



teen

# MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID

**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.

NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

## Why **teen** Mental Health First Aid?

teen Mental Health First Aid teaches high school students **how to identify, understand and respond to signs of mental illnesses and substance use disorders among their friends and peers.** The training gives students the skills to have supportive conversations with their friends and get a responsible and trusted adult to take over as necessary. It is designed to be delivered in schools or community sites in three interactive classroom sessions of 90 minutes each or six sessions of 45 minutes each.

Schools and organizations offering the training are required to train at least 10 percent of adult staff in Youth Mental Health First Aid and to train the entire grade level. A critical step in the teen Mental Health First Aid action plan is connecting with a trusted adult. Youth Mental Health First Aid trains adults to be prepared to help young people facing a crisis.

### 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.

### WHO SHOULD TAKE IT

- High school students in grades 10, 11 and 12
- High schools, organizations partnering with a high school and youth-serving organizations are eligible to teach teen MHFA to students.

**The course will teach students how to apply the teen MHFA 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.

TO LEARN MORE ABOUT TEEN MHFA, VISIT [MHFA.org/teens](https://www.mhfa.org/teens).



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**“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*

BORN THIS WAY FOUNDATION