

Resources

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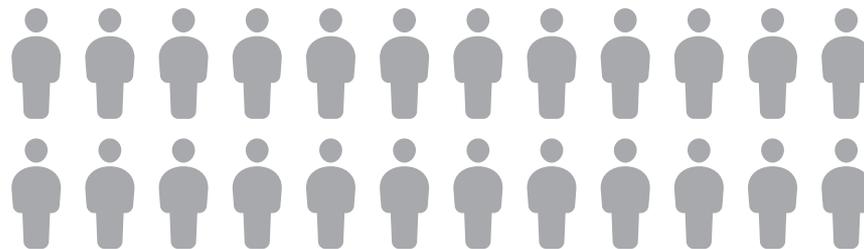
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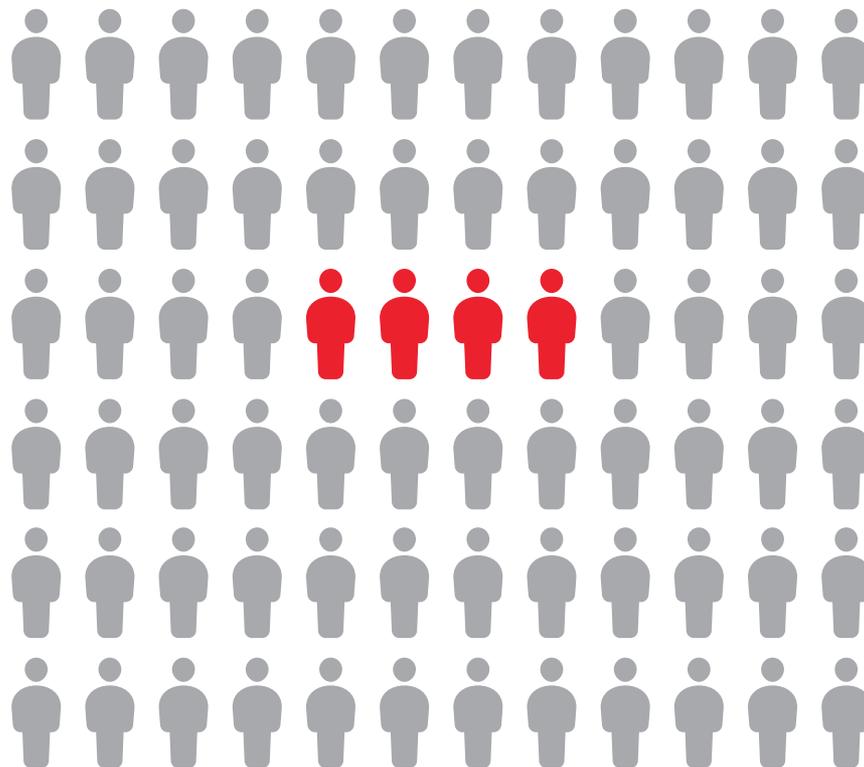
If you would like to view this DVD on-line, please go to:

<http://www.iplayerhd.com/playerframe/share/88abbad0-cdc3-4d8f-953c-fd3a804b34e8>



**GET THE
FACTS:**

GUN VIOLENCE & MENTAL ILLNESS



“All the focus on the small number of people with mental illness who are violent serves to make us feel safer by displacing and limiting the threat of violence to a small, well-defined group. But the sad and frightening truth is that the vast majority of homicides are carried out by outwardly normal people in the grip of all too ordinary human aggression to whom we provide nearly unfettered access to deadly force.”

“Gun Debate, A Misguided Focus on Mental Illness”
Richard Friedman, M.D., December 17, 2012

The Anti-Stigma Project is a joint collaboration between On Our Own of Maryland, Inc. and the Maryland Mental Hygiene Administration, and is committed to reducing the discrimination and stigma associated with mental illness. We have 20 years of experience working with a diverse group of stakeholders to identify and change attitudes and beliefs that create discrimination and stigma, which in turn significantly reduce the chances of recovering from mental health and co-occurring conditions.

Our mission is to involve all participants, both within the mental health community and those connected to it, in such areas as government, law enforcement, education, addictions, and somatic healthcare in the search for solutions. Part of that process involves providing information based on scientific research to help dispel the misconceptions that often lead to stigmatizing assumptions.

The recent events involving mass shootings and frightening acts of violence have raised questions about the association between mental health and violence. We believe that facts regarding gun violence and mental illness — *not opinions, not theories, not personal agendas, but facts* — have been missing from much of the media coverage and public dialogue.

Therefore, the purpose of this fact sheet and DVD is to provide you with accurate information and data from nationally-known and respected experts regarding violence and mental illness.

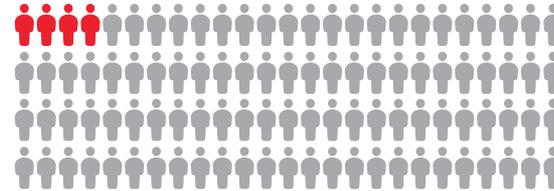
The two videos on this DVD are short and to-the-point and feature both a prominent local expert as well as two national experts in this arena.

It is our belief that productive discourse needs a foundation of facts. We believe that you will find this information helpful as you move forward in your decision-making process this legislative session to find meaningful and lasting solutions to reducing violence in Maryland.

The Facts

- Only **4%** of violence in the United States is attributable to someone diagnosed with a serious mental illness.

That means that **96%** of the violence *will not be addressed* if the current focus on this small part of the population continues.



- Someone with a serious mental illness is **2.5x - 12x** more likely to be the victim of a crime than to commit one.

And yet, the focus continues to be on the small percentage of crimes perpetrated by those with mental illness rather than the high rates of victimization.

- We know that substance abuse is a risk factor for violence, but our current focus on criminalization, rather than treatment, has proven to be ineffective in reducing the scourge of addiction in our communities.

Treatment works and is cost-effective, and expansion of our treatment resources is desperately needed.

- Prohibiting entire classes of individuals from exercising a constitutional right based on their status as mental health treatment recipients is discrimination.

If the emphasis continues to be on those with mental health challenges, the constitutional rights of an entire class of individuals may be compromised, not because of facts but because of stigma. ***Equally problematic, the actual issue of violence will continue to go unresolved.***