

After Father's Day, a Reminder to Check in on the Men in Our Lives

Father's Day has just passed, and we hope all of the fathers, grandfathers, stepfathers, father figures, caregivers, mentors, and men who show up for others felt appreciated and celebrated.

The day is often filled with cards, cookouts, calls, and family traditions. But it can also be a meaningful reminder to look beyond the celebration and check in on the emotional well-being of the men in our lives.

Many men carry significant responsibilities quietly. They may be caring for children or aging parents, managing work and financial pressures, coping with grief, navigating relationship stress, living with trauma, or trying to be strong for everyone else. Too often, that strength is mistaken for silence. And too often, silence is mistaken for being okay.

Mental health challenges among men are common, but support is not always easy to ask for. According to the National Institute of Mental Health, nearly one in five adult men in the United States experienced a mental illness in 2022. Yet men with mental illness were less likely than women to receive mental health treatment. The gap matters, because untreated stress, depression, anxiety, trauma, and substance use can affect relationships, physical health, work, family life, and overall quality of life.

The numbers also remind us why conversations matter. In 2023, the suicide rate among males in the United States was nearly four times higher than among females. In New Jersey, NAMI reports that more than 1.3 million adults experience mental illness each year, and 769 New Jersey lives were lost to suicide in 2022.

These statistics are sobering, but they are not the whole story. Men's mental health is not only about crisis. It is also about prevention, connection, and making it easier for someone to say, "I'm not myself," "I'm overwhelmed," or "I think I need help."

Sometimes support begins with a simple question: How are you really doing? It may mean checking in after Father's Day with a dad who seemed tired, a friend who has pulled back, a coworker under pressure, or a loved one who always says he is "fine." It may mean encouraging someone to talk with a primary care doctor, counselor, peer support, or mental health professional. It may also mean reminding him that asking for help is not weakness. It is care. It is courage. It is a step toward healing.

Bridgeway Behavioral Health Services is here to help individuals and families find support, treatment, and hope. Through community-based mental health services, crisis support, outpatient care, urgent care, supportive housing, outreach, and recovery-focused programs, Bridgeway helps people take the next step toward wellness.

As June comes to a close, let's continue the conversation. Let's celebrate the men who show up for others, and let's also make sure they know they do not have to carry everything alone.

Mental health matters. Support is available. And Bridgeway is here to help.