



MENTAL
HEALTH
FIRST AID

Prevent
mental illness

Help
in a crisis

Promote
wellness



A “Taste” of Youth Mental Health First Aid

Presented by:
Tracy Klingener MA, DRCC, LAC

THE MENTAL HEALTH
FIRST AID ACTION PLAN

Assess for risk of suicide
or harm

Listen nonjudgmentally

Give reassurance and
information

Encourage appropriate
professional help

Encourage self-help and
other support strategies

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What Is Mental Health First Aid?

Youth Mental Health First Aid® is the help offered to a young person experiencing a mental health challenge, mental disorder or a mental health crisis. The first aid is given until appropriate help is received or until the crisis resolves.

Mental Health First Aid® does not teach people to diagnose or to provide treatment.

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Why Mental Health First Aid?

- + Mental health problems are common.
- + Mental health problems often develop during adolescence.
- + Youth and young adults may experience mental health problems differently than adults.
- + Youth may not be well informed.
- + The sooner an individual gets help, the more likely they are to have a positive outcome.
- + Stigma is associated with mental health problems.
- + Professional help is not always on hand.

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What is Your Role?

- + Parent/Guardian/Grandparent
- + Clergy
- + Friend or Neighbor
- + Peer
- + Professional: *“In the place of the parent”*

Be aware of:

- Mandatory reporting laws
- Privacy rights of young people
- When to communicate with parents and other care-givers

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What is a mental disorder

- + Affects every area of your life
- + What are some terms people have heard used in their community to describe it?
- + Often negative connotations
- + Why do we have these negative terms

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What is Positive Mental Health

- ✚ is a state of well-being that allows us to enjoy our lives and can help children and youth weather the normal ups and downs of life.
- ✚ Positive mental health includes a variety of components of well-being, including:
 - ✚ Positive emotions
 - ✚ Life satisfaction
 - ✚ Sense of purpose in life
 - ✚ Positive psychological coping and adaptation
 - ✚ Social and emotion competencies
 - ✚ Positive relationships and attitudes
- ✚ Good mental health is also not static — it changes over time depending on what is happening in our lives. That is why, just like our physical health, we must work at it.

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Why is it Important

- + A strong foundation in childhood can lead to a healthy, happy and productive life. Good mental health contributes to strong relationships and better health at home and school. It can also help to prevent the onset of other mental health issues like anxiety and depression.
- + Positive mental health is positively associated with:
- + Academic success
- + Positive connections
- + Positive adaptations
- + Prosocial attitudes and behaviors
- + Healthy lifestyle behaviors

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What are Some of the Disorders we Might Hear About?

- + ADD/ADHD/ODD
- + Anxiety Disorders
- + Bipolar Disorder
- + Depression
- + Eating Disorders
- + Psychosis
- + Substance Use Disorders

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U.S. Youth with Mental Disorder During Adolescence (13-18)

U.S. Youth with a Mental Disorder during Adolescence (Age 13-18)



	Prevalence (%)	With severe impact (%)
Anxiety disorders	31.9	8.3
Behavior disorders	19.1	9.6
Mood disorders	14.3	11.2
Substance use disorders	11.4	11.4
Overall prevalence (with severe impact)	27.6	

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Additional Prevalence

- + 3% of 13-17 year-olds have an eating disorder.
- + 11% of school-aged youth have ADD/ADHD.

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Median Age of Onset

- + ½ of all lifetime cases of mental illness begin by age 14; ¾ by age 24.
- + Anxiety Disorders – Age 11.
- + Eating Disorders – Age 15.
- + Substance Use Disorders – Age 20.
- + Schizophrenia – Age 23.
- + Bipolar – Age 25.
- + Depression – Age 32.

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Typical Adolescent Development

+ Physical Changes

- Changes in hormones
- Increases in height and weight
- Becoming more focused on physical concerns

+ Mental Changes

- Developing more abstract thinking skills
- Using logic and reason more in decision making
- Developing own beliefs
- Beginning to question authority

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Typical Adolescent Development

+ Emotional Changes

- Can be quick to change
- Feel more intensely
- Can lead to risk taking and impulsive behavior

+ Social Changes

- May experiment with different levels of social and cultural identity
- Peer influence increases
- Notice sexual identity
- Learn to manage relationships, including romantic relationships

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Typical Behaviors vs. Symptoms

Typical Adolescence	Potential Warning Sign
Withdrawing from family to spend more time with friends.	Withdrawing from friends, family and social activity.
Wanting more privacy.	Becoming secretive; need for privacy seems to be hiding something.
Moving from childhood likes to teen pursuits.	Losing interest in favorite activities and not replacing with other pursuits.

