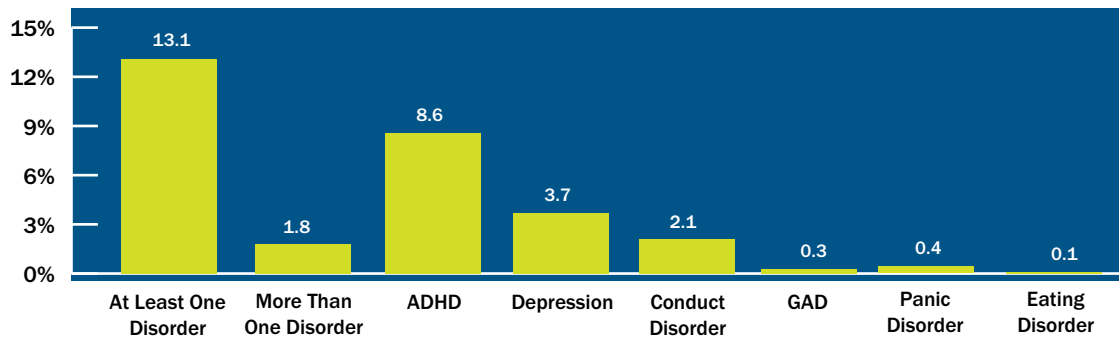




Only Half of Youth With Common Mental Health Disorders Receive Professional Services

One in eight youth aged 8 to 15 (13.1%) met diagnostic criteria¹ for any of six common mental health disorders in the past year, but only half (50.6%) of those with a diagnosable disorder had consulted a mental health professional, according to a new report published in the journal *Pediatrics*.² Researchers measured the prevalence among youth³ of attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) (8.6%), depression (3.7%), conduct disorder (2.1%), generalized anxiety disorder (GAD) (0.3%), panic disorder (0.4%), eating disorders (anorexia and bulimia) (0.1%), and more than one disorder (1.8%). Of special concern is that relatively few youth with anxiety disorders (i.e., GAD and panic disorder) receive treatment (32.2%), compared to youth with other disorders (ADHD: 47.7%; conduct disorder: 46.4%; and depression: 43.8%). Additionally, while few racial/ethnic differences in rates of disorders were observed overall, Mexican-American and African-American youth reported receiving lower rates of professional treatment than White youth.

Past-Year Prevalence of DSM-IV Mental Health Disorders Among Youth Aged 8-15



Source: Merikangas, K. R., He, J., Brody, D., Fisher, P. W., Bourdon, K., and Koretz, D. S. (2009). Prevalence and treatment of mental disorders among U.S. children in the 2001-2004 NHANES. *Pediatrics*, 125(1), p. 75-81.

Notes:

- ¹ According to the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, 4th Edition (DSM-IV)*, using the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) Diagnostic Interview Schedule for Children (DISC).
- ² The report represents the first of its kind and scope. It includes comprehensive prevalence and treatment patterns of mental health disorders in children and adolescents using a nationally representative sample.
- ³ Sample included 3,042 participants interviewed between 2001 and 2004 as part of the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES), a collaboration between NIMH and the National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS) of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

Prepared by the Center for Health and Justice (CHJ) at TASC. CHJ works to build, enhance, and sustain strong and vibrant communities by promoting policies and practices that stop the cycle of drugs and crime. We conduct research and evaluations, and offer policy analysis, trainings, and technical assistance in the fields of health and justice. For more information, visit us online at www.centerforhealthandjustice.org.

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