



Riverbend Center for Mental Health Director elaborates on mental illnesses

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By Marie Waxel - [bio](#) | [email](#)

FLORENCE, AL (WAFF) - Depression, suicide, and rehab are words making headlines across the country as people struggle to understand mental illnesses and how to help those in need.

Because of privacy laws in healthcare, the Director of Riverbend Center for Mental Health, Bryan Libell, was unable to talk about specific cases.

However, he said his facility sees an average of 7,000 patients a year with patients ranging from ages 2 to 100

"I think people are more accepting that mental illness is a problem and actually more accepting of seeking help," Libell said.

Libell has been in the mental health field for nearly four decades and has seen first hand the changes in acceptance and education of mental illness.

"There is a stigma attached to the idea that someone is seeking help," said Libell. "Understanding that mental illness is an issue of brain chemistry has made many advances in society."

Libell said the advancement in medication has made a dramatic difference in treating those issues, but care is more than just popping a pill to fix a problem.

"It's not a pill alone. A pill can assist in helping somebody, but often they have to take and make some other changes as well as learn some coping skills," said Libell. "So the counseling that goes along with the medication is usually the best result for individuals."

So, what do you do if you need help? Libell said many people call and start their process over the phone.

However, he said people who walk into the facility will be seen by a therapist as quickly as possible.

He said the bottom line is not to wait.

"If you're seeking help, go to somebody," he said. "If they don't want to come to Riverbend that's fine, go to another mental health professional. There is help out there for people that are seeking it."

For more information on Riverbend's facilities and other services available, [click here](#) to visit their website.

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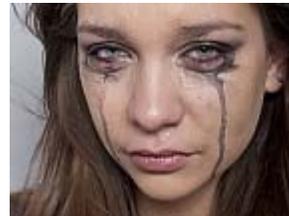
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