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Resiliency

- + Most youth pass through adolescence with relatively little difficulty despite all of these challenges.
- + When difficulties are encountered, youth tend to be quite resilient:
 - Thrive
 - Mature
 - Increase their competence



Encourage appropriate professional help

Encourage self-help and other support strategies

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Protective Factors

- + Healthy practices.
- + High self-esteem.
- + Good problem solving skills.
- + Feeling of control in their own life .
- + Spirituality.
- + Avoiding alcohol, tobacco and other drugs .
- + Consistent home/family routine.
- + Parental/familial support.

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Protective Factors

- + Monitoring of youth's activities.
- + Regular school attendance and academic performance.
- + Having a good social support system.
- + Economic security.
- + Availability of constructive recreation.
- + Community bonding.
- + Feeling close to at least one adult.

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How Parents Can Support PMH

- + Parents can help support positive mental health by forming strong and caring relationships with their children.
- + Connect – talk and listen to their feelings and experiences.
- + Be active together – take a walk and build physical activity into family time.
- + Take notice – encourage and praise the positive behaviors and choices your children make.
- + Keep learning – encourage your child to learn from both positive and negative experiences.
- + Give – your time, your words, your presence. Listen
- + Show love and affection

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MHFA ACTION PLAN

Mental Health First Aid teaches a **five-step** action plan, ALGEE, for individuals to provide help to someone who may be in crisis.

A – Assess for risk of suicide or harm

L - Listen non-judgmentally

G - Give reassurance and information

E – Encourage appropriate professional help

E - Encourage self-help & other support strategies

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ALGEE-Action A:

Assess for risk of suicide or harm



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ACTION PLAN

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Kevin Hines

Mental Health First Aid



- +

The film, developed for Youth Mental Health First Aid, features Hines sharing his struggle with mental illness and substance use. In his junior year of high school, Hines was diagnosed with bipolar disorder.
- +

In September 2000, Hines attempted suicide by jumping off the Golden Gate Bridge. He survived the 220-foot plunge and is one of only 34 Golden Gate Bridge jump survivors.

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Kevin Hines Video

+ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WcSUs9iZv-g>

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Teens and Suicide

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3BByqa7bhto&t=11s>

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Assess for Risk of Suicide or Harm

Important signs that a young person may be suicidal:

- Threatening to hurt or kill himself/herself.
- Seeking access to pills, weapons or other means.
- Talking or writing about death, dying or suicide.
- Expressing hopelessness, no reason for living or having no sense of purpose in life.
- Having rage, anger or seeking revenge.
- Acting recklessly or engaging in risky activities, seemingly without thinking.
- Feeling trapped.

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Assess for Risk of Suicide or Harm

Important signs that a young person may be suicidal
(*cont.*):

- Increasing alcohol or drug use.
- Withdrawing from friends, family or society.
- Having a dramatic change in mood.
- Sleeping all the time or being unable to sleep.
- Being anxious or agitated.
- Giving away prized possessions.

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ALGEE-Action L

Listen non-judgmentally



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Listen Nonjudgmentally

- + Using “I” statements, state nonjudgmentally what you have noticed.
- + Ask questions, but don’t push.
- + Realize it may be a relief for the young person to talk about how s/he feels.
- + Remember it’s about **the young person** not **you**.
 - His/her experiences are not the same as yours.
 - His/her perspective is not the same as yours or necessarily of other youth in the family or peer group.
 - His/her culture may not be the same as yours.
 - S/he needs our empathy.
 - S/he may use language that makes you uncomfortable.

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What to Say and NOT to Say

+ Don't say:

- I think you need to try harder
- Stop feeling sorry for yourself
- Just think positive
- You always make everything a big deal
- You're too sensitive

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What to Say and NOT to Say

+ What to say:

- Its there anything I can do to make you feel better
- I know you are doing your best.
Sometimes life can be really stressful
- Would you like to talk more about this with me or someone else?
- We can sit and come up with ways to overcome some of your worries
- I'm here for you

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ALGEE -Action G

**Give
reassurance
and information**





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Information vs. Advice

Reassuring Information	Advice
Breakups can be tough. It's natural for you to be hurt and upset.	I remember my first breakup, here's what you need to do...
I'm here for you if you want to talk. There are also people who are trained to help you work through these feelings.	You really need to talk to a counselor about that.
You are not alone.	You'll get over it. Just don't worry about it so much.

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ALGEE - Action E

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Encourage Appropriate Professional Help

- ✚ Individuals with mental disorders are treatable with a variety of therapies and/or supports.
- ✚ *Evidence-based practices* are interventions for which there is consistent scientific evidence showing that they improve individual outcomes

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ALGEE-Action E

Encourage self-help
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strategies



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Encourage Self-Help and Other Support Strategies

- Promising self-help strategies:
 - Are interesting to the young person.
 - Promote a sense of satisfaction.
 - Enhance social connectedness.
 - Should be safe.

