

Understanding how youth mental health impacts your workforce

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The health of children affects those who care for them, which in turn affects employee health and productivity.



To address the impact of youth mental health on your workforce, focus your attention on early intervention, access, integrated care and stigma.

[Click through the tabs to learn more.](#)



Taking critical action sooner

Given how early in life mental health challenges can begin, early diagnosis and treatment are essential to supporting youth mental health.



11 yrs

The average delay between when mental health symptoms first appear and intervention is approximately 11 years.⁵

1 in 6

U.S. children aged 2–8 years had a diagnosed mental, behavioral or developmental challenge.⁶

50%

of lifetime mental health conditions begin by age 14 and 75 percent begin by age 24.⁷

PROVIDE RESOURCES AND EDUCATION:

THIS IS HOW

- Empower your workforce with information around early intervention and youth mental health.
- Ask your health plan partner what tools and initiatives they provide in support of early intervention, including school-based programs.
- Request educational resources for parents and caregivers on signs of youth mental health challenges, especially on crucial subjects like suicide prevention.



Anthem BCBS uses predictive analytics to identify youths and adults at high risk for suicide. Care management teams reach out to support members' mental health and reduce the risk of a suicide attempt. [Learn more.](#)

To learn more about supporting your workforce through youth mental health and other behavioral health challenges, reach out to your health plan partner or visit smarterbetterhealthcare.com.

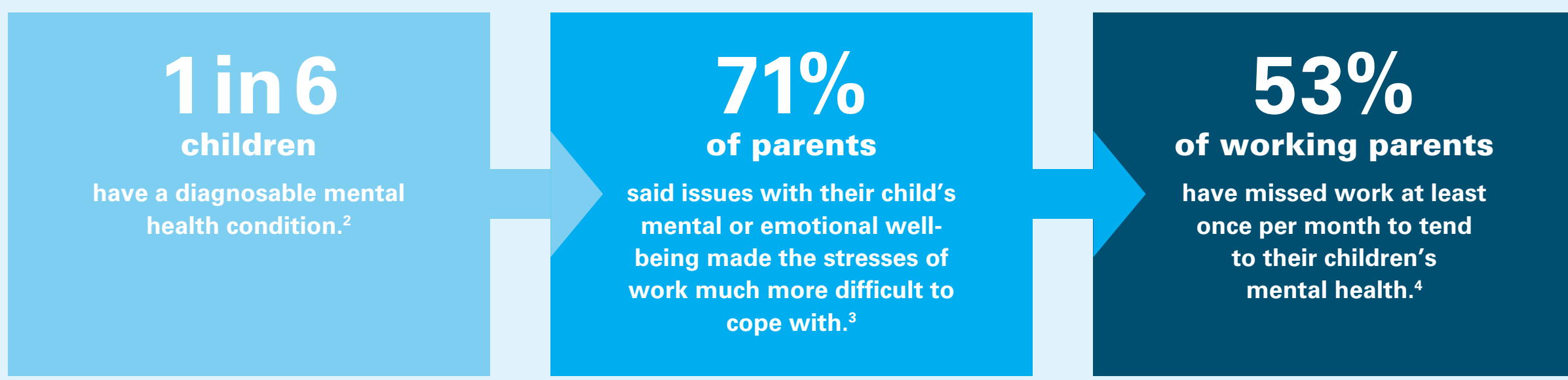
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Getting the care employees need

Access to mental healthcare is a complex issue. Regardless of your organization’s location or health plan partner, there are things you can do as an employer to help ensure you’re providing the care your employees need for youth mental health.



25%

of all working parents were not sure if their employer offered mental health resources for children.⁸

14:100k

The U.S. average of child and adolescent psychiatrists to children is only 14 per 100,000.⁹

2/3

Almost two-thirds of youth of color that need treatment for major depressive episodes still don’t receive care, revealing racial disparities in access.¹⁰

PRIORITIZE ACCESS AND EQUITY:

THIS IS HOW.

- Remind employees clearly and often about the covered care and resources available to them.
- Ask your health plan partner how they’re actively addressing inequities in access.
- Ensure effective virtual care is available to employees’ families.



BCBS of Rhode Island is partnering with Braver and Bradley Hospital to help expand access to high-quality outpatient anxiety treatment for kids by reimbursing the use of trained personal coaches, who collaborate with psychologists to work with patients and their families at home or where they need support.

