



**Mental Health**  
**FIRST AID**

*from* NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR  
MENTAL WELLBEING

# Bring teen Mental Health First Aid to New Jersey

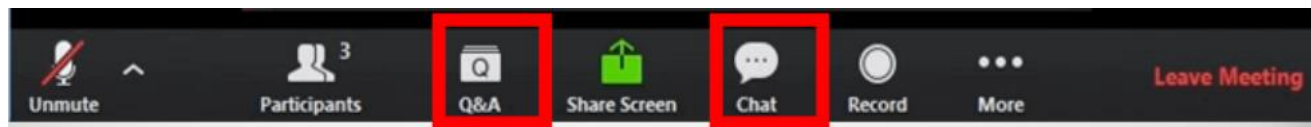
Protecting and Promoting the Mental Health of New Jersey Teens

Information Session  
July 20, 2021

# Zoom Logistics

**To ask a question,** enter it in the Q&A box.

**To message our panelists directly,** use the Chat feature.



# Agenda

- Introductions and acknowledgements.
- Opportunity overview.
- Introduction to teen Mental Health First Aid.
- Eligibility requirements and application.

# Meet the Team



**Maura Gaswirth, LICSW**  
Director, Practice Improvement  
and Consulting



**Karen Girgis, MA**  
Program Manager,  
teen Mental Health First Aid



**Kayla Blasher-Burch, MA**  
Program Coordinator,  
teen Mental Health First Aid



**Rubina Ahmad**  
Manager, Communications  
Mental Health First Aid



**Amanda Baer, MPH**  
Project Manager, Practice  
Improvement and Consulting



**Claire Plagens, MSW**  
Project Coordinator, Practice  
Improvement and Consulting



**Amanda Stark, MPH**  
Project Coordinator, Practice  
Improvement and Consulting

# Meet the National Council

NATIONAL  
COUNCIL  
*for* Mental  
Wellbeing

HEALTHY MINDS  
STRONG COMMUNITIES

# Acknowledgements

Funding for this opportunity has been provided by the New Jersey Pandemic Relief Fund (NJPRF) through the Community Foundation of New Jersey (CFNJ).



# Partnerships

teen Mental Health First Aid is a training program developed by the National Council in partnership with Born This Way Foundation.

**BORN THIS WAY/  
FOUNDATION**

# Poll: Who is on the line?

- What best describes your organization
  - High school
  - Certified community behavioral health clinic (CCBHC)
  - Mental health or substance use treatment organization
  - Other organization serving youth in grades 10-12
- What best describes your role?
  - Clinician
  - Administrator
  - Teacher
  - School social worker or counselor
  - Other program staff
  - Other - please share in chat



# Opportunity Overview

- 50 New Jersey schools and/or youth-serving organizations will receive training and materials to implement teen Mental Health First Aid (tMHFA).
- tMHFA Instructors and implementing teams will participate in a virtual, professional learning community.

# Initiative Timeline

- The 50 selected sites will commit to Year 1 (2021-2022 school year).
- The initiative runs from July 2021 through September 2023.
- After Year 1, sites will have the opportunity to apply to join a smaller cohort of 25 sites for Year 2 (2022-2023).

# Schools/Organizations Receive:

- tMHFA Instructor Training for two qualified adults.
- Materials for in-person training for teens.
- Mental Health First Aid for Adults Assisting Youth (YMHFA) training for up to 20 adult staff members (approximately 10% of staff).
- Consultation and technical assistance to support tMHFA implementation.

# Schools/Organizations Receive:

- A virtual, professional learning community running October 2021–June 2022 for tMHFA Instructors and their implementing teams:
  - Peer-to-peer support.
  - Support creating safe and supportive learning environments with content such as trauma-informed classroom strategies, culturally responsive teaching and best practices for affirming the identities of diverse adolescents.
- A stipend for participating in the learning community.
- Access to mental health resources.

