

Improving Access to Mental Health and Trauma Recovery Services Through Peer Training

**Mental Health and Psychological
First Aid**



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Today's Agenda

- CAC
- Background
- Impact
- Mental Health First Aid (MHFA)
- Psychological First Aid (PFA)
- Future plans
- Questions and discussion

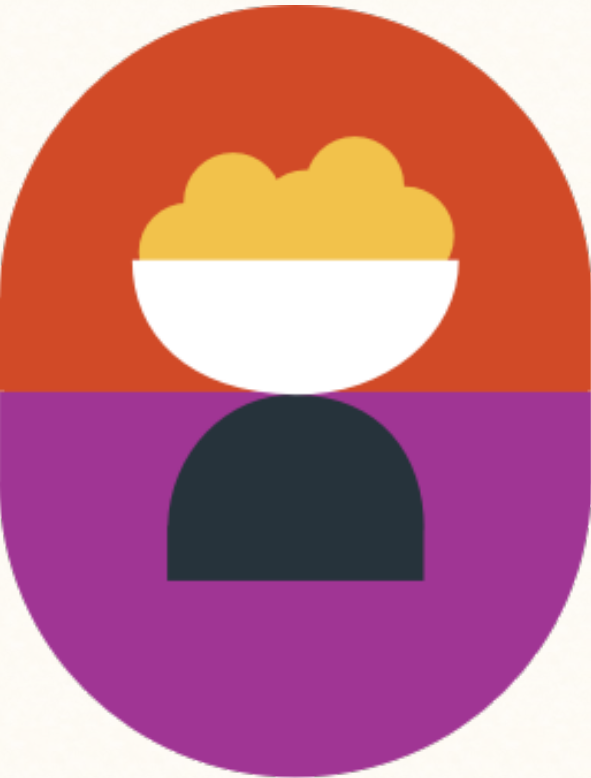


Community Action Coalition

For South Central Wisconsin (Dane, Jefferson, Waukesha Co.)



Housing Security



Food Security



Essential Resources

Background

CAC Comm Needs Assessment & partner feedback identified access to mental health and trauma recovery services as priorities

- **Target Audiences**

- WI Community Action Agencies
- Partner groups and agencies
- Train the trainer

- **Desired Outcomes**

- Improved statewide network capacity to assist individuals and communities in crisis
- Help participants recognize signs and symptoms of common MH and substance use problems
- Improve access to MH services
- Offer key concepts and range of crisis counseling services
- Gain skills needed for interactions with survivors and learning techniques for self-care

Funding

This project has been financially supported through Wisconsin Community Action Program Association with funding from the State of Wisconsin.

Impact - 2023

- **112 certificates administered for fully completed trainings**
 - MHFA: 5 trainings held
 - 74 individuals certified as Mental Health First-Aiders
 - PFA: 2 trainings held
 - 34 individuals certified in Psychological First Aid
 - MHFA instructor trainings
 - 4 CAC staff trained & certified as Mental Health First Aid Instructors.

Mental Health First Aid (MHFA)

What is MHFA?



- **Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) teaches learners how to identify, understand, and respond to signs of a mental illness and substance use disorder.**
- National Council for Mental Wellbeing
- MHFA helps individuals when aiding a person developing a mental health or substance use problem, or is experiencing a mental health crisis

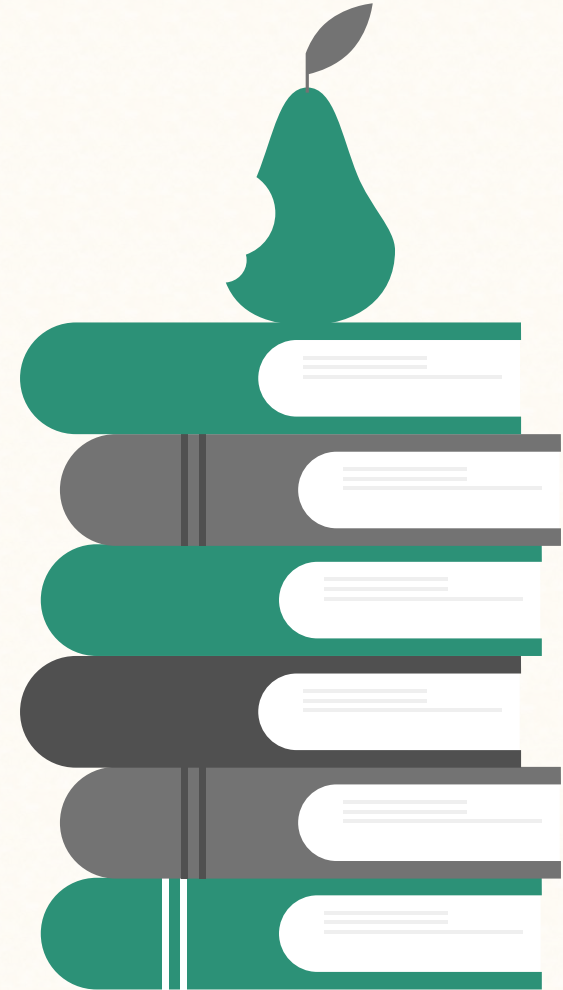
Benefits of MHFA

- Connect with community
- Advocate
- Knowledge
- Interventions
- Mental health literacy
- MH adversities are common
- Notice signs and symptoms
- Safety



