

SUCCESS OVER STIGMA



COMBATS HARMFUL STIGMA SURROUNDING MENTAL ILLNESS BY EMPOWERING CONSUMERS TO TELL THEIR STORIES

Success Over Stigma (SOS) is a consumer-driven, community advocacy and educational outreach program designed to combat the three most prevalent forms of stigma: community perception, internal stigma and external stigma. This is accomplished by recruiting and training mental health clients to share their successful stories of recovery with others.



Community Advocacy and Educational Outreach

"A YEAR AND A HALF INTO MY SOBRIETY I CONNECTED WITH [SUCCESS OVER STIGMA] AS A WAY TO GIVE BACK TO THE COMMUNITY THAT HAS SO FREELY GIVEN [ME] SUPPORT AND [HELPED] ME TO [RECOVER] FROM MY SUBSTANCE ABUSE."

~ SOS ADVOCATE



ABOUT INTERIM: Interim, Inc. is a private nonprofit organization whose mission is to provide services and affordable housing, supporting members of our community with mental illness to build productive and satisfying lives. Interim, Inc. provides a wide variety of residential treatment, affordable supportive housing and social rehabilitation services to adults with psychiatric disabilities. Our services support more than 2000 clients each year. We help our clients achieve wellness and recovery and build communities where they are able to live, work, learn, and participate fully.

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Changing Public Perceptions of Mental Illness



COMBATING STIGMA WITH EDUCATIONAL OUTREACH AND ADVOCACY

Due to advancements in medical science, we now know that mental illness is not a ‘personal weakness’ but a biological condition that can be treated. Despite this knowledge, the prejudices and misinformation surrounding mental illness remain.

Over time, those with mental illness may internalize negative messages and stigmatize themselves. They may pretend that nothing is wrong and refuse to seek treatment.

Media and news stories often depict those with mental illness as violent, dangerous, uneducated and unproductive. Because of the stigma associated with their disability, they are often denied employment, education and housing opportunities.

RECOVERY THROUGH STORYTELLING

Participants say that public speaking has helped them to manage their illness. “Every time I speak about my illness, [it] becomes much smaller, less of a monster.

EMPOWERING CONSUMERS BY TEACHING LEADERSHIP

SOS speakers have told their stories to dozens of schools, businesses, civic groups and faith communities, helping to educate the public. They also serve as speakers at inpatient psychiatric units, spreading the hopeful message that recovery is an attainable goal. Other activities include training to sit on local Behavioral Health Committees, where consumer representation is needed, as well as State committees focusing on peer leadership. Finally, SOS participants help plan and execute an annual peer-driven Embracing Wellness and Recovery Conference.

SCHEDULE A PRESENTATION

Our SOS speakers are available for presentations to business groups, service clubs, community health groups, faith groups. Speakers are trained in both panel discussion and individual presentation skills. Call (831) 800-7530 for more information or to schedule a presentation.