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WHAT IS MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID (MHFA)?

Mental Health First Aid is an 8-hour course that teaches you how to identify, understand and respond to signs of mental illnesses and substance use disorders. The training gives you the skills you need to reach out and provide initial help and support to someone who may be developing a mental health or substance use problem or experiencing a crisis.

<https://www.mentalhealthfirstaid.org/cs/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/2018-MHFA-Research-Summary.pdf>



WHAT YOU LEARN:

Just as CPR helps you assist an individual having a heart attack, Mental Health First Aid helps you assist someone experiencing a mental health or substance use-related crisis. In the Mental Health First Aid course, you learn risk factors and warning signs for mental health and addiction concerns, strategies for how to help someone in both crisis and non-crisis situations, and where to turn for help.



- Adult MHFA (Available in Spanish)
- Youth MHFA (Available in Spanish)
- Courses available in:
 - Public Safety
 - Fire/EMS
 - Teen
 - Higher Education
 - Veterans
 - Older Adults
 - Rural
 - Workplace



Examples of Funding Models

General Fund

Colorado appropriates around \$210k annually for MHFA. This year, the supplemental appropriation is through the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment under the Injury and Violence Prevention- Mental Health Promotion line item.

Florida has allocated \$6.2M each year for the past two years from the General Revenue Fund to the Department of Education to train school personnel in YMHFA or similar programs. This funds the Marjory Stoneman Douglas Act.

North Dakota has appropriated ([SB 2048](#)) \$900,000 to the Department of Human Services all of which is from the general fund, for partial funding for a behavioral health activities facilitator and for establishing and administering a voucher system.

Grant Programs

Nebraska proposed a bill ([LB568](#)) that would provide YMHFA training for teachers and other school personnel, funded through the innovation grant programs provided by the Nebraska Education Improvement Fund.

Examples of Funding Models Cont'd

[Texas](#) provides grants for the training of Mental Health First Aid trainers ([SB 955](#) Sec. 1001.202).

Non-legislative approaches:

Denver city/county voted to increase sales and use taxes for the [Caring for Denver Foundation](#) to distribute \$35m per year to fund mental health and addiction services, beginning January 2019.

New Mexico's Children, Youth and Families Department provides MHFA training to foster parents using funds dedicated for childcare, foster care maintenance, and adoption assistance.

The **Pennsylvania** Department of Corrections embedded Mental Health First Aid as part of its training academy for the state's 16,000 employees it hopes to train by March 2015. The department further garnered a \$250,000 grant from the state safety council to defray costs of manuals for all trainees.

Training Mandates

Florida: Requires all school personnel to be trained in youth mental health awareness and assistance. Youth Mental Health First Aid was the first program selected to meet the requirements and funding is available now through the Department of Education (Marjory Stoneman Douglas Act).

Rhode Island: Requires training and instruction in Mental Health First Aid for police officers and trainees (SB 2401).

North Dakota: Created new sections of the North Dakota Century Code that requires competency in youth mental health training for licensure of teachers, administrators, and ancillary staff (SB 2048).

Best Practices of Training Mandates

1. Establish clear and comprehensive training objectives.
2. Target the training needs of specific populations.
3. Provide funding for training that is sustained and right-size for the stated goals and target populations.
4. Mandate training for public sector employees who engage directly with vulnerable populations, including youth.
5. Ensure Mental Health First Aid is included as an option to satisfy professional development credits.

Teen Mental Health First Aid

Teens learn how to recognize the signs of developing mental illnesses, mental health crises, suicide, and substance use. Participants are trained to reach out to a trusted adult to address the issue.

Audience:

10th- 12th grade students

Format:

Three 75-minute sessions (other options)
Schools/organizations offering TMHFA training are required to train all classes in the 10th grade.
At least 10% of adult faculty and staff must be trained in YMHFA.

Building a foundation for Teen Mental Health First Aid

California (SB 428): If passed, this bill would mandate 10% of teachers and school personnel in each CA school be trained in MHFA (or similar) training.

New Jersey (SB 3172): An act requiring public school instruction in suicide prevention to be provided in grades kindergarten through 12.

Illinois (SB 1731): A trailer bill to a mental health training mandate passed last year for teachers; it declares YMHFA as the suggested program to satisfy this requirement.



Questions?