

National Trends in Lawyer Well-Being

September 12, 2018

**Colorado Task Force on
Lawyer Well-Being**

**Jonathan
White**

**Professional
Development
Counsel**

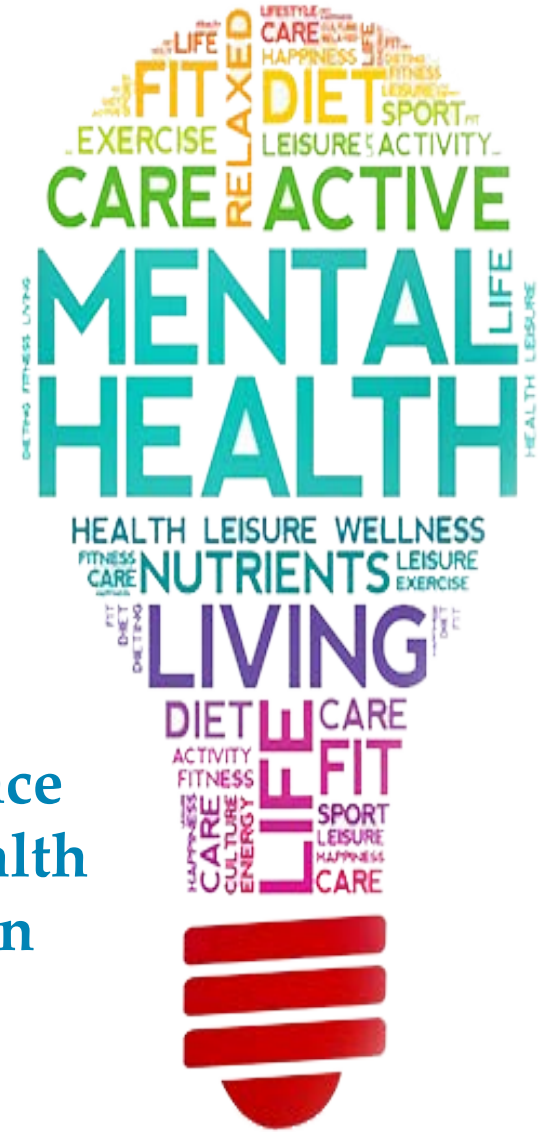
**Office of
Attorney
Regulation
Counsel**

Suffering in Silence: The Survey of Law Student Well-Being and the Reluctance of Law Students to Seek Help for Substance Use and Mental Health Concerns (the “Law Student Survey”)

- J.M. Organ, D. Jaffe, K. Bender
- 66 J. Legal Educ. 116 (2016)

The Prevalence of Substance Use and Other Mental Health Concerns Among American Attorneys (the “Hazelden Study”)

- P.R. Krill, R. Johnson, & L. Albert
- 10 J. Addiction Med. 46 (2016)



