't know exactly what brings on mental disorders. They stem from a combination of factors including your brain and environmental stress, and even your genes. You might feel stressed when multiple competing demands are placed on you. The feeling of stress also can be triggered by an event that makes you feel frustrated or nervous. When these feelings begin to interfere with your daily life, it is time to seek professional help.



What is stress?

Whether in good times or bad, most people say that stress interferes at least moderately with their lives. Stress may weaken the part of the brain that controls coping or anxiety control. Chronic stress can affect your health, causing symptoms from headaches, high blood pressure, and chest pain to heart palpitations, skin rashes, and loss of sleep.

What is depression?

Depression is a condition in which a person feels discouraged, sad, hopeless, unmotivated, or disinterested in life in general for more than two weeks, and the feelings interfere with daily activities. Major depression is a treatable illness that affects the way a person thinks, feels, behaves, and functions. At any point in time, 3% to 5% of people suffer from major depression; the lifetime risk is about 17 percent.

What is anxiety?

It's a normal part of life to experience occasional anxiety. But you can experience anxiety that is persistent, seemingly uncontrollable, and overwhelming. If it's an excessive, irrational dread of everyday situations, it can be disabling. When anxiety interferes with daily activities, you may have an anxiety disorder. Anxiety disorders are real, serious medical conditions - just as real and serious as physical disorders such as heart disease or diabetes. Anxiety disorders are the most common and pervasive mental disorders in the United States.

National prevalence data indicate that nearly 40 million people in the United States (18%) experience an anxiety disorder in any given year. Only about one-third of those suffering from an anxiety disorder receive treatment, even though the disorders are highly treatable.

Social anxiety

Social Anxiety Disorder (SAD) is marked by an intense anxiety or fear concerning social situations in which the person may be subject to negative scrutiny or criticism by others.

Try sharing your feelings with someone you feel safe with, deep belly breathing to calm the nervous system, and shifting your attention away from what is causing you anxiety and focusing on the present moment.

Technology and social media

Social connections can also have a big impact on mental health as it helps us feel more connected with the people around us and can improve your overall well-being.

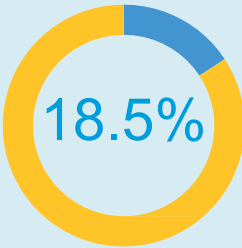
Technology is both a blessing and a curse, as it can connect us instantly to others across the country in a second. But it can also create feelings of loneliness, depression, and isolation. Try to leave the phone in your bag or leave at your desk and opt for in-person connections when you can. Go for a walk with a friend, call a friend and catch up, or make plans for something you can look forward to later in the week.



Fast facts about mental health

Learn about mental health as an element of overall wellness. Mental health can impact anyone at any time in their lives.

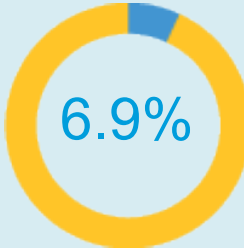
Prevalence



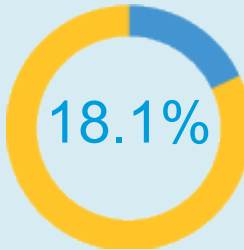
Approximately 1 in 5 adults in the U.S.—43.8 million, or 18.5%—experiences mental illness in a given year.¹



Mental health conditions are the leading cause of disability across the United States.



6.9% (16 million) of American adults live with major depression.¹



18.1% (42 million) of American adults live with anxiety disorders.¹

Impact

- Depression is the leading cause of disability worldwide, and is a major contributor to the global burden of disease.¹
- Serious mental illness costs America \$193.2 billion in lost earnings every year.²
- Approximately 1 in 25 adults in the U.S.—9.8 million, or 4.0 percent—experiences a serious mental illness in a given year that substantially interferes with or limits one or more major life activities.⁴
- 90% of those who die by suicide have an underlying mental illness. Suicide is the 10th leading cause of death in the U.S.²

Treatment

- Nearly 60% of adults with a mental illness didn't receive mental health services in the previous year.³
- Nearly 50% of youth aged 8 to 15 didn't receive mental health services in the previous year.¹
- African Americans & Hispanic Americans used mental health services at about 1/2 the rate of Caucasians in the past year, and Asian Americans at about 1/3 the rate.¹

¹ Statistics provided by the National Institute of Mental Health. www.nimh.nih.gov

² American Journal of Psychiatry and U.S. Surgeon General's Report, 1999.

³ Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

⁴ National Alliance on Mental Illness. www.nami.org



Support



How to get or give support

Recognize the signs

Are you or someone you know going through a hard time? Is someone you know feeling distressed? Everybody experiences mental health issues in different ways.