Note: many natural therapies have not been studied thoroughly in youth and may not be suitable for children or young adults.

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Recovery from Mental Illness

“Recovery is the process in which people are able to live, work, learn, and participate fully in their communities.

For some, this is the ability to live a fulfilling and productive life despite a disability.

For others, recovery implies the reduction or complete remission of symptoms.”

- President’s New Freedom Commission on Mental Health

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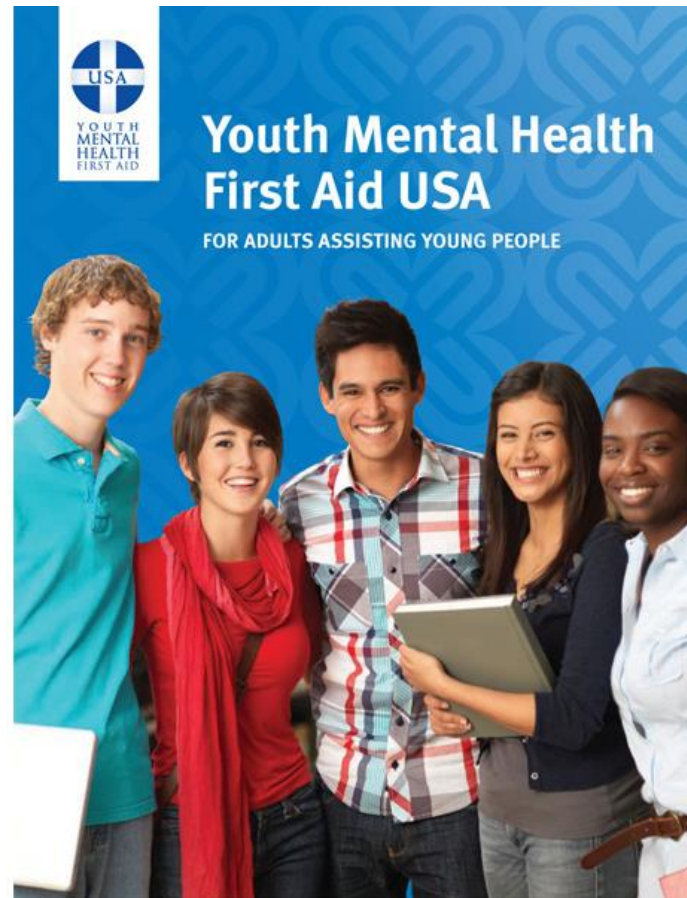
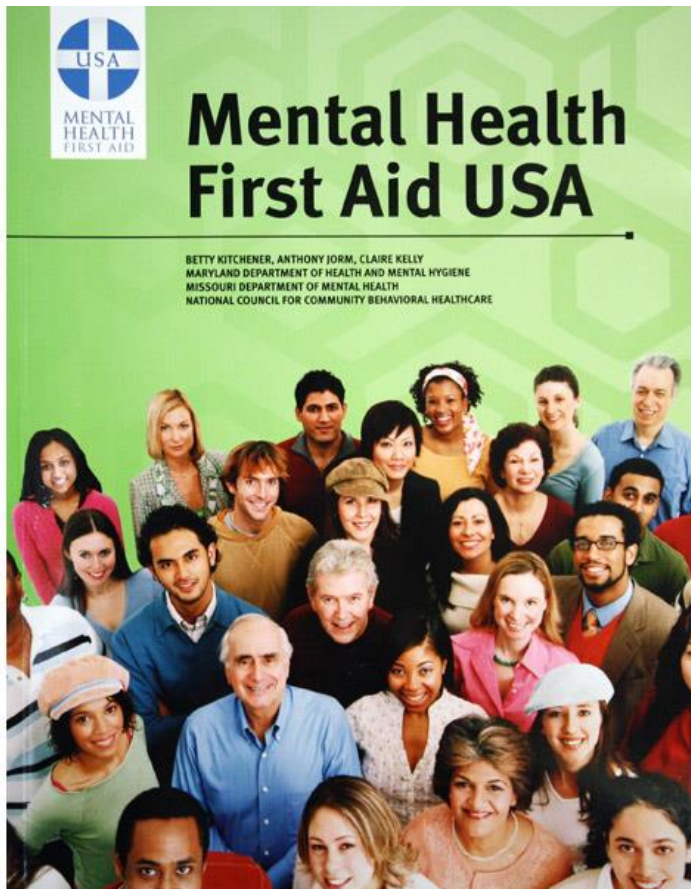
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MHFA -HOW CAN I GET IT?



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Mental Health First Aid USA

Contact: Tracy Klingener-973-334-3496, ext.518



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