

Mental Health First Aid (MHFA)

Teaching people to identify and respond to signs of mental illness or substance use disorders.



SUPPORT - SUGGEST - CONNECT

those in need to the resources to help

171,000 * MONTANANS
ages 18+ had a
**DIAGNOSABLE
MENTAL ILLNESS**

MHFA is designed to increase knowledge and build skills to help someone who is experiencing mental health problems. The training includes information about signs and symptoms of mental health problems and provides opportunities to practice response skills for specific types of problems.

We all know someone—a friend, family member, coworker, or neighbor—who has experienced mental illness. Mental Health First Aiders provide informed and compassionate support to promote better health outcomes for people experiencing problems.

Mental Health First Aiders are trained to respond in supportive ways to someone experiencing a mental health problem, as well as suggest and connect people to community resources, especially professional help.

From January 2020 - December 2021, MSU Extension instructors trained

**246 MENTAL HEALTH
FIRST AIDERS**
80 in Youth MHFA
166 in Adult MHFA

The COVID-19 Pandemic: Meeting the Challenge

On a national level, the COVID-19 pandemic has been associated with increases in depression and anxiety symptoms, substance use, and suicidality. MSU Extension's response to increased need for mental health literacy during the pandemic includes offering MHFA in new delivery formats. In addition to traditional in-person training, MSU Extension now offers blended formats:

- **Blended with virtual instructor-led session (Blended—Virtual)** Participants complete 2 hours of self-paced online coursework in the MHFA Connect training system before attending 4.5-5.5 hours of instructor-led training through a virtual session.
- **Blended with in-person instructor-led session (Blended—In-Person)** Participants complete 2 hours of self-paced online coursework in the MHFA Connect training system before attending 5.5 hours of instructor-led training through an in-person session.

From January 2020 - December 2021, MSU Extension instructors offered 9 In-Person courses, 7 Blended—Virtual courses, and 2 Blended—In-Person courses.

of Montana's High School Students:

41.4% FELT SAD OR HOPELESS
(UP FROM 36.7% IN 2019)

21.7% SERIOUSLY CONSIDERED SUICIDE

10.2% HAD ATTEMPTED SUICIDE**

87,000 * MONTANANS
ages 12+ had a **SUBSTANCE USE DISORDER**

Montana MHFA Adult and Youth classes may be requested at http://health.msuextension.org/mental_health.html