Some common signs of distress include:

- Not acting like they normally do
- Loss of interest in the things they usually enjoy
- Talking about feelings of hopelessness
- Being more reckless
- Isolating themselves

Bring it up with your doctor

Are you experiencing signs and symptoms that occur for more than 2 weeks or occur on a daily basis, it may be advised to discuss with your healthcare provider. They will be able to direct you to the appropriate mental health care.



Take Action!

Share your thoughts:

At your next annual physical, talk to your doctor about your mental health too.

Conversation starters

Don't know what to say to a friend in need? Sometimes mental health discussions can feel uncomfortable. Try one of these opening lines to get the conversation rolling:

- "I've noticed you've been down lately. What's going on?"
- "Hey, we haven't talked in a while. How are you?"
- "I'm here for you, if you need anything."
- "Seems like you haven't been yourself lately; what's up?"

No need to be an expert. Just reach out and show that you care. It's hard to know exactly what to say to someone who is struggling with depression, anxiety, or other mental health issues.

- Ask them whether they have seen a doctor
- Listen up. Let them take the lead
- Avoid offering advice or trying to fix problems
- Let them know it's okay to feel the way they do
- Encourage them to talk to an expert
- What to do next? Keep checking in! It is one of the best ways to help someone who is struggling with mental health. If you want to help, there are plenty of ways you can be there for them.

How to get support on your mental health

Santa Clarita Community College District supports a culture of wellness where we invest in our employees' well-being. It is not taboo for you to open up about your mental health. Know that you have permission to take care of your mental fitness and have the important resources listed throughout this toolkit available to you whenever you need them.



Counseling and EAP services

Counseling/psychotherapy is a talk-based process focused on helping you heal and learn constructive ways to deal with the problems or issues within your life.

The benefits of counseling/psychotherapy include effectively treating emotional problems, reducing anxiety, increasing focus, improving self-awareness and efficacy, and promoting better mental health overall. Some people like to seek counseling in a one-on-one atmosphere. It seems less intimidating, and some people just don't like to talk about their personal problems in front of other people. That is perfectly fine. Many practitioners have private practices for that exact reason, so they can counsel people individually in a more intimate setting rather than in a larger room with many people.

There are other people who actually prefer the group counseling atmosphere because they like the input that others can give them. Hearing someone else's point of view and seeing someone else's perspective on any issue is another way people find help in dealing with their problems. Group counseling can vary in size from just a few people to a larger sized group.

You can access psychotherapy through your Santa Clarita Community College District benefits in one of two ways:

- 1

Through your medical plan (Anthem Blue Cross, Blue Shield of California, Health Net of California, Kaiser Permanente, United Healthcare) you have resources specifically designed to support your mental and emotional well-being at either low-cost or no-cost. You'll see a list of what each plan covers in-network for behavioral health benefits on the CalPERS website. A link to view the plan websites located on page 14.
- 2

Through the employee assistance program (EAP) offered through your EAP, you have access to free therapy and counseling for behavioral and mental health issues.

If you use your medical plan to pay for counseling/psychotherapy:
Depending on your plan, you will pay specific copay or coinsurance amounts. For additional details regarding cost, refer to page 11.

- If you use the EAP through Employee Connect:**
You will pay nothing for your first five sessions per issue per year. Depending on the case, five psychotherapy sessions may be sufficient for treating an issue, which makes [EmployeeConnect](#) the most cost-effective choice.
- If you need additional sessions for the same issue,** EmployeeConnect will assist you in finding qualified providers who are in your medical plan network, so that you can coordinate the cost with your medical plan starting with session eleven.
 - If you are dealing with multiple issues,** you can use EmployeeConnect for up to 5 free sessions (in-person or virtual visits) per issue. Meaning, if you are having marriage issues and career issues, then you could use up to 5 sessions for each issue at no cost to you.



Take Action!
Call or visit your EAP: EmployeeConnect

888-628-4824
Username: LFGsupport
Password: LFGsupport1

[or GuidanceResources.com](#)





Common roadblocks to starting counseling/psychotherapy

“It’s inconvenient. I don’t want to take time out of my busy day to go to a therapist’s office.”

Through your EAP, you have the option of doing virtual counseling sessions from anywhere using your mobile device. You can schedule a time that works for you – including evening and weekend appointments.

“It’s expensive.”

Through your EAP, you have 5 sessions per issue. This is a better deal than using your medical insurance from the onset to cover the cost of therapy. In addition, by taking part in psychotherapy, it may save you additional money that you might otherwise spend on a long-term prescription for anti-depressants.

“I don’t want a long-term commitment to do therapy.”

Depending on the case, 10 or fewer sessions may be sufficient for treating your issue.

“It will be too painful.”

