State Statistics: Georgia

Mental Illness Is Common
• Of Georgia’s approximately 9.7 million residents, close to 349,000 adults live with serious mental illness and about 111,000 children live with serious mental health conditions.

Untreated Mental Illness has Deadly and Costly Consequences
• In 2006, 923 Georgians died by suicide. Suicide is almost always the result of untreated or under-treated mental illness.
• Nationally, we lose one life to suicide every 15.8 minutes. Suicide is the eleventh-leading cause of death overall and is the third-leading cause of death among youth and young adults aged 15-24.
• During the 2006-07 school year, approximately 50 percent of Georgia students aged 14 and older living with serious mental health conditions who receive special education services dropped out of high school.

Public Mental Health Services are Inadequate to Meet Needs
• Georgia’s public mental health system provides services to only 21 percent of adults who live with serious mental illnesses in the state.
• Georgia spent just $61 per capita on mental health agency services in 2006, or $565 million. This was just 1.7 percent of total state spending that year.
• In 2006, 52 percent of Georgia state mental health agency spending was on community mental health services; 48 percent was spent on state hospital care. Nationally, an average of 70 percent is spent on community mental health services and 28 percent on state hospital care.

Criminal Justice Systems Bear a Heavy Burden
• In 2006, 2,631 children were incarcerated in Georgia’s juvenile justice system. Nationally, approximately 70 percent of youth in juvenile justice systems experience mental health disorders, with 20 percent experiencing a severe mental health condition.
• In 2008, approximately 12,600 adults with mental illnesses were incarcerated in prisons in Georgia. Additionally, an estimated 31 percent of female and 14 percent of male jail inmates nationally live with serious mental illness.

Many Residents Rely on Public Services for Needed Care
• Approximately 12.2 percent of Georgians are enrolled in Medicaid.
• Approximately 1,682,000 Georgians are uninsured.

Housing is Unaffordable for People who Rely on SSI or SSDI
• The average rent for a studio apartment in Georgia is 97 percent of the average Supplemental Security Income (SSI) payment, making housing unaffordable for adults living with serious mental illness who rely on SSI.
\[1\] Holzer, III, C.E. and Nguyen, H.T., psy.utmb.edu.
\[5\] U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs, Data Accountability Center, Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Data, “State Rank-Ordered Tables,” Table 1.3b, Data Analysis System (DANS), (July 15, 2008), https://www.idea.data.org/StateRankOrderedTables.asp.
\[8\] Ibid.
\[9\] Ibid.
\[10\] Ibid.
\[16\] Ibid