

Abstract

Negative environmental triggers such as pollution, climate change, urban pollution, noise pollution, chemical pollutants Metals, microplastics and pharmaceuticals in the environment can affect mental health (Filipova et al. , 2020). Evans (2003) states that there is a direct correlation of mental health effects and the physical environment for example the increase of housing prices is correlated to elevation of distress also poor housing quality increases mental health stressors as a result of poor quality of housing. with Low-income communities have a higher risk of developing mental health issues due to the danger in the environment they are forced to live in. Schizophrenia, depression, and bipolar disorders are some of the most common mental health problems that low-income black and Latino communities must face (Bienkowski, 2019). These communities are exposed to many hazardous chemicals which hinder their mental health.

Regis .(2021). The Benefits of Environmental Health.Regis College.
<https://online.regiscollege.edu/blog/environmental-factors-that-affect-health/>

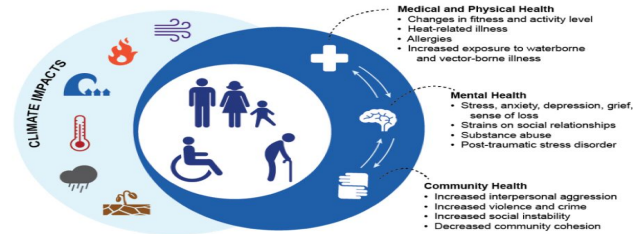
The Benefits of Environmental Health

It's not only important to strive for optimal environmental health. It's also beneficial, both for individuals and for their surrounding communities. Some of the benefits are:



Sources: American Public Health Association, Verywell Health, World Health Organization

An Illustration on How Climate Change Impacts Physical, Mental, and Community Health



At the center of the diagram are human figures representing adults, children, older adults, and people with disabilities. The left circle depicts climate impacts including air quality, wildfire, sea level rise and storm surge, heat storms, and drought. The right circle shows the three interconnected health domains that will be affected by climate impacts—Medical and Physical Health, Mental Health, and Community Health.

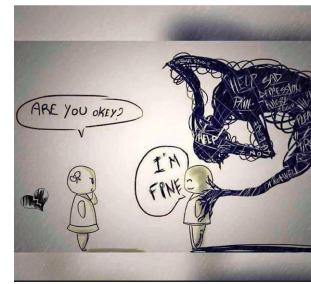
Image source: U.S. Global Change Research Program. 2016. The Impacts of Climate Change on Human Health in the United States: A Scientific Assessment.

U.S. Global Research Program. (2016). An illustration of How climate change impacts physical mental and community health. American Psychiatric Association.

<https://www.psychiatry.org/patients-families/climate-change-and-mental-health-connections/public-perception>

Minority communities are by far not the largest contributors to climate change, however they are more likely to suffer from the effects due to a lack of access to services. In order to make quality mental health services more accessible to minority communities, programs and services must be implemented through the support of public policy and legislation. Advocacy is needed at all levels of government in order to amplify the voices of those that are in underserved communities, and those that are impacted most by environmental injustice (Lofton,2021).

Wellmore Behavioral Health (2021). How Environmental Factors Impact Mental Health. Wellness Behavioral Wellness For A Lifetime. <https://www.wellmore.org/post/how-environmental-factors-impact-mental-health>



Education

Anxiety or concern about the environment is a natural reaction to such a huge and very serious threat. When the anxiety or worry begins to affect how we work and really hinders use from taking action toward living a meaningful life, it has become a maladaptive and needs more awareness. People can be affected by maladaptive eco-anxiety even if they have had no direct negative experience with an environmental disaster. It can restrict a person's ability to grow, have hopes for a better future and it significantly lowers their quality of life especially for the minorities population.

Barriers

- Lack of health insurance
- Unfunded/underfunded services
- Social class
- Race and ethnicity (ex. minorities)
- Limited/lack of access to services
- Geography
- Immigration status

5 Ways to End Stigma

- Educate yourself and others about mental health
- Share Real-life examples of people with mental health disorders
- Listen and support others with mental health concerns.
- Share stories of overcoming mental health disorders
- Explain how mental health has a range of symptoms

References

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JDKCEv5Yw>

<https://www.apa.org/news/press/releases/2017/03/mental-health-climate.pdf>

<https://www.ehn.org/air-pollution-mental-health-2639890370.html>

<https://ieep.eu/uploads/articles/attachments/2bf2051-b305-4338-9770-ae8071320b1a/Mental%20Health%20and%20the%20Environment.pdf?v=63775265428#~:text=There%20is%20strong%20evidence%20that,and%20exacerbation%20of%20psychiatric%20problems>