True, therapy can be hard work. With therapy, you might experience some initial mental discomfort in the beginning, but the payoff in the end can be long-lasting and more effective than medication alone. Through therapy you will learn skills and techniques to re-frame your thinking and extinguish your irrational thoughts to help prevent you from relapsing into future depressive episodes. The benefit of therapy is that it helps address the underlying issue that’s causing the depression, which may eliminate the need for a long-term course of medication.



Carrier/Plan resources



Get to know your Anthem Blue Cross, Blue Shield, Health Net, Kaiser Permanente and UnitedHealthcare Plans

Managing your condition can get overwhelming at times. At Santa Clarita Community College District, it’s our goal to create strategies and offer health plans that provide the support and resources you need to get the best treatment and care. Here are some helpful highlights from your coverage.

In-network mental & behavioral health services

FT Faculty	In-Network Mental Health Services	
	Outpatient	Inpatient
Anthem Blue Cross HMO (Select & Traditional)	Office visit: \$15 Other: \$0	\$0
Blue Shield of California (Access+ & Trio)	Office visit: \$15 / visit Other: \$0	\$0
Health Net of California	\$15/individual visit \$7.50/group session Other: \$0	\$0
UnitedHealthcare (Alliance & Harmony)	\$15/visit	\$0
PERS Gold PPO & PERS Platinum PPO	Office visit: \$20 Other: 10% coinsurance	Office: 40% Other: 40%

How do you find mental health care?

Did you know that you don’t need a referral for mental health services? But your personal doctor is your biggest total health advocate. If you’re struggling, they can connect you with support and help you access care.

Anthem Members

(includes PERS Platinum & PERS Gold until 1/1/25)

24/7 NurseLine

Call 24/7 NurseLine and speak with a registered nurse anytime you have a health related-question. Experienced nurses can help you figure out how to care for yourself and evaluate treatment options at no extra charge. All calls are confidential.

NurseLine 24/7: 800.700.9185

Sydney Health

Access virtual visits with psychiatrists and therapists for members aged 10 and up. Virtual urgent care services available to all members. Physicians can prescribe medication when appropriate.
<https://www.sydneyhealth.com/>

Kaiser Members

24/7 Care Advice

Get medical advice and care guidance in the moment from a Kaiser Permanente provider at 833.574.2273

Calm App

The Calm app uses meditation and mindfulness to help lower stress, reduce anxiety and improve sleep quality.

Blue Shield Members

Nurse 24/7

Have a medical concern and not sure what to do? Just call NurseHelp 24/7 for immediate and reliable health advice and information. Registered nurses are available 24 hours a day to answer any of your health questions.

For more information, call (877) 304-0504 or visit

<https://www.blueshieldca.com/nursehelp>

Health Net

Unwinding by Sharecare

Unwinding is a mindfulness program designed to manage stress and build resilience in the workplace and at home, while also improving sleep, mental health, and quality of life.

<https://healthnet.sharecare.com/>

UnitedHealthcare

Virtual Visits

Get access to care online, anywhere, anytime. A virtual visit lets you see and talk to a doctor from your mobile device or computer without an appointment. Get answers to medical questions, diagnoses, and prescriptions. Receive support for addiction, depression, trauma, loss, stress, or anxiety.

<https://www.uhc.com/member-resources/health-care-tools/telehealth-virtual-care/virtual-visits?cid=vanity-virtualvisits>

PERS Platinum & PERS Gold (effective 1/1/2025)

Included Health

Included Health provides convenient and accessible behavioral health care through virtual therapy and psychiatry services, available seven days a week by appointment. You can book virtual visits with licensed therapists or psychiatrists to receive personalized care from the comfort of your home. During these sessions, a mental health professional will evaluate your clinical history and symptoms, offer therapeutic guidance, share follow-up care recommendations, and order prescriptions if necessary.

<https://includedhealth.com/microsite/calpers/>

Use Your HSA or FSA to pay for your mental health care

To help offset the cost of care you can use funds in your HSA or FSA to pay for eligible mental health expenses.



Adult members can get Calm at: <https://www.kp.org/selfcareapps>

For immediate assistance in a mental health crisis please call **9-1-1**. Or call the **National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 988** for a national network of local **crisis centers** that provides free and confidential emotional support.

Additional programs and resources

EAP Vendor

Free confidential counseling: Eligible employees and their family members (spouse/domestic partner, dependents, parents and parents in law) are eligible for up to **5 free in-person or video counseling and unlimited telephonic visits per issue** with a licensed professional counselor for a full range of issues such as:

- Marriage, family, and relationship issues
- Emotional, personal, and stress-related issues
- Substance abuse
- Child and elder care resources
- Adoption resources
- Financial, legal, and credit assistance

Emotional Health Self Assessments: Are you concerned about depression, anxiety, or other mental health issues? These assessments combine your family history with information about your daily life to help predict your risk for certain conditions. The more you know, the better you can help prepare yourself.

