

# Research and Evaluation of Adult Mental Health First Aid

Conducting research and evaluation activities on Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) are useful to understand the program's effectiveness, implementation, and to identify areas for improvement. This resource outlines the results of studies conducted on Adult MHFA, which have found positive effects in communities across the country.

**31**  
peer-reviewed  
studies

Nearly  
**700,000**  
learners represented

Participants from  
**all 50 states**  
represented



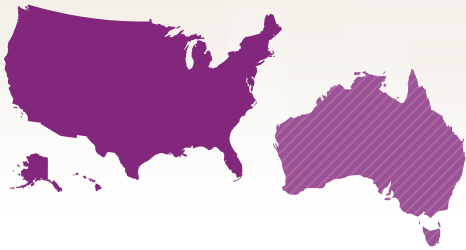
Participants have included medical professionals, community-based workers, community members living in urban and rural areas, and members from refugee, justice, military, and church communities.

## Overview of findings for Adult MHFA

Studies of Adult MHFA have found that individuals trained in the program:

- Show increased mental health literacy<sup>3-5</sup> which include:
  - Knowledge of signs, symptoms and risk factors of mental health and substance use challenges
  - Ability to identify appropriate types of professionals and self-help resources
- Increase their confidence/self-efficacy in and likelihood to help an individual in distress<sup>2,4,5</sup>
- Show reduced stigma/increased empathy toward individuals with mental health challenges<sup>3,4</sup>
- Use MHFA skills after training<sup>2</sup>
- Show increased likelihood to seek therapy or mental health care for themselves<sup>5</sup>
- Can apply MHFA skills correctly during a simulation<sup>1</sup>

## Selected Results from **Adult MHFA Studies**



In an exploratory study of **265** American and Australian **pharmacy students** who went through MHFA training and were assessed using simulated patient role-play assessments, both cohorts had similar scores and pass rates (**60-86%**). To pass, each person had to perform all required actions and enough appropriate actions for each simulated scenario according to a rubric.<sup>1</sup>

In a study of MHFA training for **98 pharmacy professionals**, participants reported high levels of confidence in performing MHFA skills and using up to **82%** of MHFA skills after their training.

These included referring someone to mental health resources (**61%**)

and asking someone if they were considering suicide (**44%**).<sup>2</sup>

61%

44%



In a pilot study which trained **89 community-based workers in Latinx and Asian immigrant communities**, participants had increases in mental health literacy and understanding in help-seeking behaviors, as well as decreases in stigma towards and social distance from people with mental disorders after training.<sup>3</sup>

In a study of **176 community first responders in Army National Guard armories**, those who received the MHFA training had increased improvements in confidence, knowledge, behaviors, and reduced stigma toward people with mental health issues. Participants who went through the training also had significant differences over time in these measures over those in the control group.<sup>4</sup>



In a national study of **2,543 residents and resident advisors (RAs)** across **19** colleges/universities across the US, RAs who trained in MHFA had improved self-perceived MH knowledge and self-efficacy. RAs were also more likely to receive therapy for themselves and had more positive beliefs about the effectiveness of therapy and medication.<sup>5</sup>

[Click here](#) to learn more about research and evaluation initiatives at MHFA and [here](#) for the full research summary on MHFA in the United States.



**Mental Health FIRST AID**

from NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR MENTAL WELLBEING

## References

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