



Mental Health First Aid

Community based training for EVERYone that can help ANYone

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ALGEE, the Mental Health First Aid mascot, and
mnemonic for the 5-step action plan



MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID

An 8-hour course that gives people the skills to help someone who is developing a mental health problem or experiencing a mental health crisis.

The evidence behind the program demonstrates that it does build mental health literacy, helping the public identify, understand, and respond to signs of mental illness.



Just as CPR helps you assist an individual having a heart attack. MHFA helps assist someone experiencing a mental health or substance use related crisis

In the Mental Health First Aid Class We Teach About

Risk factors and warning signs

Mental health and addiction concerns

Strategies for how to help someone in both crisis and non-crisis situations

Where to turn for help



Topics covered and scenarios discussed -

- Depression and mood disorders
- Anxiety disorders
- Trauma
- Psychosis
- Substance Use disorders



MHFA TEACHES AND FOCUSES ON

Recovery and *Resiliency* – the belief that individuals experiencing these challenges can and do get better, and use their strengths to stay well.



The Mental Health First Aid Action Plan

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Assess for Risk of Suicide or Harm

When helping a person going through a mental health crisis, it is important to look for signs of suicidal thoughts and behaviors, non-suicidal self-injury, or other harm. Some warning signs of suicide include:

- Threatening to hurt or kill oneself\
- Seeking access to means to hurt or kill oneself
- Talking or writing about death, dying, or suicide
- Feeling hopeless
- Acting recklessly or engaging in risky activities
- Increased use of alcohol or drugs
- Withdrawing from family, friends, or society
- Appearing agitated or angry or having a dramatic change in mood

Always seek emergency medical help if the person's life is in immediate danger. If you have reason to believe someone may be actively suicidal, call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline:

1-800-273-TALK (8255)



Listen Nonjudgmentally

It may seem simple, but the ability to listen and have a meaningful conversation requires skill and patience. Listening is critical in helping an individual feel respected, accepted, and understood.

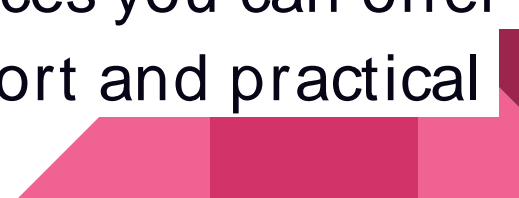
MHFA teaches you to use a set of verbal and nonverbal skills such as open body posture, comfortable eye contact, and other strategies to engage in appropriate conversation.

Give reassurance and Information

It is important to recognize that mental illnesses and addictions are real, treatable illnesses from which people can and do recover.

Approach the conversation with respect and dignity and don't blame the individual for his or her symptoms.

MHFA provides information and resources you can offer to someone to provide emotional support and practical help.

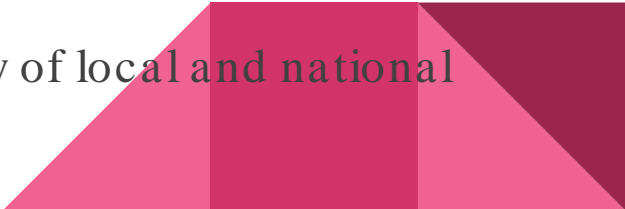


Encourage appropriate professional help

Many professionals can offer help when someone is in crisis or experiencing signs and symptoms:

- Doctors (primary care physicians or psychiatrists)
- Social workers, counselors, and other mental health professionals
- Certified peer specialists
- **Types of Professional Help-**
 - "talk" therapy,
 - medication, and
 - other professional supports

The Mental Health First Aid course provides a variety of local and national resources to connect individuals in need to care.



Encourage self-help and other support strategies

Individuals with mental illness can contribute to their own recovery and wellness through:

- Exercise
- Relaxation and meditation
- Participating in peer support groups
- Self-help books based on cognitive behavioral therapy
- Engaging with family, friends, faith, and other social networks

Mental Health First Aid helps you to identify potential sources of support and to practice offering these supports to the person you are helping.

