



Depression and Bipolar
Support Alliance

GRASSROOTS ADVOCACY

Fact Sheet

Depression and Bipolar Disorder

About DBSA

DBSA is the leading peer-directed national organization focusing on mood disorders: depression and bipolar disorder. These serious, all too often life-threatening—yet highly treatable—conditions combine to

- Affect 21 million American adults,
- Cost \$23 billion in work absenteeism, and
- Account for 90 percent of the nation's suicides

Prevalence

- Nearly **one in five adults** in the U.S. experiences a mental health condition each year
- Bipolar disorder affects **2.9%** of the U.S. adult population
- Major Depressive disorder affects **6.9%** of the U.S. adult population¹
- According to the National Advisory Mental Health Council, the treatment success rate for bipolar disorder is **80%**¹³

Economic Costs

- Major Depressive disorder is the **leading cause** of disability in the U.S.²
- The loss of productivity from mental health disorders costs **\$63 billion** each year³
- The unemployment rate for adults living with mental illness is **3-5 times higher** than for those without mental illness⁴
- Diagnoses of bipolar disorder in children **rose 4,000%** from 1996-2006⁵
- More than **50%** of students with a mental disorder, ages 14 and older, drop out of high school⁶
- High school dropouts cost the U.S. economy **\$1.8 billion** every year⁶

Informed by the First-person Lived Experience

Unlike other organizations of its kind, DBSA is created for and led by individuals who themselves have a mood disorder diagnosis. Our bylaws stipulate that over half of both the governing board of directors and paid professional staff must be individuals who have or have experienced depression or bipolar disorder.

Human Costs

- People living with bipolar disorder have the **highest rate** of substance abuse of all mental health diagnoses⁷
- **31%** of adults using homelessness services, report have a combination of these conditions⁸
- **70%** of youth in juvenile justice systems have at least one mental health condition⁹
- **25-50%** of individuals with bipolar disorder attempt suicide at least once during their lifetime¹⁰

Treatment

- **89.3 million** Americans live in a federally-designated Mental Health Professional Shortage area¹¹
- Peer support is an **evidence-based** successful treatment model¹²
- Individuals who use **peer support services**, show significant growth in self-esteem and personal empowerment because they are participating by choice
- Programs with a **peer provider** on their team have better gains in quality of life, self-image, outlook and social support and fewer major problems
- **300 DBSA** peer support **chapters**, offer **630 meetings** representing over **53,000** people nationally

Citations

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- ⁴Burke-Miller J.K. et al (April 2006) “Demographic Characteristics and Employment Among People with Severe Mental Illness in Multisite Study” *Community Mental Health Journal* 42((2)
- ⁵Moreno C. Laje G Blanco C. et al National trends in the outpatient diagnosis and treatment of bi-polar disorder in youth. *Arch Gen Psychiatry* 2007: 64(9) 1032-1039
- ⁶Alliance for Excellent Education (2013) “Building a Grad Nation”,
- ⁷McGregor, S (2007) Substance Abuse and Bipolar Disorder
- ⁸Burt, M (2001) “What will it take to end homelessness?” Urban Institute: Washington D.C. p. 3
- ⁹Glaze L. & James DJ (2006, September). Mental Health Problems of Prison and Jail Inmates. US Department of Justice
- ¹⁰Risk assessment and psychosocial intervention for suicidal patients. Chesin M. Stanley B., *Bipolar Disorder*. 2013 Jun 20
- ¹¹U.S. Department of Human Services *Designated Mental Health Care Health Professional Shortage Areas* Nov 2011
- ¹²SAMSHA 2012, 13Davidson