



Join us in our work to...

# End the stigma of addiction

## Substance use disorder (SUD) is a treatable chronic illness. It is not a moral failing.

However, only 1 in 10 who need treatment ever receive it. Overwhelmingly, the greatest obstacle is stigma and the discrimination that accompanies it: The misguided belief that someone struggling with SUD is both at fault and not able to be treated.

Stigma is pervasive in our country despite decades of public education campaigns and the hard work of individuals who have shared their addiction stories. Three quarters of the nation does not believe SUD is an illness—a view that perpetuates life-threatening discrimination. Stigma erodes self-worth, creates social isolation, and reduces access to care. It makes it harder to get a job and access healthcare—even if you're in recovery. It clouds our nation's ability to coalesce around meaningful solutions, including treatment, harm reduction, and recovery supports and services.

Stigma is a critical impediment in our response to a crisis that takes the lives of 10 Americans every hour. Launched in 2020, [Shatterproof's National Movement to End Addiction Stigma](#) is a first-of-its-kind strategy in the U.S.

*We invite you to join our community of supporters who are helping ignite transformational change in how our society views addiction.*

### Four Types of Stigma

**Public stigma** - Reflects the negative beliefs in society that isolate those who are struggling with SUD.

**Structural stigma** - Limits resources and perpetuates insufficient or harmful policy responses.

**Self-stigma** - An individual internalizing and accepting negative stereotypes—feeling “broken” and looked down upon, with little or no self-esteem.

**Stigma against Medications for Opioid Use Disorder (MOUD)** - FDA-approved medications to treat addiction are under-prescribed, underutilized, overly restricted, and even actively discouraged.

*The convergence of racism, discrimination, and substance use in the U.S. is well documented. Stigma further disadvantages minority populations, particularly Black Americans, making it even more difficult to access compassionate, high-quality, evidence-based addiction care.*

## With Your Help We Can Change Even More Hearts and Minds

Shatterproof’s National Movement to End Addiction Stigma replicates the success of other transformational social movements—like HIV/AIDS, cancer, and marriage equality.

We are building a national coalition based on six systems that are critical to reducing addiction stigma: employers, healthcare, government, criminal justice, media and entertainment, and local communities. We bring stakeholders together, pilot evidence-based best practices, and scale what works.

### More Large-Scale Behavior Change

Shatterproof is already achieving measurable change in how our country views addiction. For example, in Pennsylvania, we achieved addiction stigma reduction of at least 5% through a groundbreaking, multi-million-dollar social media campaign.

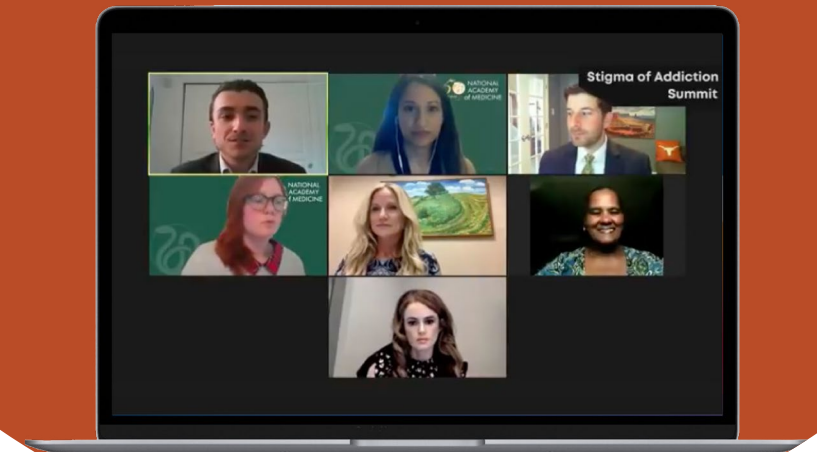
We reached three million individuals in just the first six months and proved that when people get the right information through others they trust, they are less inclined to judge and more open to the needs of those living with addiction:

Topic Area*	Statement (Agree/Disagree)	Agree Before Campaign	Agree After Campaign
Disease State	Opioid addiction is a medical illness like diabetes, arthritis, or heart disease	58.3%	<b>65.7%</b>
Social Exclusion	I would be willing to have a person with OUD as a neighbor	38.2%	<b>52.4%</b>

\*Selection of four promising topic areas from a 60+ question survey using validated measures.



*Your generosity will help us build on this success—enabling us to launch stigma reduction efforts through new channels, like hospitals, media and entertainment, and the criminal justice system. Addiction stigma reduction is key to tackling health inequity in our nation.*



### More Transformational Thought Leadership

To achieve a stigma reduction tipping point, we need the entire field to embrace evidence-based strategies to overcome deeply entrenched attitudes and misinformation.

Shatterproof collaborated with the National Academy of Medicine and University of Texas-Austin Dell Medical School to conduct our nation’s first annual Stigma of Addiction Summit, attracting more than 4,500 participants, including experts from universities, health systems, nonprofit organizations, and government. We were also invited to participate in the 2021 Presidential Inauguration, along with special guests, to address the importance of stigma reduction.

### The Shatterproof Addiction Stigma Index (SASI)

Results of the Shatterproof Addiction Stigma Index (SASI)—our nation’s largest, most expansive survey measuring addiction stigma—were released in October 2021, in collaboration with The Hartford.

- The SASI sets a baseline measure of addiction stigma and attitudes from the public about substance use, including perceptions of those with a SUD.
- It will be used to call increased attention to, measure progress on, and hold our nation accountable in eliminating a major driver of the addiction crisis.

### We Have Work To Do

We need to continue elevating the efforts and expertise of advocates with lived experience. We also need to combine our dedication to ending addiction stigma with anti-discrimination and pro-acceptance initiatives to ensure widespread adoption, understanding, and efficacy of interventions for all

*Shatterproof has set a bold goal to achieve a 7.5% reduction in stigma by 2025, measured by the SASI.*

*Your support will allow us to more aggressively and strategically convene stakeholders and partners to create exponential system change, together.*



People underestimate the power of stigma. How can a small, six-letter word have so much power? On a very basic level, stigma is associated with a lot of “dis” words: disapproval, disappointment, discrimination, disgrace, discredit. We live in a world where the stigma silences so many, for fear of all those “dis” words.

**Jaclyn Brown**

SHATTERPROOF AMBASSADOR IN ARIZONA AND SISTER OF MARC

## Meet This Moment With Us

To build a more tolerant, compassionate, and healthier future, we must act now.

We have an opportunity and an obligation to change course—to chart a new path based on research and to dismantle the discrimination and misinformation that threatens addiction recovery.

With your support, we can learn from our results, take steps towards destigmatizing those who are living with SUD, and create an even bigger national movement to treat addiction like the chronic disease it is.

**Thank you for engaging with us and considering how your desire to help others may align with our mission to save and improve the lives of so many we cherish.**

Have thoughts, observations, or a story to tell? We would love to hear from you.



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