Youth Mental Health First Aid
Training Program

What is Mental Health First Aid?
First Aid is the help given to an injured person before medical treatment can be obtained. Mental Health First Aid is the help given to someone developing a mental health problem or in a mental health crisis. The first aid is given until appropriate professional treatment is received or until the crisis resolves.

Who runs the Mental Health First Aid Training and Research Program?
The Mental Health First Aid Training and Research Program was developed in 2001 at the Centre for Mental Health Research at the Australian National University by Betty Kitchener and Professor Tony Jorm. In 2005 the Program moved to ORYGEN Research Centre at the University of Melbourne.
A number of specialist courses are now available that teach Mental Health First Aid. These include:
• The 12-hour Adult MHFA course covering how to assist adults.
• The 12-hour Adult MHFA for CALD Communities in Australia.
• The 14-hour Youth MHFA course covering how adults can assist adolescents.
• The 14-hour Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander MHFA course covering how to assist Indigenous Australians.

The 14-hour Youth MHFA Course
A 14-hour course has been developed for adults working or living with adolescents.
This specialist course was developed in response to the following:
• Mental illnesses frequently first arise in adolescence and young adulthood.
• Young people have poorer knowledge about mental illness and how to get professional help.
• They are particularly likely to initially need support from adults to get appropriate help.

Course content
The course covers the MHFA Action Plan and the following crisis situations and mental illnesses.
Crisis situations covered are:
• Suicidal behaviours
• Self-harm
• Acute stress reaction
• Panic attacks
• Acute psychotic behaviour

Mental health problems covered are:
• Depression
• Anxiety disorders
• Psychosis
• Substance use disorders
• Eating disorders

Participants learn the signs and symptoms of these mental health problems, where and how to get help and what sort of help has been shown by research to be effective.

The Mental Health First Aid Action Plan:
1. Assess the risk of suicide or harm
2. Listen non-judgementally
3. Give reassurance and information
4. Encourage the young person to get appropriate professional help
5. Encourage self-help strategies

Course format
This 14 hour course can be delivered in either
• a 2 day training package (7 hours per day)
• as 4 separate modules (3.5 hours each)
Participants receive a copy of the Youth MHFA manual to keep.

Where can the course be held?
The course can be conducted wherever a Youth Mental Health First Aid Instructor can travel. If extended travel is required, the instructor’s costs will need to be met.

Cost?
Contact your local instructor to ask about their rates.

Who can attend the course?
Any interested adult can attend. This is an education course and not a therapy program or support group.

Where can I get more information?
Visit the Mental Health First Aid website at www.mhfa.com.au for information on:
• Course availability
• List of YMHFA instructors
• Instructor training programs
• Mental health first aid strategies
• Evaluation results