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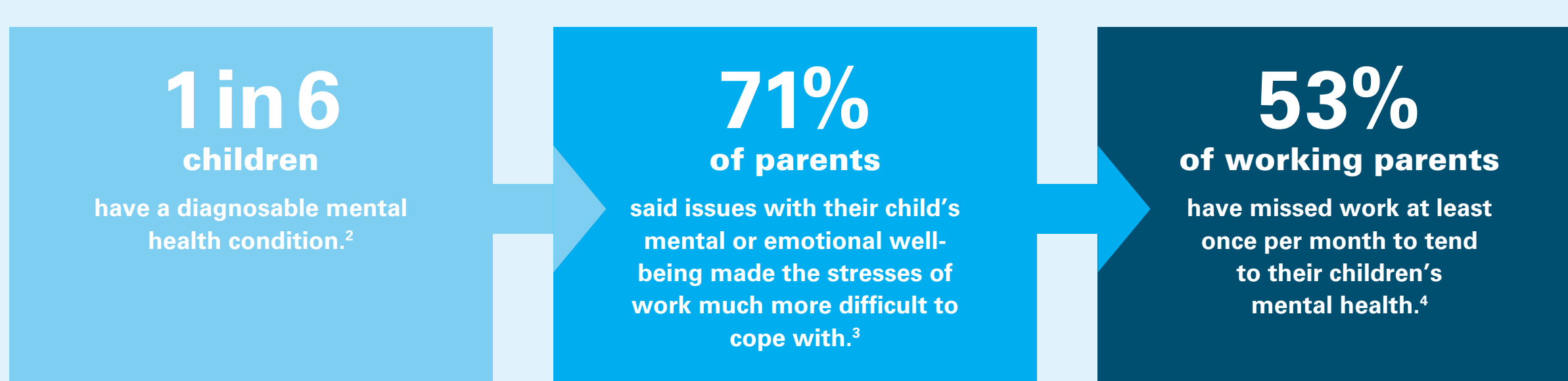
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- ACCESS
- INTEGRATED CARE
- STIGMA

Making patient-centered care easy

The shortage of behavioral health providers available to meet the needs of youth is at crisis levels. Since 90 percent of children receive regular medical care from a primary care provider, an integrated care approach can help improve access to behavioral healthcare.¹¹



75-80%

of children, youth and young adults with mental health concerns don't receive adequate treatment, largely due to barriers to accessing high-quality mental health services.¹²

1 in 3

pediatricians say that they have sufficient training to diagnose and treat children with mental disorders.¹³

70-80%

of prescriptions for medications related to mental health conditions for young people are written by pediatricians and general practitioners, rather than mental health professionals.¹⁴

REIMAGINE HOW WE WORK:

THIS IS HOW

- Support health plan partners that are empowering pediatric primary care providers with training and resources in the screening and treatment of youth mental health conditions.
- Choose healthcare networks that seamlessly connect pediatric primary care and behavioral health providers. When medical records and resources are shared among providers, they can develop a collaborative care model for patients.



BCBS of Michigan, in collaboration with the University of Michigan, expanded its Collaborative Care model to pediatric practices, enabling behavioral health care managers and psychiatrists to coordinate whole health, patient-centered treatment from primary care doctors' offices. [Learn more.](#)