# Poll: Interest and MHFA Familiarity

- What best describes your interest in this opportunity? (select all that apply)
  - I am interested in this opportunity to implement at my organization or a partner organization
  - I am interested in becoming a teen MHFA instructor
  - Other - please share in chat
- How familiar are you with Mental Health First Aid?
  - Very familiar: I have taken a course or am an instructor
  - Familiar
  - Unfamiliar but interested in learning more



**Mental Health**  
**FIRST AID**

*from* NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR  
MENTAL WELLBEING

# Why teen Mental Health First Aid?

# Why teen Mental Health First Aid?



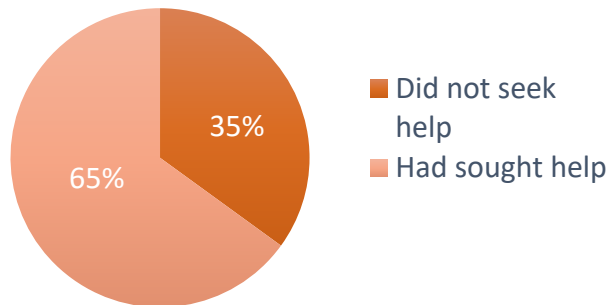
**1 in 5**

teens in the United States  
will experience a mental  
health challenge by the  
time they are 18.

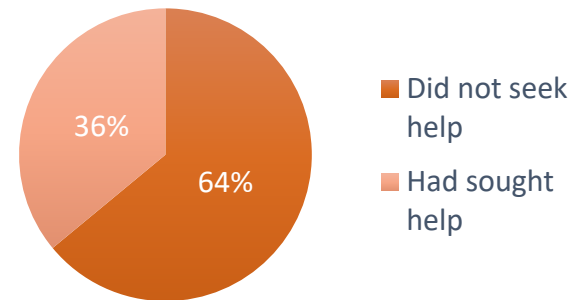
# Why teen Mental Health First Aid?

**Too many young people with mental health challenges don't seek help.**

**Australia/United Kingdom**



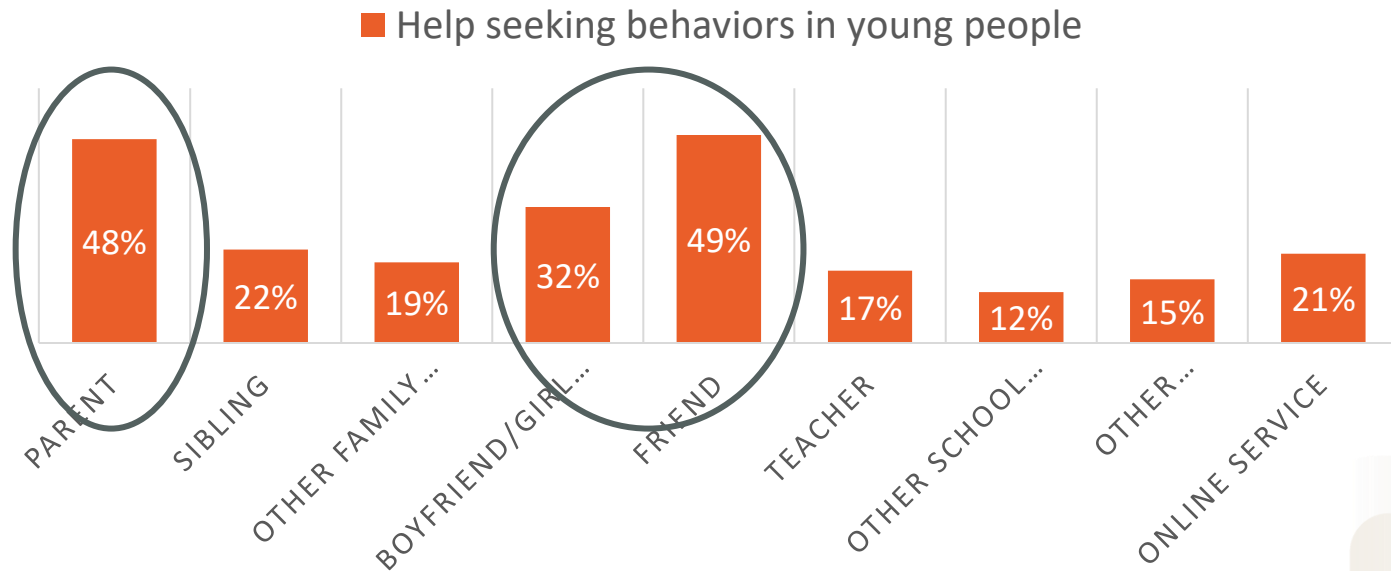
**United States**





# Why teen Mental Health First Aid?

## Young People Prefer to Seek Help from Friends and Family





**Mental Health**  
**FIRST AID**

*from* NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR  
MENTAL WELLBEING

