

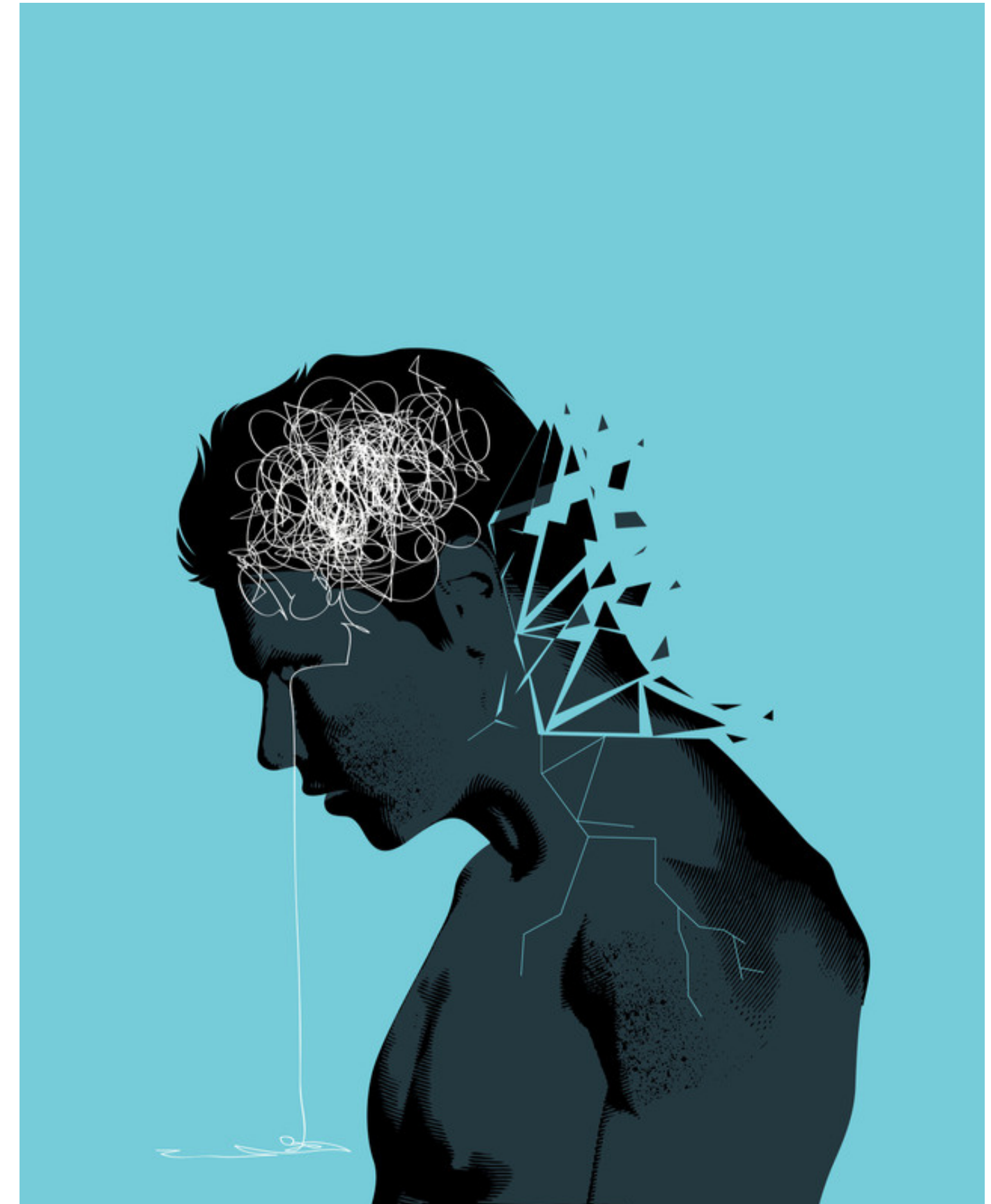


The Impact of Toxic Masculinity On Men's Mental Health

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WHAT IS TOXIC MASCULINITY?

