



*A Collaborative Partnership*

NATIONAL COUNCIL  
for Community Behavioral Healthcare

Maryland State Department of Mental  
Hygiene

Missouri Department of Mental Health

## About the National Council

Represent 1,700 community-based organizations that care for more than 6 million adults and children with mental illnesses and addiction disorders.

- > Policy
- > Practice
- > Public education

## 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.



[www.MentalHealthFirstAid.org](http://www.MentalHealthFirstAid.org)

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## What You Learn

- > Overview of mental health problems
  - Depressive disorders
  - Anxiety disorders
  - Psychotic disorders
  - Substance use disorders
  - Eating disorders
- > Mental Health First Aid for crisis situations
- > Mental Health First Aid for non-crisis situations

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## Program Origins

- > Created in Australia in 2001
- > Auspiced at the University of Melbourne
- > Expanded to 14 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



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## 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

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## Potential Audiences

- Hospitals and health centers
- Employers
- Faith communities
- Schools/universities
- Law enforcement/first responders
- Nursing home staff
- Families and caring citizens
- Mental health authorities
- Policymakers

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## 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*

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## 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*

## Community Connections

“Mental Health First Aid – with its new emphasis on recovery – has the power to transform communities, the power to change beliefs and the ability to connect people in ways they never would have connected otherwise.”

*Larry Fricks  
National Consumer Leader*



## By the Numbers

- > 3,000+ Mental Health First Aiders
- > 180+ community trainings
- > 360 instructors certified
- > 36 states
- > 1,000,000 media impressions



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## Vision



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

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## How it Works

### Training Components

- > 12-hour community program offered by instructors
- > 5-day instructor certification training offered by the National Council

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## Implementation & Sustainability

- > Web-based technical assistance infrastructure
- > Program evaluation
- > Expansion to all 50 states
- > National media campaign



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## State Implementation Steps

- > Experience Mental Health First Aid — attend a course.
- > Develop rollout strategy — define key target audiences and how to reach them.
- > Certify instructors.
- > Get key influencers — community partners, policymakers, media, funders — to support and endorse.
- > Offer/organize 12-hour programs.

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## For More Information

[www.MentalHealthFirstAid.org](http://www.MentalHealthFirstAid.org)

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