# What is teen Mental Health First Aid?

# What is teen Mental Health First Aid?

## AUDIENCE

- High school students.
- Grades 10-12.
- Ages 15-18.

## STRUCTURE

- Three 90-minute sessions  
OR  
Six 45-minute sessions.
- Blended and Virtual delivery coming soon (six-session format).

## ORGANIZATIONS

- Schools/districts.
- Organizations partnering with a school.
- Youth-serving organizations or community sites.

# Learning Objectives

- Recognize early warning signs that a friend is developing a mental health challenge.
- Recognize warning signs that a friend may be experiencing a mental health crisis, particularly suicide.
- Describe how to talk to a friend about mental health and how to seek help.
- Explain when and how to get a responsible adult involved.
- Discuss where to find appropriate and helpful resources about mental health challenges and professional help.
- Apply the tMHFA Action Plan to help a friend experiencing a mental health challenge or crisis.

# teen Action Plan

Emphasis on  
Getting a Trusted  
Adult to Step In

## tMHFA 5 STEP ACTION PLAN

1.



**LOOK**

for warning signs

2.



**ASK**

how they are

3.



**LISTEN UP**

4.



**HELP**

them connect  
with an adult

5.



**YOUR**

**FRIENDSHIP**

is important

t**een** Mental Health First Aid teaches young people how to identify, understand and respond to mental health concerns among their friends.

Learn more at [MHFA.org/teens](https://mhfa.org/teens)

# tMHFA Course Outline

**tMHFA does not teach teens how to diagnose — it's information about being a supportive friend, encouraging friends to seek help, and knowing when it's time to get someone else involved.**

- I. Mental health in general, what mental health challenges are, how common they are in teens.
- II. Impact of mental health challenges on teens, how people with mental health challenges can get better, professionals who can help.
- III. Helping a friend who is in crisis because they are suicidal, introducing the tMHFA Action Plan, learning how it can be used in a crisis situation. A video shows a teen helping a friend who is experiencing suicidal thoughts.
- IV. Helping a friend who is in another type of crisis, such as threatening violence or harm to others, engaging in non-suicidal self-injury, or experiencing a traumatic event such as bullying, abuse, or assault. Practice using the tMHFA Action Plan in these types of crisis situations.
- V. Helping a friend who may be in crisis due to substance use and helping a friend who may be developing a mental health challenge.
- VI. Recovery and resilience.



**Mental Health**  
**FIRST AID**

*from* NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR  
MENTAL WELLBEING

