



teen MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID VIRTUAL

1 IN 5

teens has had a **serious mental health disorder** at some point in their life.*

50%

of all **mental illnesses begin by age 14**, and 75% by the mid-20s.**

Suicide is the **second-leading cause of death** for

15- TO 24- YEAR-OLDS.***

Sources

* Merikangas KR, He JP, Burstein M, Swanson SA, Avenevoli S, Cui L, Benjet C, Georgiades K, Swendsen J. Lifetime prevalence of mental disorders in U.S. adolescents: results from the National Comorbidity Survey Replication-- Adolescent Supplement (NCS-A). *J Am Acad Child Adolesc Psychiatry*. 2010 Oct;49(10):980-9.

** Kessler RC, Chiu WT, Demler O, Walters EE. Prevalence, Severity, and Comorbidity of Twelve-month DSM-IV Disorders in the National Comorbidity Survey Replication (NCS-R). *Archives of general psychiatry*. 2005;62(6):617-627. doi:10.1001/archpsyc.62.6.617. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, Center for Behavioral Health Statistics and Quality. (2016). Key substance use and mental health indicators in the United States: Results from the 2015 National Survey on Drug Use and Health. Rockville, MD.

*** Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. National Center for Health Statistics: Adolescent Health. <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/fastats/adolescent-health.htm>

Why teen Mental Health First Aid?

Social media, social distancing, socializing — it is hard to be a teen in these challenging times. Recognizing that teens prefer to share their problems with peers, teen Mental Health First Aid (tMHFA) teaches teens in grades 10-12 how to identify, understand, and respond to signs of mental disorders and substance use disorders among their friends. tMHFA gives young people the skills to have supportive conversations with their friends and get a responsible and trusted adult to take over as necessary.

Now, with tMHFA Virtual, teens can develop these skills from the safety and comfort of their own home.

How it Works

In six 45-minute sessions, teens participate in a self-paced online course, a virtual or in-person Instructor-led session, and a skills-building online activity that allows them to apply what they've learned.

What's Needed

Sites implementing tMHFA Virtual must develop a safety protocol for responding to a teen in distress and abide by certain safety guidelines. These include informing parents/guardians of the program, collecting emergency contact information, and providing the contact information of a mental health professional or a site staff person a teen can reach out to if needed. A critical step in the teen Mental Health First Aid Action Plan is connecting with a trusted adult, so each tMHFA site is also required to have at least 10 percent of adult staff trained in Youth Mental Health First Aid.

What it Covers

- Common signs and symptoms of mental illness.
- Common signs and symptoms of substance use.
- Common signs and symptoms of a mental health crisis, particularly suicide.
- How to open the conversation about mental illnesses and addiction with friends.
- The impact of school violence and bullying on mental health.
- How to seek the help of a responsible and trusted adult.

Teens will learn how to apply the tMHFA Action Plan to help a friend:

- **LOOK** for warning signs.
- **ASK** how they are.
- **LISTEN UP.**
- **HELP** them connect with an adult.
- **YOUR** friendship is important.

Who Should Take it

tMHFA is for teens in grades 10, 11 and 12.

Individual schools, school districts, organizations partnering with a school or providing the training at a youth program, youth-serving organizations/programs, and community sites that serve teens are eligible to apply as teaching sites.

At schools, tMHFA must be taught to an entire grade level. If taught at a youth-serving organization, program, or community site that serves youth, tMHFA must be taught to all teens in a program.



Schools offering this training can save lives, families and communities. Regardless of how happy, smart or popular someone seems on the outside, everyone is fighting battles we have no idea about. tMHFA taught me that sometimes we need a reminder of what is important and the tools to make that a priority." — **Katie Ramboyoung**, teen Mental Health First Aider