**Tracing
the
Lawyer
Well-Being
Movement**

MENTAL HEALTH

28%

depression

19%

severe anxiety

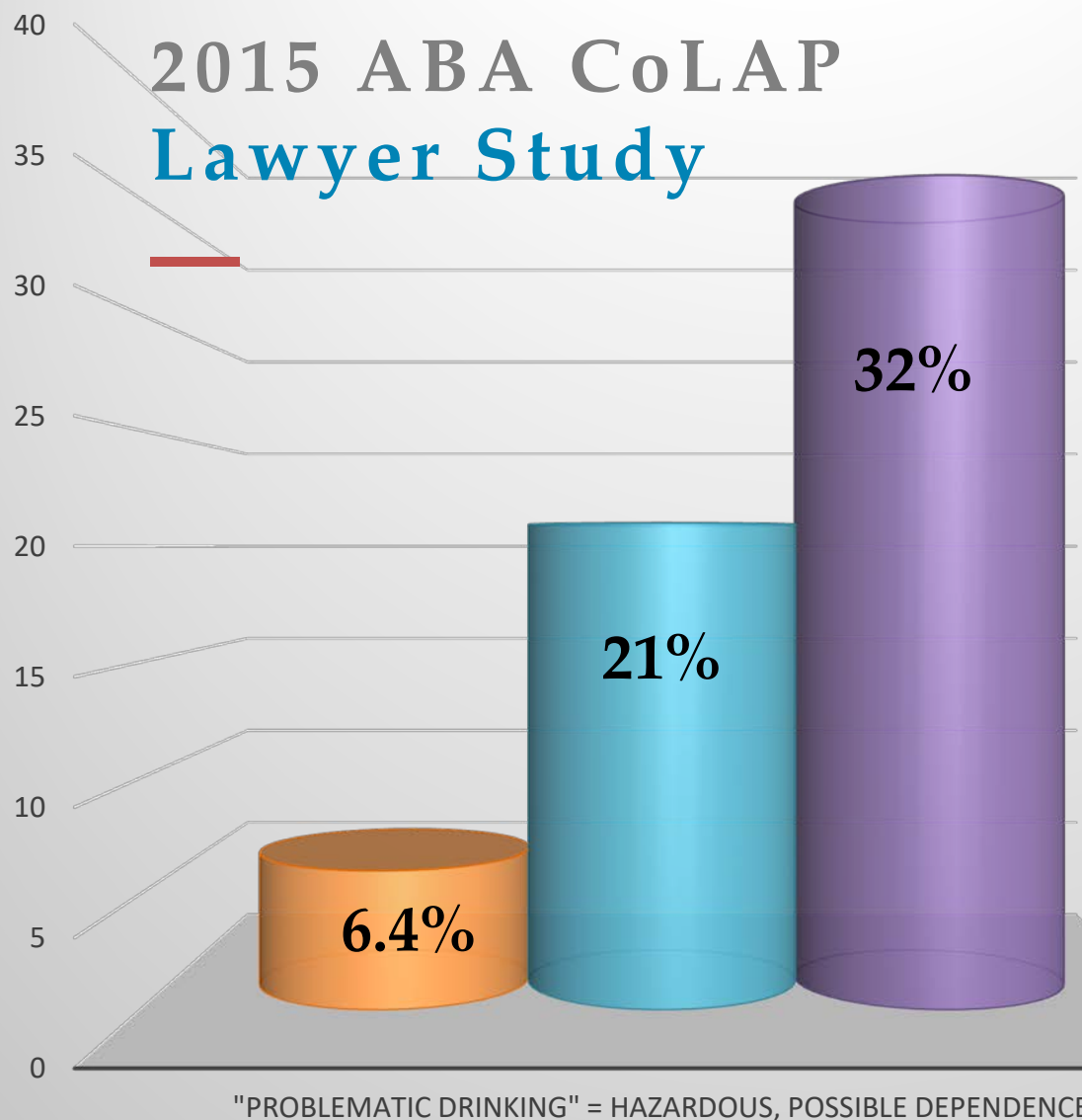
11.5%

suicidal thoughts
throughout career



Why me?
MENTAL
PRISON
What's wrong
with me??

Hazelden Study Findings: Lawyers



■ General U.S. Population ■ All Attorneys ■ Attorneys under 30 years old



MENTAL HEALTH

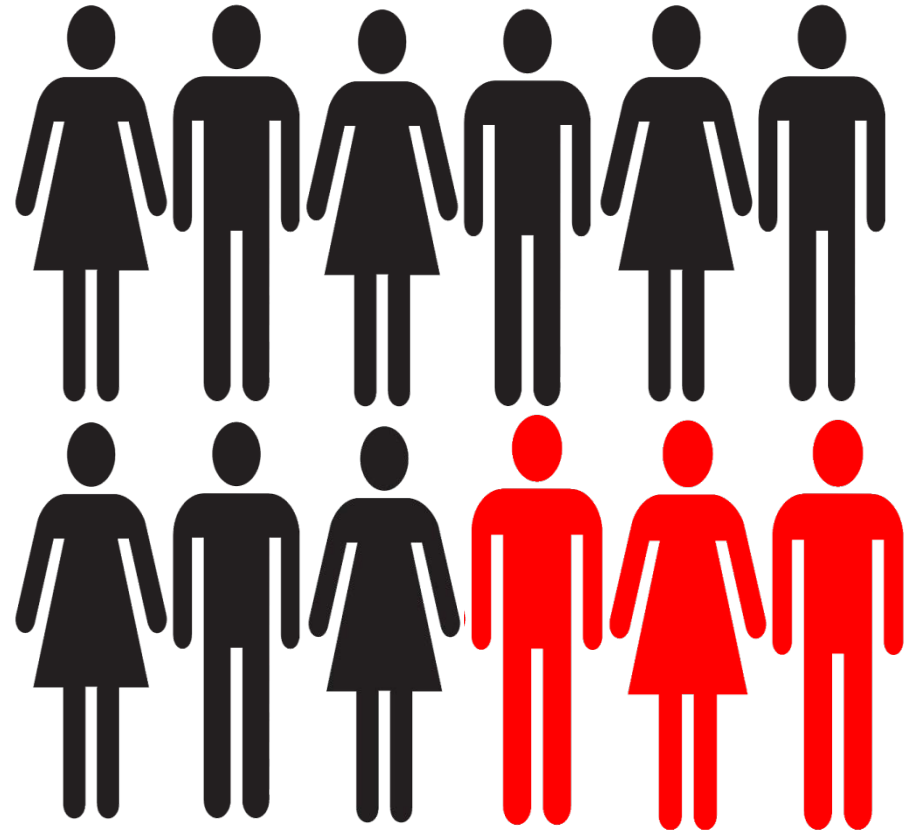
17%	depression
14%	severe anxiety
23%	mild/moderate anxiety
6%	suicidal thoughts in last year

ALCOHOL USE RATES

	Law students	Other grad students
Got drunk in past 30 days	53%	39%
Binge drank at least once in prior 2 weeks	43%	36%
Binge drank at least twice in prior 2 weeks	22%	21%



**ONE QUARTER
AT-RISK FOR
ALCOHOLISM**



- **November 2017**
- **886 respondents**
- **24.2% reported anxiety**
- **25% reported depression**
The CDC reports 7.7% of people ages 20-39 suffer depression
- **20.5% at heightened suicide risk**
- **66% reported new mental health challenges in law school**
- **Survey conducted by law school student government. Survey prepared by Harvard's University Health Services and the Student Mental Health Association.**

Source: A. Chan, A. Lee, A. Savitt, *Wellness at the Law School: Promises to Keep and Miles to Go Before We Sleep*, HARV. CRIMSON, Mar. 28, 2018; J. Halper, *Law Student Leadership Plans Mental Health Initiatives*, HARV. CRIMSON, Oct. 19, 2017.

**Evidence of pervasive suffering
calls for decisive action now.**

Amanda Chan, Amanda Lee, Adam Savitt, *Wellness at the Law School: Promises to Keep and Miles to Go Before We Sleep*, HARV. CRIMSON, Mar. 28, 2018.

- **296 students (out of 650 total)**
- **70% experienced mental health issues in law school**
- **81% said being open with faculty could lead to stigma**
- **81% did not understand bar admission requirements re: mental health conditions**
- **Survey conducted by Yale Law School Mental Health Alliance**

THE PATH TO LAWYER WELL-BEING:

Practical Recommendations
For Positive Change

[THE REPORT OF THE
NATIONAL TASK FORCE ON
LAWYER WELL-BEING]