More likely to share.
Today’s youth grew up hearing about anxiety, depression, eating disorders and suicide. They are more open about their mental health than previous generations and they are more likely to talk with parents and friends or post on social media about their mental health challenges.

More likely to seek treatment.
Youth and young adults today are more likely to seek mental health treatment including online therapy, counseling with a licensed psychologist and inpatient mental health and substance use treatment. Asking for and receiving help carries less stigma than it did for previous generations.

More accepting.
Over 85% of surveyed youth report that they would be comfortable making friends or working with someone who has been diagnosed with a mental illness. More than half say they would be comfortable living with, dating or voting for someone who has a mental illness.

Receiving better support, information and resources.
More than 80% of surveyed youth agree that mental health resources are better today than when their parents were young. TV shows and social media address mental health regularly and younger celebrities are sharing their mental health challenges. There is more awareness today about person-first language and increased sensitivity toward those who may be suffering. Federal laws are helping align the importance of mental health with physical health. And, telehealth and apps have increased access to mental health support.

The Bottom Line
Stigma around mental illness is decreasing as:
- More people speak out
- Mainstream media includes individuals with mental and behavioral health diagnoses
- Conversations about mental health move from a private to a public space

The words “mental health” are no longer associated with severe mental illness. Mental health is recognized as a vitally important aspect of our overall health.