Early Detection and Prevention

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Mental Health First Aid: Early Detection and Prevention

A special thank you to Lea Ann Browning, Chief Program Officer of the Mental Health Association of Maryland, for her permission to share her slides on Mental Health First Aid.
Represents the $39 Billion Public Mental Health System serving 7.1 million people annually in all 50 states, 4 territories, and the District of Columbia.

An affiliation with the approximately 195 State Psychiatric Hospitals: Serve 147,000 people per year and 41,800 people served at any point in time.
Mental Health First Aid is the help offered to a person developing a mental health problem or experiencing a mental health crisis. The first aid is given until appropriate treatment and support are received or until the crisis resolves.

- Originated in Australia and currently in 20 countries
- Adult MHFA course for individuals 18 years of age and older, available in both Spanish and English
- Youth MHFA is designed to teach caring adults how to help an adolescent (aged 12-17) who is experiencing a mental health or substance use challenge or crisis
- Included in SAMHSA’s National Registry of Evidence-based Programs and Practices
- Founded in partnership with Maryland and Missouri State Governments and the National Council for Behavioral Health
What Participants Learn

- Prevalence of mental health problems.
- Risk factors for mental health and substance use problems.
- Signs and symptoms of a variety of illnesses
- 5-step action plan to help someone developing a mental health concern or in crisis.
- Where to find evidence-based professional, peer, and self-help resources.

MHFA Action Plan

- Assess for risk of suicide or harm
- Listen nonjudgmentally
- Give reassurance and information
- Encourage appropriate professional help
- Encourage self-help and other support strategies
**Where Mental Health First Aid Can Help**

- **Prevention**
- **Early Intervention**
- **Treatment**

- Well
- Becoming Unwell
- Unwell
- Recovering

Where Mental Health First Aid can help on the spectrum of mental health interventions

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**Why Mental Health First Aid?**

- Mental health problems are common
- Stigma is associated with mental health problems
- Professional help is not always on hand
- Individuals with mental health problems often do not seek help
- Many people…
  - are not well informed about mental health problems
  - do not know how to respond
ALGEE-OMETER

More than 310,000 First Aiders in the US
Trained by more than 6,300 Instructors

Audiences

31.4% General Community/Not Specified
24.7% Behavioral Health
15.9% Higher Education
7.0% Social Services
6.9% Primary Care
6.7% Law Enforcement/Public Safety
5.6% Faith Communities
4.5% Youth-focused entities
0.6% Business/Corporations
2.2% Other
Evidence

Mental Health First Aid...

...increases knowledge and understanding
...encourages people helping people
...supports people getting help
...decreases social distance
...increases mental wellness

Evidence

What people are saying...

N.Y.U. has also added a mental health first aid training course. Employees who work in campus hot spots learn to identify mental illness symptoms as well as how to defuse a tense situation until help arrives. A hot spot is any place prone to frustrate, including the financial aid office, the bursar’s office, and the registrar’s office.

Attend a traditional first aid class, and you will learn checklists for assessing and responding to cuts, burns and strokes. [In Mental Health First Aid] students consider how they would respond to...a stranger having a panic attack, a friend expressing hopelessness, or a client distressed over an illness.

The New York Times
January 23, 2011

USA Today
March 12, 2012
Take a Course. 
You could be the help someone needs.

Learn more at
MentalHealthFirstAid.org
MHFAmaryland.org

Question and Answer for Panel