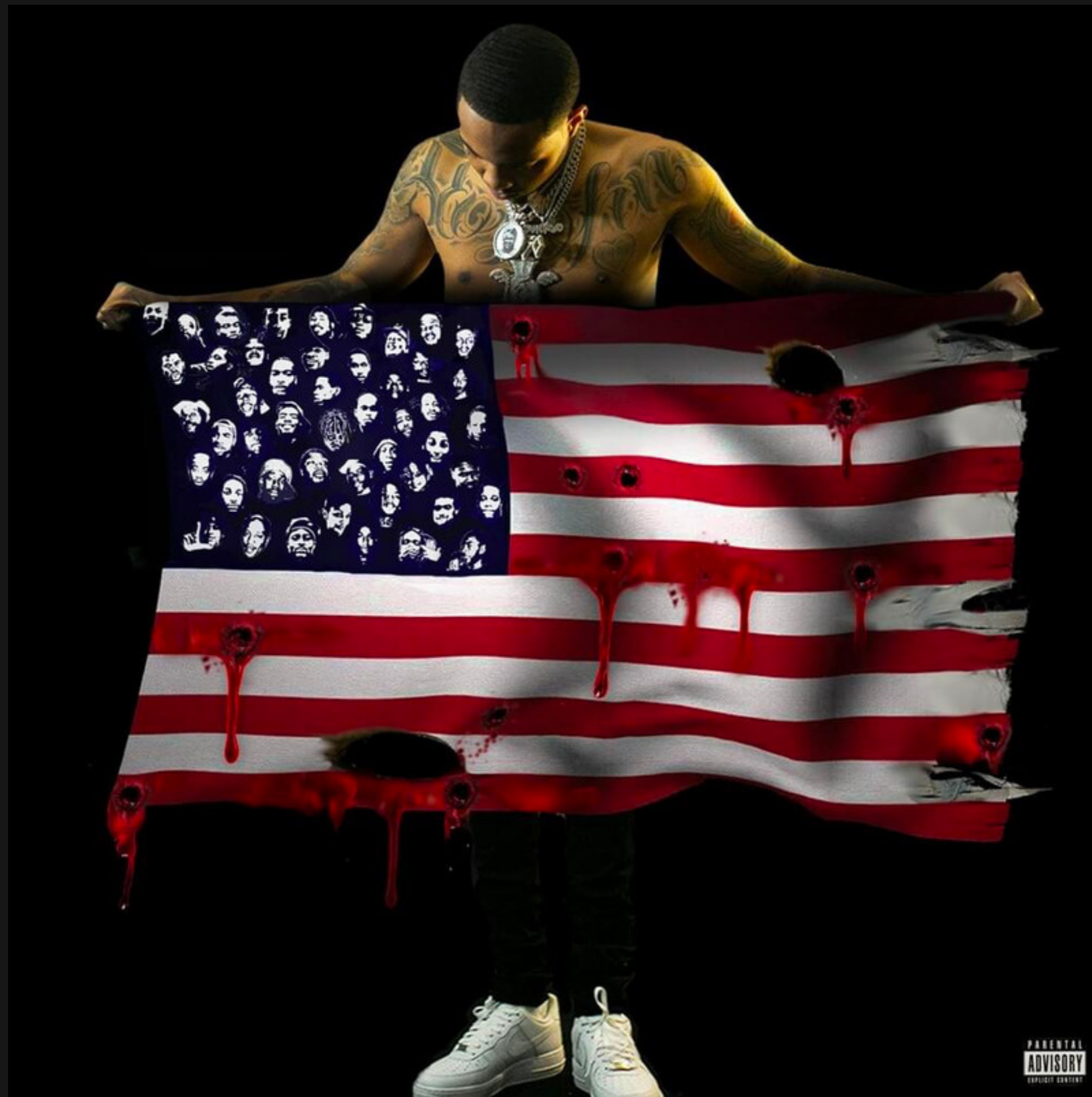
To find the meaning of toxic masculinity, we first have to know what masculinity is. Masculinity is defined as having the traditional characteristics possessed by a man. The average traits for someone who is masculine are someone who is assertive, powerful, in control, and courageous. So with that definition of masculinity, toxic masculinity is the concept of masculinity being amplified. Masculinity becomes toxic when it harms one's mental health or harms someone around them. An example of toxic masculinity is when men become overtly aggressive to a female partner to show dominance and power. Another example of toxic masculinity is never showing any emotions because emotions are seen as a feminine trait so it can be portrayed as the man being fragile and showing weakness.



