Stigma Information Sheet

Definition

Prevention

Understanding

Recognizing

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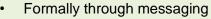
Stigma are negative attitudes or discrimination against individuals or groups based on a particular characteristic, associated with substance use disorders (SUDs) as well as other physical, mental and behavioral health conditions.

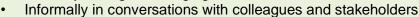
STIGMA IS PREVENTABLE!!



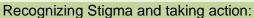
- Use language that puts the "person" before the condition or experience. Give value to the worth of the person
- How we refer to people with substance-related conditions may inadvertently elicit and perpetuate stigmatizing attitudes
- Stigmatizing language impacts investment and availability of recovery supports, access, and willingness to participate in recovery
- Describing Substance Use Disorder (SUD) as treatable helps

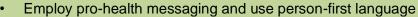
Stigma can be practiced by individuals, organizations and agencies, communities and society. Prevention practitioners are in a unique position to reduce the stigma surrounding substance misuse and mental illness:

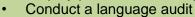




- · Often work across the continuum of care
- They have opportunities to influence professional in various settings including mental health, human services, and public health.







- Support and enhance individual coping strategies
- Provide information and support
- · Shape public views on substance use disorders
- · Engage community stakeholders in discussions
- Change laws and policies that contribute to stigma



Individual Level Strategies

- Use "person first" language refer to people having a problem which can be addressed, rather than the person as the problem
- Be aware of the influence of trauma and unintentional bias

Public Level Strategies



- Engage community stakeholders in outreach efforts and developing messages
- Convey the potential for a range of positive changes and pathways to recovery

Organizational Level Strategies

- Identify the intended audience, and how to use language when communicating with this group
- Correct negative attitudes held by colleagues, coworkers, and potential allies
- Leverage the potential opportunities I have in my prevention role to dispel myths about addiction
- Prioritize maximizing connection, worth, inclusion, and community membership
- Provide information and support
- Update laws and policies that promote anti-stigma approach

Addictionary® (recoveryanswers.org) This is an online dictionary of addiction-related terms to help the general public and health care professionals "modify their language about addiction."



The PTTC Network uses affirming language to promote the application of evidence-based and culturally informed practices.

<u>Words Matter: How Language Choice Can Reduce Stigma</u> This resource provides an overview of language and outlines strategies to assess and develop stigma-free messages that "are positive, productive, and inclusive."

<u>Stigma Resources from the TTC Networks (June 2022)</u> This list of resources from the Prevention Technology Transfer Center Network, Addiction Technology Transfer Center Network, and Mental Health Technology Transfer Center Network.

<u>Engaging People Who Use Drugs in Prevention Efforts: Strategies for Reducing Stigma</u> This tool explores actions practitioners can take to reduce stigma toward members of the drug-using community in order to better engage them as partners in prevention efforts.