

# First Aid=

Emergency treatment administered to an injured or sick person before professional medical care is available.



You may know CPR and the Heimlich Maneuver. You can call 911. But can you administer First Aid in a mental health crisis?

It's easy to tell when someone might be suffering from a heart attack, is choking, or is unable to breathe. But what does depression look like? Or anxiety? Have you met people experiencing suicidal thoughts or behaviors?

Panic Attacks? Substance Use Disorders? Trauma? Eating Disorders? Grief?

How would you know?  
And how can you help?

# Mental Health First Aid=

The initial help given to a person showing symptoms of mental illness or in a mental health crisis (severe depression, psychosis, panic attack, suicidal thoughts and behaviors...) until appropriate professional or other help, including peer and family support, can be engaged.

A 12-hour course prepares members of the public to provide Mental Health First Aid to those in need. This course is delivered by certified Mental Health First Aid USA instructors who complete a 5-day training and meet other certification requirements.

## Mental Health First Aid Authorities



Mental Health First Aid USA is coordinated by the National Council for Community Behavioral Healthcare, the Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, and the Missouri Department of Mental Health – we train and certify instructors to deliver the 12-hour Mental Health First Aid course in your community.

To learn more and find a Mental Health First Aid course in your community, visit

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

**ATTEND A FREE COURSE IN SAN MATEO COUNTY**  
[www.smchealth.org/bhrs/communityed](http://www.smchealth.org/bhrs/communityed)

Contact:

Lauren Getuiza at (650) 372-8548  
c\_lgetuiza@smcgov.org

or

Jei Africa at (650) 573-2714  
jafrica@smcgov.org



**COUNTY OF SAN MATEO HEALTH SYSTEM**  
BEHAVIORAL HEALTH & RECOVERY SERVICES



# MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID



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

## Did You Know?

You are more likely to encounter a person in an emotional or mental crisis than someone having a heart attack. Mental disorders are more common than heart disease and cancer combined.



Wish I could help, but I don't know what to do.



Should I ask what's wrong? But what if I make her angry?



I don't understand what's going on but I think he needs help.

## Mental Health First Aid Transforming Communities

**Myth:** Mental illness is something that only affects others and not us, our family, or our friends.

**Fact:** An estimated 1 in 4 Americans have a diagnosable mental illness. Mental health crises occur frequently in your workplace, church, family, school, and community.

**Myth:** Mental illness has no real impact on society.

**Fact:** Mental illness accounts for 15% of the total economic burden of all disease in the U.S. Untreated mental disorders cost \$79 billion in lost productivity every year.

**Myth:** Mental illness is not that serious, people get over it.

**Fact:** Medical experts rate mental disorders among the most impactful illnesses. Mental illnesses interfere with a person's ability to go to school, work, care for himself or herself, and form relationships.

The stigma surrounding mental illness often prevents people from seeking help or even acknowledging that they need help. And if they do want help, they don't know where to turn. Mental Health First Aid equips the public to help persons with mental illness connect to care.

Mental Health First Aid is a highly interactive, 12-hour program taught over several days or weeks to small groups.

*Save lives and  
build stronger communities.*

*Join Mental Health First Aiders across the USA*

### You will learn

- The prevalence of mental illnesses in the U.S. and their emotional and economic cost.
- The potential warning signs and risk factors for depression, anxiety disorders, trauma, psychotic disorders, eating disorders, and substance use disorders.
- A 5-step action plan to help an individual in crisis connect to professional care.
- Resources available to help someone with a mental health problem.

Mental Health First Aid has been rigorously evaluated and is proven to reduce stigma connected to mental illnesses. This program can reduce the damaging effects of mental and emotional disorders such as job loss, school dropouts, relationship issues, and drug and alcohol problems.

### Who Can Be a Mental Health First Aider?

- Educators/School Administrators
- College/University Leaders
- Human Resources Professionals
- Members of Faith Communities
- Homeless Shelter Staff and Volunteers
- Nurses/Physician Assistants/Primary Care Workers
- Police/First Responders/Security Personnel
- Mental Health Authorities
- Policymakers
- Substance Abuse Professionals
- Social Workers
- Consumers and Family Members
- Caring Citizens