Pressures Of Being A Man

"There are rules about how you should dress, behave and present yourself; how you should deal with conflict and express your emotions." (Stratford). The constant pressure of always acting masculine is a result of society pushing stereotypes on men. Men aren't allowed to act a certain way without their manhood being questioned. There is constant competition between males to determine who is more of a man. Being more or less masculine should not define how much of a man someone is.



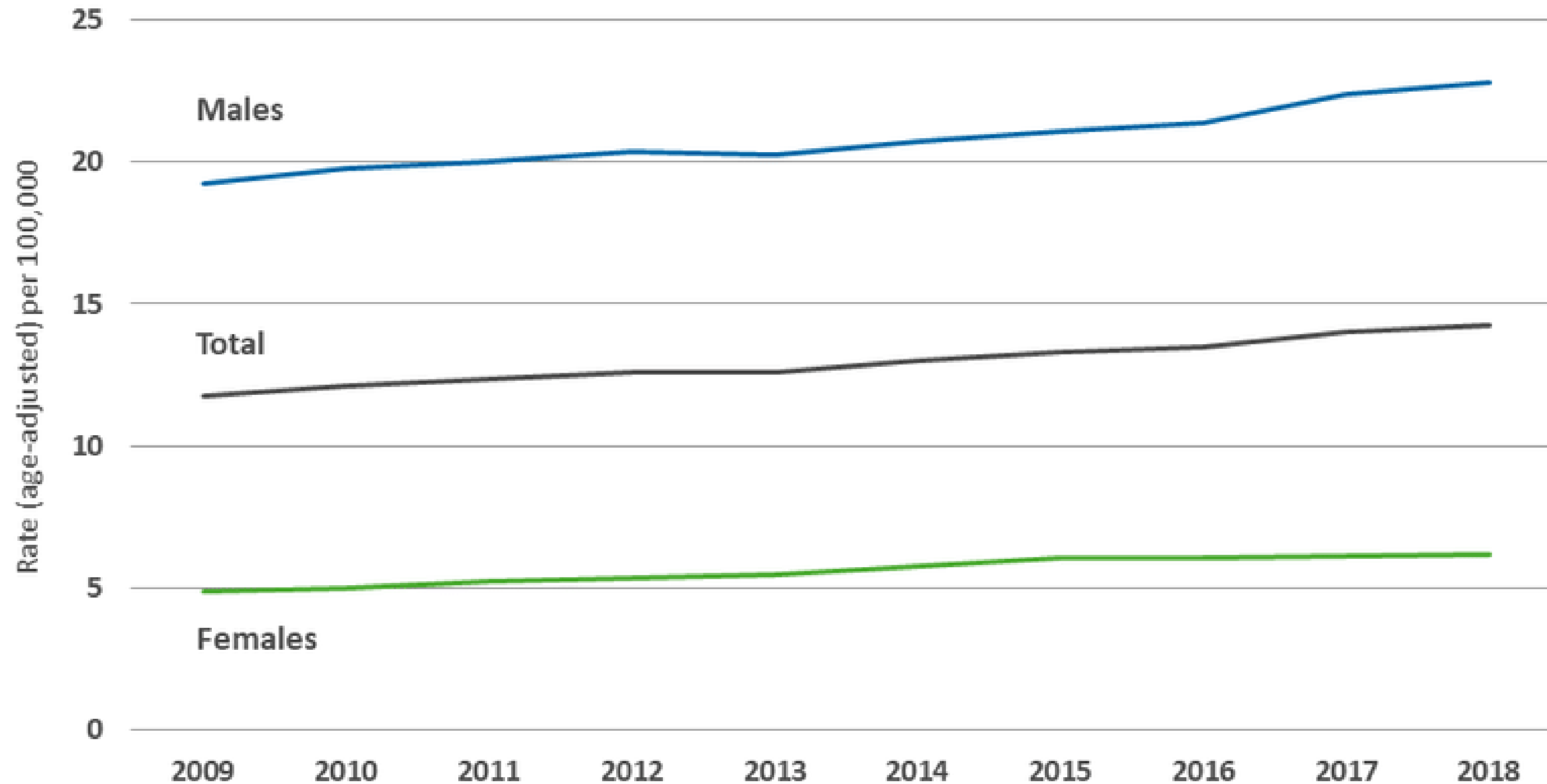


Chicago Rapper G-Herbo grew up in the rough neighborhoods of Chicago, often labeled "Chiraq" because of the murders and violence that mimics the war in Iraq. In February of 2020, G-Herbo released the album PTSD which had frequent themes of how growing up in Chicago and watching his friends get murdered led to him developing PTSD. His album serves as a reassurance to many who grew up in his same situation that getting help is normal. In an interview with Fader Magazine, G-Herbo said, "What inspired me to make it was trying to bring awareness to a situation that people are desensitized by. We don't really know that we suffer from Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. We don't notice a mental illness. It's normalized. Stuff that we endure on a day-to-day basis. And I think that this project could really help people address their problems." G-Herbo has also recently launched "Svervin' Through Stress", a program which aims to help African American teens and young adults by providing therapeutic resources to help their mental health.

"I stayed up the longest when my nigga died
I poured up some more so I can stop from cryin'
Relapsed after quittin' like my second time
But I know I just wanna numb the pain that's
inside"

-G-Herbo "Gangsta's Cry"

Suicide Rates by Sex, United States 2009-2018



HOW IS TOXIC MASCULINITY HARMFUL TO MEN'S MENTAL HEALTH?

Both men and women face the same problems with depression, anxiety, and mental illnesses yet men are more likely to commit suicide as a result of these problems. The reason why more men commit suicide is because there is a stigma around getting help. If a man goes to therapy or tries to help his mental health, they are seen as weak. In an interview titled *Speaking of Psychology: How masculinity