



teen Mental Health First Aid (tMHFA): What students need to know

Your school is conducting tMHFA training, which gives teenagers the skills they need to recognise and help with mental health problems and crises in their friends, and to get the help of an adult quickly.

Young people will often turn to each other when stressed or upset, and try to help each other, and sometimes take too much on. This course teaches you not to try to take on these problems alone, and when you should get an adult involved. You won't be talking about any problems you are having yourself and you won't learn to give therapy or diagnose a problem.

The course discusses suicide. Some people will find it distressing. Talk to your parents about it if you're worried that talking about suicide will make it too hard for you to be a part of the course. However, you should be aware that most people find that even if they have lost someone to suicide, the information in the course makes them feel better, not worse.

This course isn't happening because of any specific problems at your school. No individual student will be discussed in the course.

Session 1 discusses mental health problems in general, and understanding how common and tough these are in young people. You'll also learn about professionals who can help.

Session 2 talks about helping a friend who is in crisis, whether because they are suicidal, engaging in non-suicidal self-injury, using alcohol or other drugs, or experiencing bullying or abuse.

The Action Plan ('Look, Ask, Listen, Help Your Friend') is introduced for the first time, and applied to a crisis situation.

There is a video which shows a young man helping a friend who is experiencing suicidal thoughts.

Session 3 takes a step back and discusses how to help if someone seems to be developing a mental health problem. We won't teach you how to diagnose problems – it's advice about being a supportive friend, encouraging your friend to seek help, and knowing when it's time to get someone else involved.

You will take your manual home after session 3. There are resources for further information in the back and you may want to explore them alone or with your parents. If you wish to learn more now, resources are also provided overleaf.



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If you wish to learn more...

... about mental health problems experienced by young people, visit:

- www.youthbeyondblue.com
- www.reachout.com

... about MHFA programs:

- www.mhfa.com.au

For immediate online help:

- www.kidshelp.com.au
- www.eheadspace.org.au

Or, talk to the student welfare team at your school.