# The History and Development of tMHFA

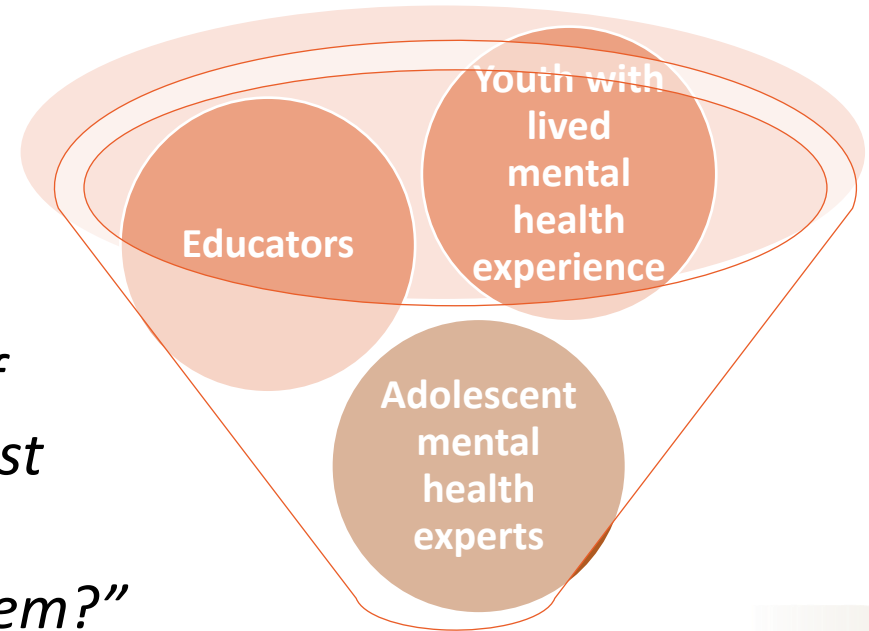
# History of tMHFA

- Dr. Laura Hart and Dr. Claire Kelly from Mental Health First Aid Australia developed tMHFA in 2015.
- Developed in response to:
  - Critical mental health needs of young people:
    - Half of all mental illnesses develop by the age of 14.
    - Suicide is a leading cause of death among teens.
  - Research indicates that while young people prefer sharing problems with peers, their peers do not always have the knowledge or skills to help them.



# tMHFA Guidelines

*“What is the minimum amount of information and what are the most critical skills teens need to help a friend with a mental health problem?”*



**Guidelines for teens  
providing Mental Health First  
Aid to peers.**

**Formed foundation for  
tMHFA Curriculum.**

# International Evaluation Results

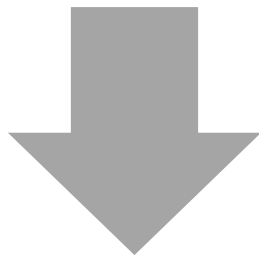
Researchers at the University of Melbourne conducted two evaluations of the Australian teen Mental Health First Aid program which showed that learners:



Demonstrated **increased mental health literacy**.

Were **more confident** helping a peer with a mental health problem.

**Viewed seeking help** from mental health professionals (school counselors, therapists, etc.) **more positively**



**Reported less psychological distress**, after receiving the teen MHFA training.

# U.S. Program Adaptation

In May 2018, the National Council, in partnership with Born This Way Foundation, began adapting the curriculum to make it relevant to teens in the United States.



## **Academic Research Partner**

Johns Hopkins  
University Bloomberg  
School of Public  
Health, Department  
of Mental Health



## **20 National Experts**



## **8 In-person and Virtual Youth Focus Groups**



## **Film Production Company**

# U.S. Version Addresses

Student  
Diversity

Trauma

Social Media

Addiction

Stigma

Violence



**Mental Health**  
**FIRST AID**

*from* NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR  
MENTAL WELLBEING

U.S. Pilot  
2019-2020

# 2019 – 2020 Pilot Program

- Spring 2019: The National Council partnered with Born This Way Foundation to pilot the program in eight sites across the country, training 32 Instructors and 4000 teens.
- Summer 2019: The National Council expanded the pilot to an additional 75 sites, which implemented tMHFA in the 2019-2020 school year.



# 2019-2020 Research Study

Researchers from Johns Hopkins University Bloomberg School of Public Health conducted an evaluation of tMHFA.

- Initial Pilot – 2018-2020
  - Evaluation study with eight pilot sites – 2018-2020
- Expanded Pilot – 2019-2020
  - Expanded study with over 35 sites – 2019-2020
  - Waitlist controlled trial with 40 sites – 2019-2020



Students participating in the study took a pre-test, post-test, and 3- and 6-month follow up tests.

