

## Anti-stigma

### What is stigma and why is it bad?

### Anti-stigma do's and don'ts



- Mental illnesses affect 5-9 percent of Idaho children and adolescents each year. That is approximately one or more students per classroom.
- One in five families in Idaho is personally affected by mental illness.
- Mental illnesses are real, common, and treatable.

Stigma is a cluster of negative attitudes and beliefs that motivate people to fear, reject, avoid, and discriminate against those who have a mental illness.

#### **Stigma is about disrespect**

- Fear of stigma discourages individuals who have a mental illness and their families from getting the help they need.
- Undiagnosed mental illness can affect academic performance, interpersonal relationships and absenteeism.
- **Do** use respectful language such as: People first language.  
*Examples:* person with schizophrenia (not schizophrenic); person who has asthma (not asthmatic); person with diabetes (not diabetic).
- **Do** emphasize abilities not limitations.
- **Do** tell someone who is using stigmatizing language or behavior to stop.
- **Don't** portray successful persons with disabilities as super-human.
- **Don't** use generic terms such as retarded.
- **Don't** use terms such as crazy, lunatic, manic-depressive, slow functioning, or normal.