



Mental Health First Aid CANADA

What is Mental Health First Aid?

It is the help provided to a person developing a mental health problem or experiencing a mental health crisis. First Aid is given until appropriate professional treatment is received or until the crisis is resolved. The concept is based on the model of medical first aid.

Why would this program benefit your agency and your employees?

Mental health problems will affect one in three Canadians at some point in their life. Chances are you have employees and clients who need help. Participants will learn how to:

- Identify when a person may be a danger to themselves or others and take steps to preserve life.
- Recognize the early warning signs for mental health problems and provide help to prevent more serious problems from developing.
- Provide comfort to someone with a mental health problem and support them in recovering their mental health.

Who should take this course?

Anyone can benefit from Mental Health First Aid – members of the general public, teachers, health service providers, emergency workers, frontline workers, volunteers, human resources professionals, employers, and community groups.

Course Format:

MHFA is a two-day training course provided in supportive group learning environment. Practical skills are taught in a way so that it is easy to remember and apply in real-life settings.

What Course Should I Take?

Two versions:

1. Mental Health First Aid Basic
2. Mental Health First Aid for Adults who Interact with Youth

Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) Canada *For Adults who Interact with Youth*

teaches first aid skills to adults so they can provide help to youth (ages 12-24) developing a mental health problem or experiencing a mental health crisis. In 14 hours* you will learn:

- Signs and symptoms of common mental health problems and crisis situations
- Basic actions for mental health first aid
- Information about effective interventions and treatments
- How to access help and resources

Basic Course includes:

Mental Health Problems

Substance Related Disorder
Depression
Anxiety Disorders
Psychosis

Crisis Situations

Overdose
Suicidal Behavior
Panic Attacks/Acute Stress Reaction
Acute Psychosis

Youth version: all of the above plus two added sections:

Deliberate Self Injury*
(only in Youth Version)

Eating Disorders*

Why take MHFA Canada?

Mental health problems are common, especially depression, anxiety and misuse of alcohol and other drugs. One person in three will experience some form of problem with their mental health at some point in their life.

There is a stigma associated with mental health problems. This may hinder people from seeking help. People are often ashamed to discuss mental health problems with family, friends and work colleagues. They may also be reluctant to seek professional help for such problems because of their concerns about what others will think of them.

Many people are not well informed. Understanding how to recognize mental health problems and what effective treatments are available is not widespread. With greater community awareness, people will be able to recognize their own or others' problems and feel more comfortable about seeking professional assistance.

Professional help is not always on hand. Family doctors, counsellors, psychologists and psychiatrists can all assist people with mental health problems. However, just as with accidents and other medical emergencies, such assistance is not always available when a problem first arises. This is when members of the public can offer immediate aid and support the person until they get appropriate professional help.

People may lack the insight to realize they need help or that help is available. Some mental health problems cloud clear thinking and good decision-making. A person experiencing such problems may not realize that they need help or that effective help is available for them. They may be in such a state of distress and not able to think clearly about what they should do.

Members of the general public often do not know how to respond. In a mental health crisis situation, the helper's actions may determine how quickly the person with the problem gets help and/or recovers. In Mental Health First Aid Canada, they learn an approach to help them to be calm and confident and to respond in an appropriate way to give the best help.