



Around 10-20% of adolescents worldwide, experience some sort of mental health disorder.

Having an untreated mental health condition in teenage years, can have severe consequences for physical and mental health in adulthood according to WHO, the World Health Organization. Even though 16% of global diseases and injuries among adolescents are because of mental health conditions, they remain underdiagnosed and undertreated.

“A great deal of mental health conditions are both preventable and treatable, especially if we start looking after our mental health at an early age,” says UN Secretary-General António Guterres.

The overarching objective of World Health Day is to increase awareness about psychological disorders and combat mental health disorders to achieve improved mental health globally. This year the theme is “Young people and mental health in a changing world.”

http://www.who.int/mental_health/world-mental-health-day/2018/en/

Adolescence and the early years of adulthood are often associated with a lot of changes. Young people are faced with multiple periods of transition e.g. changing schools, leaving home, starting at the university or at a new job. According to the Finnish Association for Mental Health, of all mental health conditions 50% starts before the age of 14, and 75% starts before the age of 24. Therefore, treating people as early as possible is vital to secure their well-being in adulthood.

“Poor mental health during adolescence has an impact on educational achievement and increases the risk of alcohol and substance use and violent behaviour. Suicide is a leading cause of death in young people,” says Guterres in his message on World Mental Health Day.

WHO has responded to this by putting into motion several plans to combat mental health conditions such as emotional disorders, childhood behavioral disorders, eating disorders, psychosis or self-harm and suicide.

Globally there is a gap between high-income and low-income countries when it comes to mental health, which WHO attempts to address. Regardless of age, of the 14% of people globally who have a mental health condition 75% of them are from low-income countries where they do not have access to the treatment they need.