can hurt mental health* by Audrey Hamilton, Wizdom Powell, an associate professor in the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill Department of Health Behavior, says. "But in general, when men adhere rigidly to the kinds of norms that encourage them to not share their emotions, to be sort of relentlessly self-reliant without seeking the help or support of others. They can have poorer mental health outcomes, particularly more depressive symptomatology because doing so cuts them off I think from the social networks and social supports that might help them get through a difficult time." In society's right now around the world, getting help is a sign of weakness. In order to combat toxic masculinities effect on mental health, we as a society need to make in more normal to get help and treatment. Society needs to push the message that it's okay not to be okay.



DEPRESSION IN MEN

The National Institute of Mental Health reports that men are less likely than women to talk about, recognize, or seek treatment for depression. Further, depression often manifests itself in men as anger, irritability, aggressive behavior, or other potentially harmful symptoms.

AmeriHealth Caritas encourages men feeling depressed do the following:



Visit a primary care provider (PCP) for an annual wellness visit and screening for depression risk factors.



Avoid social isolation. You can follow the current physical social distancing guidelines but still stay connected with people.



Exercise regularly to support overall well-being.



Look for support groups in your community or on social media platforms to find encouragement and ideas for dealing with depression.



If needed, seek behavioral health therapy so you can talk to a provider about how you are feeling.

Resources To Get Help

- National Suicide Prevention Lifeline - Call: 800-273-TALK (8255)
- NAMI Resource Guide for Those Experiencing A Mental Health Emergency - Call: 800 950 6264
- Crisis Text Line - Text HOME to 741741
- Youthline Confidential Teen to Teen Help Line - Call: 877-968-8491
- Find Social Services and Resources Near You p Call:211



It's OK to get help

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Need Support? "Movember, us.movember.com/mens-health/get-support.

-Added some of the resources on the website to my presentation