

*5 Strategies for Increased*  
**Mental Health  
Awareness**



**RAVE**  
MOBILE SAFETY

# Communities Can't Afford to Overlook Mental Health

The mental health crisis in the United States has ballooned into a massive problem for many communities. [44 million adults](#) in the U.S. experience mental illness, yet [1 out of 5](#) of these individuals say they can't receive the treatment they need.

This gap in care means that people suffering from mental illness are often inappropriately shuffled to institutions such as emergency rooms or prison. This misled practice costs the United States over [\\$30 billion](#) each year.

While this nationwide problem can seem too massive to fix, remedying this crisis starts with a combined effort from local government officials, first responders, and 9-1-1. Implementing these five strategies can help reduce the negative impact mental illness can have in your community, pave the way for improved response in critical situations, and increase overall mental health awareness.

# 1

## Promote mental health awareness

The more a person knows about mental illness, the more equipped they are to recognize it and act. When a community is educated about mental illness, they can spot the signs of it more easily and take the appropriate steps towards an impactful action.

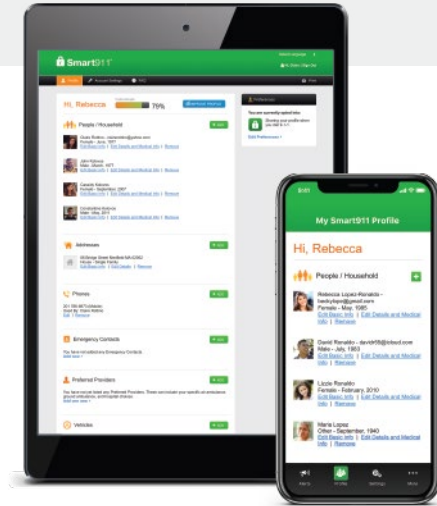


According to the [National Alliance on Mental Illness \(NAMI\)](#), the first step to promoting better mental health awareness is addressing stigma. NAMI says that stigma causes negative views of people suffering from mental illness. Those with a mental health condition can internalize this stigma, making it more difficult for them to reach out and get the help they need.

NAMI and similar organizations like [Active Minds](#) and [MentalHealth.gov](#) offer many resources to help you spread awareness and start positive conversations about mental health in your community.

# 2

## Create safety profiles



While educating your community about mental health is important, 9-1-1 call takers, first responders and others who work in the public safety space also need to be informed if an individual is suffering from a mental illness. This can be especially important for first responders, who need to know if they will be responding to a call involving someone who acts erratically or is unable to comply with orders.

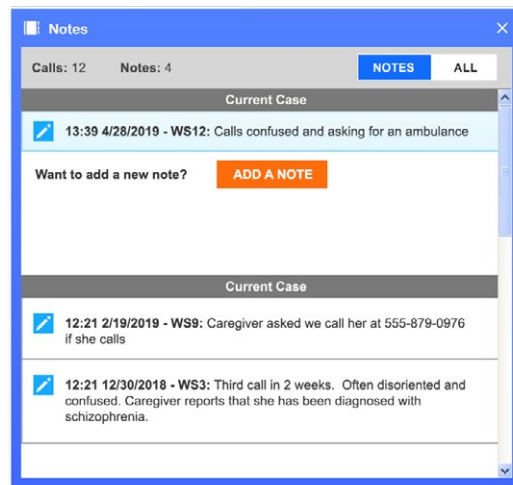
With programs such as [Smart911](#), members of the community can fill out safety profiles that will be visible to call takers if they telephone 9-1-1. People can indicate if they, or anyone in their household has applicable mental health issues that first responders need to be aware of.

Additionally, these profiles can also indicate health history and medication, making it easier for first responders to understand the situation and assist appropriately. Because this information is critical to many different parties during an emergency, there must also be strong cross-departmental communication. For example, with products such as [Rave 911 Suite™](#), 9-1-1 can share these safety profiles and details about a person's mental health with police while they're en route to respond to a call.

# 3

## Include notes for 9-1-1

Even if a person does not fill out a safety profile identifying their mental illness, 9-1-1 call takers can still share information among themselves and with external teams about a particular caller. For example, Rave 911 Suite allows call takers to attach notes about particular callers, such as if they regularly phone in with non-emergencies.



Frequent 9-1-1 callers can be a huge strain on local resources. Not only can they hold up call takers from answering more pressing calls, but they can also demand resources that aren't necessary, such as requesting an ambulance when they are not having a medical emergency. If call takers can leave notes flagging these individuals, their colleagues and first responders can know if someone requires a wellness check instead of an ambulance, and allocate their resources appropriately.

# 4

## Establish a trained team

While there are many solutions that can help 9-1-1 and first responders identify individuals with a history of mental health issues, one of the most valuable resources can be a team that is specifically trained to work with these members of the community.

Unlike first responders, a [Crisis Intervention Team \(CIT\)](#) specializes in communicating with mentally ill members of the community. Even if a community cannot dedicate the resources to building this team, there are many telepsychiatry options that allow first responders to use iPads and other technologies to connect with these specialists.

Telepsychiatry evaluations place the onus on mental health professionals to determine whether a person needs to be held for evaluation, prescribed medication for their symptoms, or let go. This cuts down on costs by diverting people from incarceration, increases positive outcomes between residents and police, and allows first responders to get back on the job and respond to the next call.





# 5

## Encourage community reporting

Mental health awareness doesn't just fall on those in charge of keeping their community safe. Residents need a way to report concerns or issues before they escalate into a larger problem. For example, in the aftermath of many school shootings, students and teachers sometimes said they had earlier concerns about the perpetrator but didn't know where or how they could report this apprehension and remain anonymous.

Anonymous tip tools, such as [Rave Eyewitness](#), empowers your community to report and prevent dangerous incidents. Through discreet and anonymous two-way texting, community members can share concerns about an individual's mental health, in addition to instances of crime, weapons on school grounds, bullying, among other reasons.

By providing anonymous and safe reporting, people can be valuable eyes and ears in their community without fear of repercussions. It keeps residents engaged and allows them to proactively help make their neighborhood safer.



# Learn how **Rave Mobile Safety** can help solve the mental health crisis in your community

Mental health is a critical issue for communities across the country. Implementing the right tools and technologies provides a 360-degree approach to addressing mental health, from activating public safety teams to engaging residents.

Rave 911 Suite empowers communities to make mental health needs and issues known to internal teams whose priority is public safety. This solution also makes it easier for residents to report concerns and be proactive in their community.

Learn how Rave 911 Suite can help increase community-wide awareness and response to the growing mental health crisis.

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