Take Action!

EmployeeConnect login information:

Call or visit Lincoln Financial Group EmployeeConnect:

888-628-4824 or [GuidanceResources.com](https://www.guidanceresources.com)

Username: LFGsupport

Password: LFGsupport1



Fitness Programs

Anthem Members

ACTIVE & FIT DIRECT

Choose from more than 11,900 participating fitness centers nationwide at a discounted rate. This program is offered through American Specialty Health Fitness, Inc.

Blue Shield of California

FITNESS YOUR WAY BY TIVITY HEALTH

Members 18 years or older have access to a nationwide gym discount program through Fitness Your Way®. Members can choose from multiple fitness packages and access thousands of well-known fitness locations nationwide. Find locations near home, work, and where you travel.

Health Net

HEALTH COACHING

The Health Coaching Program offers one-on-one telephonic health coaching and resources to provide additional support to members. A personal health coach helps with short- and long-term goal setting and achievement for lasting results. The program includes trackers and easy tools to use in the behavior change process. Personalized health coaching is available for weight loss, healthy eating, stress management, exercise, and tobacco cessation.

Kaiser Permanente

MYSTRENGTH

The myStrength app can help you set your goals and work towards them in ways that work for you. Choose the mental health and wellness areas you want to focus on.

Visit: kp.org/selfcareapps

PERSONAL WELLCONESS COACHING

Get help reaching your health goals. Work one-on-one with a wellness coach by phone at no cost!

Visit: kp.org/wellnesscoach

UnitedHealthcare

ONEPASS SELECT

One Pass Select™ is a subscription-based fitness and well-being program that supports a healthier lifestyle. You can choose from four membership tiers to access thousands of nationwide fitness networks.



Important documents and contacts



Documents and other helpful information

Click on the buttons below to view helpful documents and additional mental health resources.

Santa Clarita Community College District Benefits



Medical Plan Summaries



Other Resources

- [Tips to help a friend, from seizetheawkward.org](#)
- [Suicide Prevention Lifeline Live Chat](#)
- [Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance](#)
- [Depression Resources from Kaiser](#)




Contacts

PLAN	PHONE	WEBSITE	
HEALTH			
Anthem Blue Cross <ul style="list-style-type: none">Select HMOTraditional HMO	855-839-4524	anthem.com/ca/mcr/calpers	
Blue Shield of California <ul style="list-style-type: none">Blue Shield Access+ HMOBlue Shield Trio HMO	800-334-5847	myoptions.blueshieldca.com/calpers_active	
Health Net of California <ul style="list-style-type: none">Salud y Más HMO	888-926-4921	calpers.healthnetcalifornia.com/	
Kaiser Permanente HMO	855-380-7828	kp.org	
UnitedHealthcare <ul style="list-style-type: none">Alliance HMOHarmony HMO	877-359-3714	member.uhc.com/myuhc	
PERS Platinum & PERS Gold	800-405-2127 - Blue Shield of CA 855-633-4436 - Included Health	myoptions.blueshieldca.com/calpers_active includedhealth.com/microsite/calpers/	
Employee Assistance Program (EAP) EmployeeConnect from Lincoln Financial Group (All Employees)	888-628-4824	GuidanceResources.com Username: LFGsupport Password: LFGsupport1	
Dental PPO – Delta Dental	866-499-3001	deltadentalins.com	
Dental HMO – United Concordia	866-357-3304	unitedconcordia.com	
Vision Service Plan (VSP)	800-877-7195	vsp.com	



Contacts

PLAN	PHONE	WEBSITE	
LIFE/AD&D AND DISABILITY			
Life and AD&D – Lincoln Financial Group	800.423.2765	lfg.com	
VOLUNTARY PLANS AND DISCOUNTS			
Lincoln Financial Group – Voluntary Life and AD&D	800.423.2765	lfg.com	
Lincoln Financial Group – Voluntary Long-Term Disability		lfg.com	
American Fidelity – Voluntary Benefits <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Accident• Critical Illness• Disability Income• Cancer Insurance• Flexible Spending Account (Health and Dependent Care)• 403(b) Retirement Plan: American Fidelity	800.365.9180 951.600.0122	americanfidelity.com	
OTHER BENEFITS			
403(b) Retirement Plans: Envoy Plan Services & CalPERS 457	Envoy: 800.248.8858 CalPERS 457: 888.713.8244	envoyplanservices.com calpers457.com	
Retirement Accounts - CalPERS & CalSTRS	CalPERS - 888.225.7377 CalSTRS - 800.228.5453	calpers.ca.gov calstrs.com	
Alliant Medicare Solutions	888.835.2588	alliantmedicareolutions.com	



Thank you...

Thank you for taking the
time to learn more about
your mental health
offerings through
Santa Clarita
Community College
District.