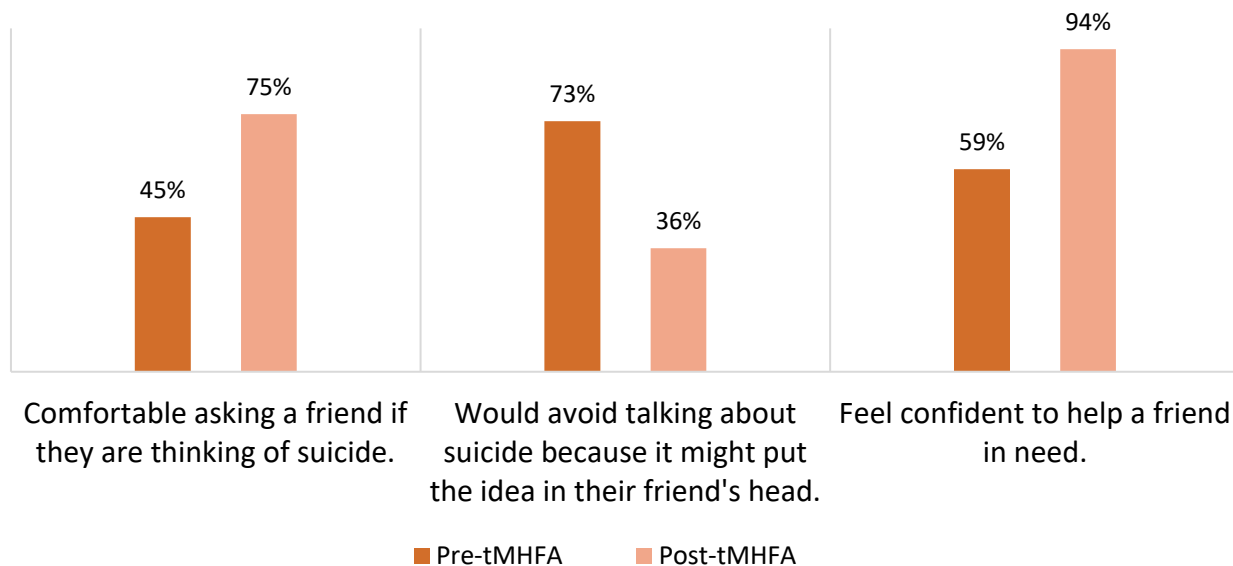
The pilot study measured:

- Adolescents' knowledge of the general warning signs of a developing mental illness.
- Skills and confidence in providing Mental Health First Aid to a peer.
- Actual usage of teen Mental Health First Aid skills with peers three and six months after the training.
- Data so far is positive!

# tMHFA Pilot Study Results

Despite disruptions due to COVID-19, we collected data from **2,580 diverse students** across **54 schools**.

## TEEN SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS



- **98% of Instructors** reported they thought the tMHFA training was relevant to their students.
- **99% of Instructors** believed the training made a positive impact on their students.
- Instructors reported **referring 500 teens** to school or community mental health services following the training.



# tMHFA Pilot Study Results: 6-month Follow-Up

- **57%** of teens reported that they had encountered a peer experiencing a mental health challenge or crisis.
  - **88%** of those teens reported using their tMHFA skills to help their peer.
- **Specific to the challenges of COVID-19**
  - **70%** of teens said they used what they learned in tMHFA to deal with their own stress.
    - **100%** of those teens reported that using their skills made them feel better or allowed them to get help.
  - **67%** reported they used their tMHFA skills to help someone in their life experiencing stress.



**Mental Health**  
**FIRST AID**

*from* NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR  
MENTAL WELLBEING

# Implementation Requirements

# Implementation Requirements

- The program must be taught to teens in grades 10, 11 or 12, or ages 15-18. (At this time, grade 9 and university-level students are not permitted.)
- tMHFA should be taught to standard classroom sizes of five to 30 teens. Classes should take place with at least one day between sessions and over the course of no more than three weeks.
- If teaching at a school, the program should be taught to the entire student population of the grade (not pre-selected teens in specific courses). If teaching at a youth-serving organization or program, the program should be taught to an entire group of students at the youth-serving organization or youth program.
- Sites should have 10% of adult staff trained in Youth Mental Health First Aid. This ensures teens will have trusted adults in their community who are equipped with the skills to help with a mental health or substance use challenge or crisis.
- Sites offering the training must have a protocol in place to ensure safety of teens, including responding to a teen in distress and/or one who indicates they would like to be seen.
- Sites must commit to using tMHFA Exit Tickets to provide teens with a discreet way of asking for help for themselves or a friend after every session of the course. Sites must establish a protocol to have Instructors and/or a site staff person read every tMHFA Exit Ticket and contact every teen who requests help.

