

What Teens Need to Know About teen Mental Health First Aid

Our school/site is conducting teen Mental Health First Aid (tMHFA) training for GRADE/AGE beginning on DATE. tMHFA teaches teens in grades 10-12, or ages 15-18, **how to identify, understand and respond to signs of mental health and substance use challenges in their friends and peers. The training will give you the skills to have supportive conversations with your friends and to get help from a responsible and trusted adult.**

Teens often turn to each other when stressed or upset, but sometimes when they try to help, they take on too much. This course teaches you to not try taking friends' problems on alone, and when and how to get an adult involved. You won't talk about any problems you are having yourself, and you won't learn to give therapy or diagnose a problem.

We want you to know tMHFA discusses school violence and suicide. Some people will find those topics distressing. Talk to a parent or guardian if you're worried that talking about suicide or school violence will make it too hard for you to be part of the course. You should also know that most people find that even if they have lost someone to suicide, the information in the course makes them feel better, not worse.

This course isn't happening because of any specific problems here, and we will not discuss any individuals.

Depending on our schedules, you'll attend six 45-minute sessions or three 90-minute sessions. Here's an outline:

Session 1
Mental health, what mental health challenges are, and how common they are in teens.
Session 2
The impact of mental health challenges on teens, how people with mental health challenges can get better, professionals who can help.
Session 3
Helping a friend who is in crisis because they are suicidal, introducing the tMHFA Action Plan ("Look, Ask, Listen, Help Your Friend") and how it can be used in a crisis situation. A video shows a teen helping a friend who is experiencing suicidal thoughts.

Session 4
Helping a friend who is in another type of crisis, such as threatening violence or harm to others, engaging in nonsuicidal self-injury, or experiencing a traumatic event such as bullying, abuse, or assault; practice using the tMHFA Action Plan (“Look, Ask, List, Help Your Friend”) in these types of crisis situations.
Session 5
How to help a friend who may be in crisis due to substance use, how to help if someone might be developing a mental health challenge. tMHFA does not teach you how to diagnose! It’s information about being a supportive friend, encouraging friends to seek help, and knowing when it’s time to get a responsible, trusted adult involved.
Session 6
Recovery, resiliency and all final activities to complete the tMHFA course.

You will receive a certificate of completion for taking the course and a manual to use during the course that you can take home after the last session. There are resources for additional information in the manual, and you may want to explore them alone or with a parent or guardian. If you wish to learn more now, check out these resources:

RESOURCES

National Helplines

If you or someone you know needs help immediately, please call 911.

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline - save this in your phone!

Call 800-273-TALK (8255)

Visit www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org

Crisis Text Line – save this in your phone!

Text “MHFA” to 741-741 for free 24/7 crisis counseling.

Visit www.crisistextline.org

Learn more about mental health problems

Teens Health

http://teenshealth.org/teen/your_mind

National Alliance on Mental Illness

www.nami.org/Find-Support/Teens-and-Young-Adults

National Institute of Mental Health

<https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/topics/child-and-adolescent-mental-health/index.shtml>

Learn more about Mental Health First Aid

Mental Health First Aid USA

www.MentalHealthFirstAid.org/

Remember, you can also talk to your school mental health professionals for additional information and support!