

Help save a life with  
**Mental Health First Aid**  
training from Rush



 RUSH



Community Health Equity  
and Engagement

**1** in **5** teens, young adults and adults lives with a mental health condition.



In 2020, **100** Black and **60** Latinx Cook County residents died by suicide.



Every week, more than **31** people in Cook County die of drug overdoses.



## You can take action to help.

If you see someone with a physical injury or medical crisis, first aid training tells you how to help: call 911, check for a pulse, start CPR.

But what if you see someone who's threatening to hurt themselves, is having a panic attack or has overdosed? Would you know how to help?

Like first aid for physical injuries, Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) trains community members to respond appropriately when someone needs help. The fact is, you're far more likely to encounter someone having an emotional or mental crisis than someone having a heart attack.

The eight-hour course teaches participants how to identify, understand and respond to signs and symptoms of mental illness and substance use disorders.

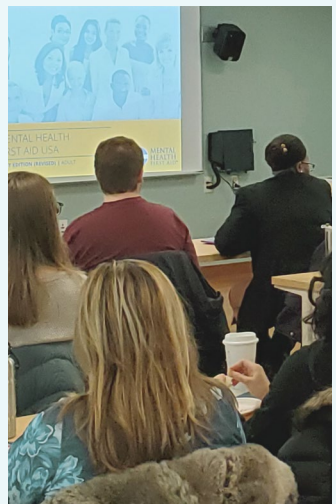
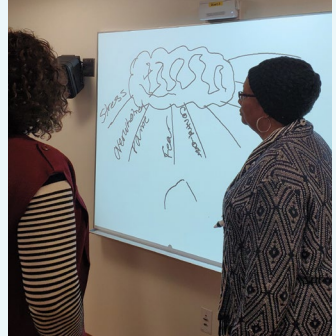
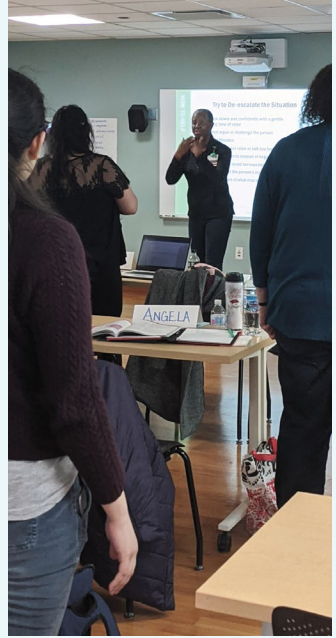
Those who complete MHFA training know how to:

- Reach out to someone in crisis
- Provide initial help and support
- Help people connect with professionals who can assist further

As more people get trained in MHFA, more people who need mental health services will have another way to get help. Plus, we'll reduce stigmas that can keep people from seeking treatment.

You can **take a MHFA training class** in your area, or **bring one to your church or nonprofit organization.**

All classes are taught by certified MHFA instructors. For more information, sign up at **[bit.ly/RushMHFA](https://bit.ly/RushMHFA)**, email **[mhfa@rush.edu](mailto:mhfa@rush.edu)** or call **312-563-9046**.



“When we think about mental health, we often think of diagnoses like schizophrenia or bipolar disorder. In reality, far more people experience issues like anxiety and depression that can affect their daily lives. Mental Health First Aid training teaches participants how to recognize mental health needs — not only in others, but in themselves, too — and breaks down stigmas by teaching that these challenges are nothing to be afraid of. The more people know, the more likely they are to get help or offer help to someone else.”



LaDawne Jenkins, manager, community engagement initiatives, Rush University Medical Center



## About Mental Health First Aid

Mental Health First Aid was created in Australia in 2001 and has been adapted for use in the United States. Certified instructors have trained more than 2 million people in the U.S. to be MHFA first aiders.

MHFA equips people to identify and help someone who is developing a mental health challenge or experiencing a mental health crisis such as panic attacks, bouts of depression, grief or the aftereffects of trauma. In all situations, the goal is to provide support until professional help can take over.

MHFA teaches you to respond to someone in crisis using a five-step **ALGEE** action plan.

**A**ssess for risk of suicide or harm

**L**isten nonjudgmentally

**G**ive reassurance and information

**E**ncourage appropriate professional help

**E**ncourage self-help and other support strategies



## Benefits for the whole community

MHFA training improves individuals' and organizations' mental health literacy: the ability to be aware of people experiencing mental and emotional challenges, respond to them skillfully and take the appropriate action. And it helps take the fear and hesitation out of starting conversations about mental health and substance use problems.

Multiple peer-reviewed studies show the following benefits for people trained in MHFA:

- Gain knowledge of signs, symptoms and risk factors of mental illnesses and addictions.
- Can identify multiple kinds of professional and self-help resources for people who have a mental health or substance use challenge.
- Increase their confidence in and likelihood to help someone in distress.
- Show increased mental wellness themselves.

When more people are equipped with the tools to start a dialogue, more people can get the help they need.



# Types of training



## Adult Mental Health First Aid

### For all community members

Adult Mental Health First Aid training teaches you how to identify, understand and respond to signs of mental illness and substance use disorder in adults.

#### Who should take it

- Employers
- Police officers
- Hospital staff
- First responders
- Faith leaders
- Community members
- Teachers and school staff

#### What you'll learn

- Common signs and symptoms of anxiety, depression, substance use and psychosis
- How to interact with a person in crisis
- How to connect the person with help
- How to administer naloxone if someone overdoses



## Youth Mental Health First Aid

### For parents or people who work with youth

Youth Mental Health First Aid training teaches you how to identify, understand and respond to signs of mental illness and substance use disorder in young people ages 12 to 18.

#### Who should take it

- Teachers and school staff
- Coaches
- Camp counselors
- Youth group leaders
- Parents
- People who work with youth

#### What you'll learn

- Overview of adolescent development
- Common signs and symptoms of anxiety, depression, substance use, psychosis, disruptive behavior disorders (including ADHD) and eating disorders in youth
- Five-step action plan for how to help young people in crisis and non-crisis situations



## Rochelle's story

Rochelle was trained in MHFA at her West Side church.

“Everybody at my training had a story to tell about their own experiences with mental health.”

The first time she used her training, she was at a fast-food restaurant when a woman in distress began yelling and removing her clothing.

“It was obvious that she was having a crisis, and I knew to contact the police and request a specially trained officer. I could describe what was happening and let the dispatcher know that the young lady probably needed attention beyond what a paramedic could provide.”

A police officer trained in mental health crisis intervention arrived and was able to de-escalate the situation so the woman could be transported safely to the hospital.

“We need to figure out how to get MHFA into all kinds of places — city offices, people who work in public transportation, stores, anyone who deals with a range of people on a daily basis. There are a lot of people out here who need help, and now I'm equipped to engage.”

### Learn more or sign up for a training

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