



teen Mental Health First Aid (tMHFA): What students need to know

Dear Year Ten students:

Our school is conducting tMHFA training for the Year Ten students this term, which gives teenagers the skills they need to recognise and help with mental health problems and crises in their friends, and to get the help of an adult quickly. This training will be part of the broader Health Education and Physical Education courses.

Presenter:

Sheryl Moncur is a Counsellor/Teacher who has worked in education for 40 years, the last 14 as school counsellor. Sheryl has been at GSG for 20 years as educator, middle management and pastoral leader. She is an accredited teenMHFA trainer and presented the Year Eight and Ten courses last year, and is also a Youth Mental Health First Aid instructor and has trained staff and community members. Sheryl is passionate about the promotion of mental health in young people and in the broader community, with a view to lessening stigma while increasing awareness and help-seeking.

Young people will often turn to each other when stressed or upset, and try to help each other, and sometimes take too much on. This course teaches you not to take on these problems alone, and when you should get an adult involved. You won't be talking about any problems you are having yourself and you won't learn to give therapy or diagnose a problem.

The course briefly addresses suicide which for personal reasons, some of you may find distressing. Please discuss this with your parents/carers and understand that you have the choice to leave the room temporarily (to Student Services) at any time you feel affected by the content, after which I would follow up with a check in.

This course isn't happening because of any specific problems at your school. No individual student will be discussed in the course.

Course Structure

Session 1 discusses mental health problems in general, and understanding how common and tough these are in young people. You'll also learn about professionals who can help.



teen Mental Health First Aid (tMHFA): What students need to know

Session 2 talks about helping a friend who is in crisis, whether because they are suicidal, engaging in non-suicidal self-injury, using alcohol or other drugs, or experiencing bullying or abuse.

The Action Plan ('Look, Ask, Listen, Help Your Friend') is introduced for the first time, and applied to a crisis situation.

There is a video which shows a young man helping a friend who is experiencing suicidal thoughts.

Session 3 takes a step back and discusses how to help if someone seems to be developing a mental health problem. We won't teach you how to diagnose problems – it's advice about being a supportive friend, encouraging your friend to seek help, and knowing when it's time to get someone else involved.

You will take your manual home after session 3. There are resources for further information in the back and you may want to explore them alone or with your parents.

If you wish to learn more...

... about mental health problems experienced by young people, visit:

- www.youthbeyondblue.com
- www.reachout.com

... about MHFA programs:

- www.mhfa.com.au

For immediate online help:

- www.kidshelp.com.au
- www.eheadspace.org.au



teen Mental Health First Aid (tMHFA): What students need to know

Or, talk to the student welfare team at your school.

As Year Ten students, your pastoral teams include your homeroom teachers, Heads of House, and trusted adults such as other teachers and coaches. Many of our staff have completed the Youth Mental Health First Aid Course, which assists staff in providing support for young people. These people are Mark Bonnin, Karen Bradbury, Sheryl Moncur, Rachel Mordy, Angela Ferreira, Brendan Goggins, Brett Tompkin, Atsuko Kagi, Elinor Couper, Angelina Ross, Alexis Stone, Claire St Jack, Emma Franklin, Bryce McLean, Nathan Symonds, Ian Robson, Bea Pritchard, Meredith Wright, Penni Berryman, Penny Simpson, Catherine Nathan, Elizabeth Cosh, Rebecca Davies, Angela Golling, Josh Pitman, Tim Basten, Tara Ball, Jenny Colgate, Nyree Mckenzie, Kathy Lubke, Ellen Smith, Paul Donaldson, Grant Taylor, Peta Spinks, Amber Freeman, Amanda Stanborough, Neil Ferreira, Stephen Berryman, Leah Field, Jill Bascombe. The list of these YMHFA'ers is glued into the inside cover of the manual which students take home at the end of Session 3. Also, the pastoral team have lists of these people.