# Implementation Requirements

- Each school or organization where tMHFA training will be delivered to teens must apply to be an implementing site and have a memorandum of understanding (MOU) and/or a contract with the National Council (updated annually).
- The National Council for Mental Wellbeing requires that tMHFA Instructors only teach tMHFA at Implementation Sites with a current MOU and a demonstrated commitment to implement the program with safety and fidelity.



**Mental Health**  
**FIRST AID**

*from* NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR  
MENTAL WELLBEING

# tMHFA

# Instructor Training

# 3-day Instructor Training

## Training-at-a-Glance



### Day 1



#### Prep Work:

- Watched Instructional Videos
- Completed Instructor Prep Workbook
- Roll Call Meeting

#### Huddle 1:

- Welcome
- The Movement tMHFA
- Unpacking the Curriculum

 30 min break

#### Huddle 2:

- Student Safety
- Classroom Management

 60 min break

#### Huddle 3:

- Teachback Guidance and Preparation
- Teachback Assignments

#### Homework:

- Review Assignment and Prepare for Coaching
- Coaching Prep Sheet

### Day 2



#### Huddle 4:

- Rubric Overview
- Overview of Coaching Calls

#### Coaching Begins

- 30-minute blocks



#### Breakout Rooms:

- Meet with assignment buddy

#### Homework:

- Teachback Prep
- Implementation Guide

### Day 3



#### Teachbacks and Feedback:

- 40-45 minute blocks



#### Final Huddle

- Implementation Guide
- The 3 P's
- Graduation



# Materials Received



Padfolio and  
flash drive



PowerPoint  
presentation for  
the tMHFA  
course



Teaching Notes for  
six 45-minute sessions  
and three 90-minute  
sessions



One copy of teen  
Manual for each  
teen learner



Implementation  
Toolkit and  
Instructor  
Processing Guide

Instructors can access electronic copies of materials  
via a OneDrive link.

# Hear from a tMHFA instructor

**Dana Rahmel, M.S.Ed.**  
School Social Worker  
Maple Shade High School





# Questions



# Poll: Timing for future events

- If selected, what time(s) of day could you attend future events? (Select all that apply)
  - Early morning
  - Late morning
  - Lunchtime
  - Early afternoon
  - Late afternoon
  - Evening
- If selected, what day(s) of the week could you attend future events? (Select all that apply.)
  - Monday
  - Tuesday
  - Wednesday
  - Thursday
  - Friday

# Eligibility Requirements

- School or youth-serving organization in New Jersey.
- Able to implement tMHFA for teens in grades 10-12, or ages 15-18, by June 2022.
- Participation in a virtual, professional learning community for the certified tMHFA Instructors and their implementing teams October 2021-June 2022.
- Commitment by school or organization's leadership and any other key stakeholders to implement this training and for participation in the virtual, professional learning community.
- Able to meet the tMHFA implementation requirements with fidelity.

# Application

- Available on the [New Jersey tMHFA website](#) July 26-August 20.
- Includes the following:
  - Part I: Contact and organization information.
  - Part II: Short-answer questions.
  - Part III: teen Mental Health First Aid (tMHFA) training questions.
  - Part IV: Attachment and key dates
- Only applications that are complete and submitted will be reviewed.
- Should take approximately 20 minutes to complete.
- Should be completed by an employee familiar with the school's or organization's workforce training and general mental health support.

# Next Steps

- Application open July 26-August 20.
- September 20: Applicants will be notified of their status.
- If selected, attend one orientation session:
  - September 30, 10-11 a.m. or
  - October 4, 4-5 p.m.
- Selected sites will receive information on:
  - Instructor training schedule and process.
  - Professional learning community virtual events October 2021-June 2022.

# Questions





## **Mental Health** **FIRST AID**

*from* NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR  
MENTAL WELLBEING

More information can be found on our  
[New Jersey Webpage](#)

Don't forget to sign up for updates!

Questions? Email [NJteenMHFA@TheNationalCouncil.org](mailto:NJteenMHFA@TheNationalCouncil.org)