

Mental Health of America of San Diego County

Breaking Down Barriers

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Mental Health First Aid

Mental Health First Aid is the initial help given to a person showing symptoms of mental illness or in a mental health crisis until appropriate professional, peer, or family support can be engaged. The highly interactive 12-hour course prepares members of the public to provide Mental Health First Aid to those in need.

Mental health provider organizations across the country have been offering Mental Health First Aid to reinforce their position as community leaders, strengthen collaborations with community partners, and increase awareness of treatment options as the demand for mental health

services grows significantly with the implementation of parity and healthcare reform.

Mental Health America of San Diego County provides a 12-hour course to diverse audiences — consumers and families, caring citizens, schools, colleges, workplaces, law enforcement, first responders, primary care, faith communities... **the possibilities are endless!**

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

Get the Facts

- *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.*

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.



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..

Save Lives and Build Stronger Communities

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

You will learn...

1. The prevalence of mental illnesses in the U.S. and their emotional and economic cost.
2. The potential warning signs and risk factors for depression, anxiety disorders, trauma, psychotic disorders, eating disorders, and substance use disorders.

3. 5-step action plans to help an individual in crisis connect to professional care.
4. 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.



Ten Tools to Live Your Life Well

- *Stay Connected*
- *Stay Positive*
- *Get Physically Active*
- *Help Others*
- *Get Enough Sleep*

- *Create Joy and Satisfaction*
- *Eat Well*
- *Take Care of Your Spirit*
- *Deal Better with Hard Times*
- *Get Professional Health if you need it*

Breaking Down Barriers Transforming Communities

Helping Communities Grow

The purpose of Breaking Down Barriers is to increase access to mental health services to underserved groups and reduce the stigma associated with mental illness in the communities where they reside.

Through public education and building community partnerships, we can increase access to mental health services. Breaking Down Barriers is a program designed to bring awareness to mental health services throughout San Diego County.

The Outreach Specialists for Urban and Rural American Indian Communities have been providing Mental Health First Aid Certification trainings and Mental Health Awareness

presentations to numerous organizations, Tribal Nations and communities in Southern California.

For more information contact:

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