Did you know…

Asian American and Pacific Islander Communities (AA/PIs) Mental Health Facts

- There is very little research about mental health issues in these populations.
- Overall prevalence rates of diagnosable mental illnesses among AA/PIs are similar to those of the Caucasian population.
- Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders have the lowest rates of utilization of mental health services among ethnic populations.\(^i\)
- AA/PIs show higher levels of depressive symptoms than whites. South Asian refugees reported the highest rates among Asian groups. \(^ii\)
- The Chinese American Psychiatric Epidemiologic Study (CAPES study) found a lifetime prevalence rate of about 7% (lifetime) and a 3% rate over one year.
- The National Comorbidity Study (NCS) reported even higher rates of major depression among Chinese Americans (17% for lifetime and 10% current).\(^iii\)
- The word depression does not exit in certain Asian languages (E.g. Chinese).
- The suicide rates for Filipino (3.5%), Chinese (8.3%), and Japanese (9.1%) Americans are substantially lower than the suicide rate of white Americans (12.8%).\(^iv\)
- Among elderly women of all ethnic or racial groups, Asians have the highest suicide rate.\(^v\)
- According to mental health care providers: Asian American women ages 15-24 have a higher rate of suicide than Whites, Blacks, and Hispanics in that age group.\(^vi\)
- The Commonwealth Fund Survey of the Health of Adolescent Girls, reported that Asian American adolescent girls had the highest rates of depressive symptoms of all
Southeast Asians suffer from particularly high rates of depression and post-traumatic stress disorder and exhibit more than twice the need for outpatient mental health services than the general Asian population.  

Suicide rates are higher than the national average for some groups of Asian Americans.  

The suicide rate among Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders in California is similar to that of the total population.  

Many Southeast Asian refugees are at risk for post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) associated with trauma experienced before and after immigration to the U.S.  

- One study found that 70% of Southeast Asian refugees receiving mental health care met diagnostic criteria for PTSD.  
- In a study of Cambodian adolescents who survived Pol Pot's concentration camps, nearly half experienced PTSD and 41% suffered from depression 10 years after leaving Cambodia.  

Approximately 70 AAPI providers are available for every 100,000 AA/PIs in the U.S., compared to 173 per 100,000 whites.  

AA/PIs appear to have the extremely low utilization of mental health services relative to other U.S. populations.  

- In the CAPES study, only 17% of those experiencing problems sought care.  
- A national study concluded that Asian Americans were one quarter as likely as whites to seek mental health services and half as likely as Latinos and African Americans.
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