

## How to start a conversation about mental health

Wearing a lime green ribbon as you go about your daily life is a great way to create opportunities to talk about mental health in your community. In fact, according to a survey 3.8 million Californians saw someone wearing a lime green ribbon and almost half had a conversation about mental health because of the green ribbon! But what do you say when someone asks about your green ribbon? Here are a few quick tips and conversation starters:

**Share why mental health matters to you personally.** Aim for something brief and personal that you would feel comfortable sharing with others. For example: *“I wear a green ribbon because, like millions of Californians, \_\_\_\_\_ [insert one of the following statement that is true for you, or create your own.]”*

- I think we need to talk about mental health challenges more openly, and make it safer for people to reach out for help when they need it.
- I have experienced mental health challenges and I recovered. I want others to know they can too.
- people I love have experienced mental health challenges and I want to show my support.
- I know what it’s like to experience mental health challenges and I want others to feel safe to reach out for support.
- I am showing my support for people with mental health challenges, and you can too by wearing the lime green ribbon.

**Share a fact.** There are a lot of myths out there about mental health, help correct this by sharing a fact when someone asks about your ribbon. For example:

“I wear a ribbon to help start conversations about mental health in my community. Stigma is a real problem and it keeps people with mental health conditions from reaching out for support from people in their life. In fact 69% of Californians said they would definitely or probably hide a mental health problem from coworkers or classmates. I want that to stop.”

“I wear a green ribbon because I want people to know that recovery from a mental health condition is not only possible, but probable. In fact, 70-90% of individuals report reduced symptoms and improved quality of life with treatment and support. And yet, people don’t reach out because of stigma. Young people especially wait too long to get help, from 6-8 year on average. We can stop that by letting people know that we support them and that with the right help they can get better.”

For more tips on how to start a conversation, check out this short film brought to you by Each Mind Matters: <https://vimeo.com/129273542>