

Bring teen Mental Health First Aid to

NEW JERSEY



PROFESSIONAL LEARNING COMMUNITY OVERVIEW

Today's teens live in a world shaped by multiple ongoing crises, most of which continue to be exacerbated by COVID-19 and its repercussions. As a result, they've struggled over the past year and continue to face many real stressors. Through teen Mental Health First Aid (tMHFA), our goal is to validate their experiences and provide actionable steps to help them better support themselves and each other.

tMHFA is a training program developed by the [National Council for Mental Wellbeing](#) in partnership with [Born This Way Foundation](#). It teaches teens in grades 10-12 (ages 15-18) about common mental health and substance use challenges and crises, and how they can help their friends who are struggling -- whether that means offering a shoulder to lean on or bringing in outside help. tMHFA empowers teens to speak up, take action and get help when it's needed from a trusted adult.

Thanks to funding provided by the New Jersey Pandemic Relief Fund through the Community Foundation of New Jersey, the National Council is bringing [teen Mental Health First Aid](#) to 50 school or youth-serving organizations in New Jersey at no cost. As part of this opportunity, certified tMHFA Instructors and their implementing teams take part in a **virtual, professional learning community**.

- tMHFA Instructors and their implementing teams will participate in a virtual, professional learning community running October 2021-June 2022.
- The professional learning community will enhance training to help tMHFA Instructors create a safe and supportive learning environment and will provide technical assistance and implementation support as sites plan and begin to train teens.
- Topics will include trauma-informed classroom strategies, culturally responsive teaching and best practices for affirming identities of diverse adolescents.
- The learning community will provide resources and brief presentations from experts.
- Peer-to-peer learning will play a key role in the learning community, which will bring together tMHFA instructors and implementing teams from across New Jersey.
- Participants will have the opportunity to share successes and gather input on challenges.
- Each of the 50 selected implementing sites will receive a \$1,000 stipend for participating in the learning community.
- Events will be virtual and held monthly. Selected implementing sites will provide input on the scheduled times of monthly learning community events.