



STIGMA & SUBSTANCE USE DISORDER (SUD)

INTRODUCTION

This snapshot of information is intended to inform individuals, parents, professionals, and providers of how stigma around Substance Use Disorder (SUD) impacts Hispanic & Latino populations in the US.

WHAT IS STIGMA?

Stigma is defined as having a negative or discriminatory attitude toward a specific characteristic or attribute. Stigma can be observed in other people, institutional policies formed by government or private organizations, or even within ourselves in the form of internalized shame also called "self-stigma".¹

SUD STIGMA AND THE HISPANIC AND LATINO POPULATIONS

Latinos' drug addiction stigma decreases with acculturation, but remains higher among the most acculturated Latinos compared to African-Americans. These attitudes may pose a barrier to treatment for Latino drug users. Stigma is higher among immigrant Latinos with low English proficiency compared to their U.S. - and foreign-born counterparts.⁵

IMPACT OF STIGMA AROUND SUD

- Reluctance to seek treatment
- Misperceptions around substance use & treatment
- Opportunity restriction
- Dehumanization
- Poor mental health among those with SUD
- Relationship conflict
- Harmful language that perpetuates stigma^{1,2,3,4}

How to Reduce Stigma



LANGUAGE MATTERS



Use person-first language such as: "person with a SUD" instead of "addict".

Don't belittle others' experiences. Encourage and acknowledge strengths.⁴

Things You Can Do To Fight Stigma

1. Talk Openly About Mental Health.
2. Educate Yourself And Others.
3. Be Conscious Of Language.
4. Encourage Equality Between Physical And Mental Illness.
5. Show Compassion For Those With Mental Illness.
6. Choose Empowerment over Shame.
7. Be Honest About Treatment.
8. Let The Media Know When they are stigmatizing.
9. Don't Harbor Self Stigma.⁶



Align with Organizations & Campaigns

Connect with local, state, national, and global organizations in-person, online, or through social media to find available resources in your area.

Follow initiatives such as "Stamp Out Stigma" that encourage conversations around SUD and mental health.¹

REFERENCES

1. [Stigma, Prejudice, and Discrimination Against People with Mental Illness](#)
2. [The Opioid Crisis and the Hispanic/Latino Population: An Urgent Issue](#)
3. [Exploring the public stigma of substance use disorder through community-based participatory research](#)
4. [Reducing the Stigma of Addiction](#)
5. [Acculturation and drug addiction stigma among Latinos and African Americans: An examination of a church-based sample](#)
6. [9 Ways to Fight Mental Health Stigma](#)

Click the link below to access our website for additional information.

[National Hispanic and Latino Addiction Technology Transfer Center](#)