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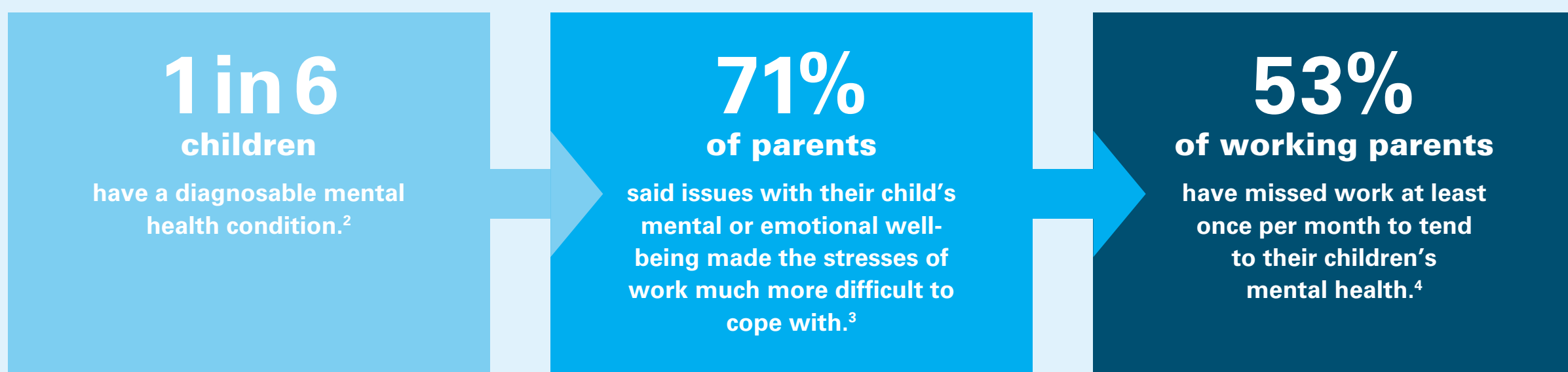
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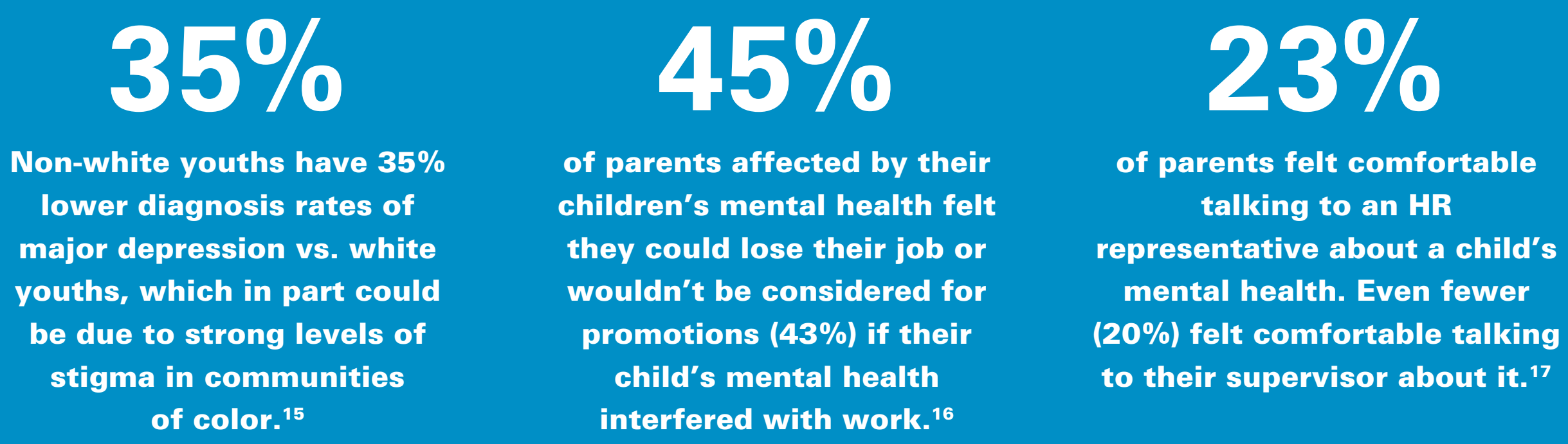
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Battling stigma from within

Stigma is a prevalent issue among youth facing mental health challenges, especially in communities of color. The stigma of mental health concerns can also prevent employees from being open about their children's struggles at home.



COMMUNICATE OPENLY AND LEAD BY EXAMPLE:

THIS IS HOW

- Remind leadership to be outspoken about your organization's commitment to battling damaging mental health stigmas.
- Ask your health plan partner what programs they offer to help destigmatize mental health among youth and encourage those who are struggling to seek care.
- Allow employees flexibility with hours and remote work, and assure them their jobs are safe if they need time off.



BCBS Kansas City launched Shut out the Stigma in partnership with the Kansas City Royals to promote awareness of stigma, with a focus on the behavioral health needs of youths. The initiative will expand in 2023 to address youth stress and anxiety in sports, and how impactful adult behavior can be on young athletes. [Learn more.](#)

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