

# MHFA Canada for Adults who Interact with Youth Course

## DESCRIPTION

The Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) training course was developed to help people provide initial support to someone who may be developing a mental health problem or experiencing a mental health crisis.

MHFA Canada teaches mental health first aid skills. The course does not train people to be therapists, counselors or mental health professionals. The philosophy behind MHFA Canada is that mental health crisis, such as suicidal and self-harming actions, may be avoided through early intervention. If crisis do arise, then members of the public can take action that may reduce the harm that could result.

MHFA Canada: For Adults Who Interact with Youth focuses on mental health problems and first aid for youth ages 12 to 24. Mental health problems often first develop during adolescence or early adulthood, with half of all mental disorders beginning by age 14, and 75 percent beginning by age 24.

Most mental disorders develop gradually. The early signs and symptoms of developing mental health problems will be different from the more established clinical profiles which are reflected later in life. The social, educational and family environments in which mental disorders occur in young people are also different from those later in life. Therefore, the information in this course is designed to be sensitive to the unique aspects of mental health problems in young people. It is meant to assist education professionals, health providers, parents and other adults in the identification of mental health problems and appropriate first aid intervention strategies.

The following mental health problems are covered:

- Mood Disorders
- Anxiety disorders
- Psychosis
- Substance Use Disorder
- Eating disorders
- Deliberate self-injury

The following mental health crisis situations are covered:

- Suicidal behaviour
- Overdoses
- Panic Attacks
- Reactions to traumatic events
- Psychotic episodes

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## COURSE OUTLINE

### **Session 1: Mental Health and Mental Illness**

- What is Mental Health First Aid?
- Why Mental Health First Aid?
- Common mental health problems
- The five basic actions of mental health first aid
- Treatment and resources

### **Session 2: Substance Related Disorders**

- What is a Substance-Related Disorder?
- Signs and symptoms
- Types of Substance-Related Disorders
- Substance use by youth
- Types of substances
- Mental Health First Aid for substance-related disorders
- Crisis first aid for overdose
- Treatment and resources

### **Session 3: Mood Disorders**

- What is a mood disorder?
- Types of mood disorders
- Signs and symptoms of mood disorders
- Risk factors for mood disorders
- Mood disorders and substance use
- Suicide in Canada
- Crisis first aid for suicidal behaviour
- Mental health first aid for depression
- Treatment and resources

### **Session 4: Deliberate Self-Injury**

- What is deliberate self-injury?
- Reasons for deliberate self-injury
- Risk factors for deliberate self-injury
- Mental Health First Aid for deliberate self-injury
- Treatment and resources

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## COURSE OUTLINE (CONTINUED...)

### ***Session 5: Anxiety Disorders***

- What are anxiety disorders?
- Symptoms of anxiety disorders
- Types of anxiety disorders
- Risk factors for anxiety disorders
- Anxiety disorders and substance use
- Crisis first aid for panic attacks
- Crisis first aid for acute stress reaction
- Mental health first aid for anxiety disorders
- Treatment and resources

### ***Session 6: Eating Disorders***

- What is an eating disorder?
- Types of eating disorders
- Risk factors for eating disorders
- Mental Health First Aid for eating disorders
- Treatment and resources

### ***Session 7: Psychotic Disorders***

- What are psychotic disorders?
- Symptoms of psychotic disorders
- Types of psychotic disorders
- Risk factors for psychosis
- Psychosis and substance use
- Crisis first aid for acute psychosis
- Mental health first aid for psychosis
- Treatment and resources