Interventions Learned

When you take a course, you learn how to apply the Mental Health First Aid action plan in a variety of situations, including when someone is experiencing:

- Panic attacks
- Suicidal thoughts or behaviors
- Nonsuicidal self-injury
- Acute psychosis (e.g., hallucinations or delusions)
- Overdose or withdrawal from alcohol or drug use
- Reaction to a traumatic event

The opportunity to practice — through role plays, scenarios, and activities — makes it easier to apply these skills in a real-life situation

4 Reasons to Become a Mental Health First Aider

1. Be prepared:

When a mental health crisis happens, know what to do

2. You can help:

People with mental illnesses often suffer alone

3. Mental illnesses are common:


1 in 5 adults in any given year

4. You care:

Be there for a friend, family member, or colleague




Course Format

- 8 hours long. In your community, it may be offered in one, two or four sessions
 - Highly Interactive - get involved with the material and relate what you learn to real-life applications.
 - Discussion topics, exercises, and other activities keep you engaged in the course and give you an opportunity to practice helping skills.
 - Certified Instructors teach a national curriculum and teaching standards, while emphasizing hope for recovery.
 - Classes usually consist of 30 people or less are offered in a respectful, comfortable environment.
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Adult Mental Health First Aid

The adult Mental Health First Aid course is appropriate for anyone who wants to learn how to help a person who may be experiencing a mental health related crisis or problem.

Course participants come from a variety of backgrounds and play various roles in a community so there are specialized modules for the adult version.


- Public safety
 - Higher education
 - Military families
 - Rural audiences
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Youth Mental Health First Aid

Designed to teach how to help an adolescent (age 12-18) who is experiencing a mental health or addictions challenge or is in crisis.

The course introduces common mental health challenges for youth, reviews typical adolescent development, and teaches the 5-step action plan for how to help young people in both crisis and non-crisis situations.

Topics covered include anxiety, depression, substance use, disorders in which psychosis may occur, disruptive behavior disorders (including ADHD), and eating disorders.




Rural Mental Health First Aid

Nearly twenty percent of people in the United States live in a rural area.

The challenges faced by residents in rural areas are significantly different than those in urban areas.

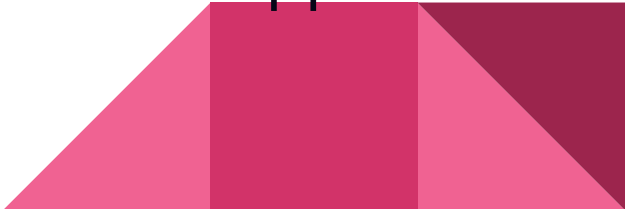
Rural populations are often underserved and possess health and behavioral health disparities.

Rural communities have a chronic shortage of behavioral health providers and limited access to services.



Rural Mental Health First Aid

Mental Health First Aid has the potential to address these disparities in rural communities by increasing mental health literacy (i.e., knowledge and beliefs about mental disorders which aid their recognition, management, or prevention) among key community members – creating a stronger, more prepared network of support for individuals living in rural areas.



Rural Mental Health First Aid

MHFA is a way to build community level capacity to identify mental health and substance use issues early

Rural residents to increase their confidence to intervene and refer people to the resources that do exist.

Rural communities have a long history of being innovative and taking responsibility.

MHFA is a way to increase the level of baseline knowledge about mental health and substance use issues and to decrease the negative perceptions often associated with these issues.

Rural Mental Health First Aid

Our targeted effort to serve rural communities addresses their unique characteristics, recognizes and enhances community capacity around behavioral health issues in rural areas.



Anyone, anywhere can be the one to make a difference in the life of someone with a mental health or substance use challenge – if they know what to do and what to say.



Thank You!!

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Please feel free to contact me with further questions or
for information on classes