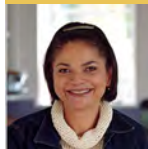


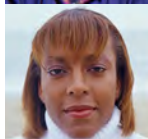
Ohioans Experiences with...

Mental Illnesses among Coworkers, Friends, and Family

Results from The Health Foundation of Greater Cincinnati's Ohio Health Issues Poll 2006



According to the President's New Freedom Commission on Mental Health (2003), about 5–7% of U.S. adults have a severe mental illness. The 2006 *Ohio Health Issues Poll* asked Ohioans if they had ever observed what they thought were symptoms of severe mental illnesses in their coworkers, friends, or family members. Responses do not reflect actual prevalence or diagnoses of severe mental illnesses. Rather, they reflect the observations of Ohioans.



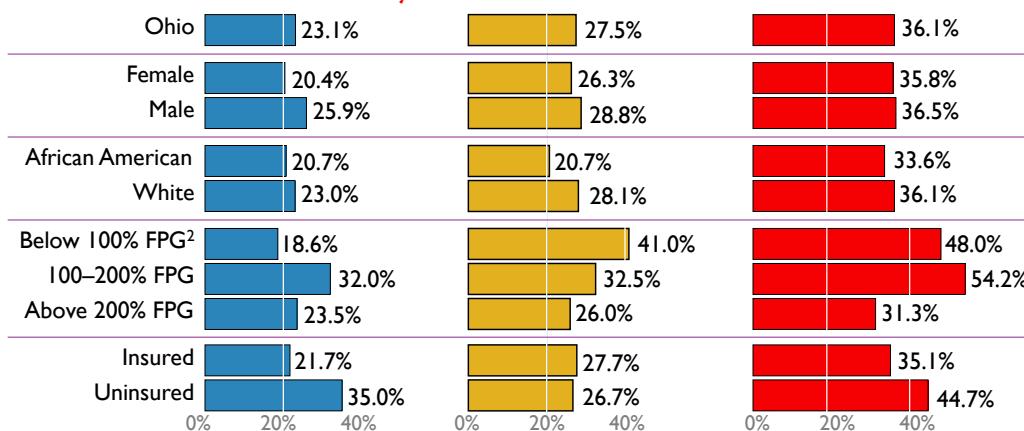
Severe mental illnesses were described to survey participants in this way:

Severe mental illnesses are serious chronic illnesses that affect the brain. People with these illnesses may hear voices, have hallucinations or serious delusions, experience profound depression or paralyzing anxiety, or have uncontrollable mood swings. These disorders can profoundly disrupt a person's thinking, ability to relate to others, and ability to cope with the demands of life. When the illness is active, a person may lose touch with reality or may not be able to process information normally.

On average, 3 in 10 Ohioans reported they had observed *symptoms* of severe mental illnesses in coworkers, friends, or family members. Observations were higher for friends and family members, most likely because people are closer to friends and family members and spend more time with them than with coworkers. Symptoms may be harder to hide from friends and family than from coworkers. Also, many people with severe mental illnesses do not work or may only work part-time.

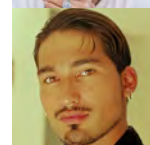
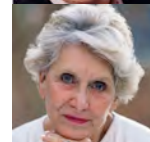
There were minor differences in observations between the sexes or African Americans and whites. There were, however, major differences between the insured and uninsured and among income levels. Again, however, these are reports of observed symptoms, not prevalence rates. People with higher incomes and with insurance have better access to treatment and may have their symptoms under better control. People with severe mental illnesses are often disabled from working at all or they work part-time and have lower personal and family incomes than average.

% of Ohioans who have observed what they thought were symptoms of severe mental illness in any of their coworkers, friends, or family members¹



¹ Percent of respondents reporting "don't know" are not included in these charts.

² The federal poverty guideline (FPG) in 2005 was an annual income of \$19,350 for a family of 4.



These findings are from The Health Foundation of Greater Cincinnati's Ohio Health Issues Poll, part of the Ohio Poll conducted May 9–21, 2006, by the Institute for Policy Research at the University of Cincinnati. A random sample of 841 adults from throughout Ohio was interviewed by telephone. In 95 of 100 cases, the statewide estimates will be accurate to $\pm 3.4\%$. In addition to sampling error, there are other sources of variation inherent in public opinion studies, such as non-response, question wording, or context effects that can introduce error or bias. For more information about the Ohio Health Issues Poll, please visit www.healthfoundation.org/ohip.html.