A Collaborative Partnership

NATIONAL COUNCIL for Community Behavioral Healthcare

Maryland State Department of Health and Mental Hygiene

Missouri Department of Mental Health
What Is Mental Health First Aid?

The help provided to a person developing a mental health problem or experiencing a crisis until professional treatment is received or the crisis resolves.
Program Origins

• Created in Australia in 2001
• Auspiced at the University of Melbourne
• Expanded to 17 countries, including Scotland, China, Canada, Finland, Singapore, Ireland, Wales, England, Cambodia, Japan, South Africa, Thailand and New Zealand.
• Piloted in the U.S. in 2008
Evidenced Effectiveness

- Four published randomized control trials and a qualitative study (in Australia)
  - Increases mental health literacy
  - Expands individuals’ knowledge of how to help someone in crisis
  - Connects individuals to needed services
  - Reduces stigma
Potential Audiences

– Hospitals and health centers
– Employers
– Faith communities
– Schools/universities
– Law enforcement/first responders
– Nursing home staff
– Consumers, families and caring citizens
– Mental health authorities
– Policymakers
People Are Saying . . .

• “Just weeks after attending the training, I’ve already used the skills I learned in Mental Health First Aid…”
  
  Hospital Employee

• “I think any professionals who deal with people should take this course, especially emergency personnel, teachers, . . .”
  
  Employment Services Professional
People Are Saying . . .

• “I now feel better prepared for what might happen.”  
  *Homeless Shelter Volunteer*

• “This info can help a person become more understanding, rather than judgmental, of someone with a mental illness”  
  *Community Member*
By the Numbers: 2008-2011

• 45,000+ Mental Health First Aiders
• 1,800+ instructors certified
• 45 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico
What You Learn

• Overview of mental health problems
  – Depressive/Mood disorders
  – Anxiety disorders
  – Disorders in which psychosis occurs
  – Substance use disorders
  – Eating disorders

• Mental Health First Aid for crisis situations
• Mental Health First Aid for non-crisis situations
5 Step Action Plan

• A – Assess for risk of suicide or harm
• L – Listen Nonjudgmentally
• G – Give reassurance and information
• E – Encourage appropriate professional help
• E – Encourage self help and other support strategies
Methods of Learning

• Didactic
  – PowerPoint
  – Workbooks
  – Active participation

• Videos
  – On Depression, Anxiety disorders, Psychosis

• Case Vignettes
How it Works

Training Components

• 12-hour community program offered by instructors

• 5-day instructor certification training offered by the National Council, Missouri Department of Mental Health, and Maryland Department of Health & Mental Hygiene
My Experience

• Have taught MHFA 10 times
  - Youth Advocates
  - Senior Center Staff
  - General Public
• Class sizes are capped at 25 for maximum learning and participation
Vision

By 2020, Mental Health First Aid in the USA will be as common as CPR and First Aid.
For More Information

www.MentalHealthFirstAid.org

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