What people learn

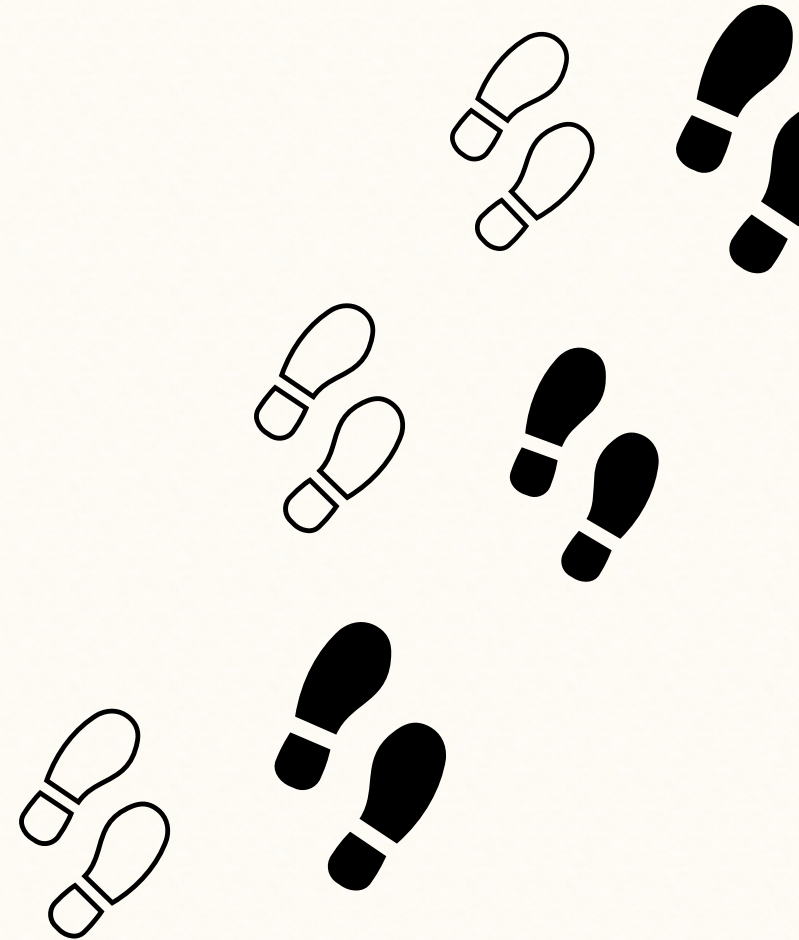
- Risk factors and warning signs
- Information on mental health disorders
- A 5-step action plan
- Mental health resources
- Interventions



5 Step Action Plan

ALGEE

- **Assess:** for risk of suicide or harm
- **Listen:** nonjudgmentally
- **Give Reassurance:** and information
- **Encourage:** professional help
- **Encourage:** self help and support strategies



Evidence

- Increase knowledge and understanding of mental health adversities
- Encourages people to help others
- Supports people getting help
- Decrease social distance
- Increase mental wellness



Cost of MHFA

- **New Instructor Training is \$2,000/person for NCWB members and \$2,200/person for non-members**

MHFA Activity

Example: Knowledge Check

- **True/False:**

1. Mental Health First Aid is the help offered to a person experiencing a mental health crisis or challenge
2. MHFA does not supersede any operational, legal or organizational obligations that first aiders are bound to
3. Mental disorders are not common
4. Risk factors increase the likelihood of developing a mental illness or addiction.
5. Trauma is a risk factor for nearly all mental health and substance disorders
6. First aiders do not diagnose, they notice changes in thoughts, appearance, feelings, and behaviors
7. Culture is a key influence in how we understand health and health care options/decisions
8. Reducing stigma is not an important part of being a first aider and language does not matter

Psychological First Aid

What is Psychological First Aid?

Psychological First Aid (PFA) is an evidence-informed modular approach to help children, adolescents, adults, and families cope in the immediate aftermath of a disaster or traumatic event.

- Those affected by such events may experience a broad range of early reactions that interfere with adaptive coping, and recovery may be helped by support from compassionate and caring disaster responders.
- PFA is designed to reduce the initial distress caused by traumatic events and to foster short- and long-term adaptive functioning and coping.

Benefits of PFA

- **Providing emotional support, education on coping with stress, connection to resources, and giving voice to those who have experienced or are experiencing trauma caused by disasters or traumatic events.**
- **To assist the community with disaster and trauma recovery through individuals trained in healthy coping mechanisms, recovery pathways, and available resources.**
- **Improved access to mental health resources**
- **Improved statewide network capacity to assist individuals and communities in crisis**

Cost of PFA

- **The cost of PFA training with our current provider is \$1,500/8-hr virtual session**

Future Plans

Future Plans

- **CAC staff to provide MHFA trainings to partner organizations**
 - 4 staffed certified to teach MHFA
- **Host additional PFA trainings for partner organizations statewide**
 - **Target Audiences:** Community Action Agencies (CAA), health agencies, first responders, school social workers, and other service agencies across Wisconsin.
- **Invite/encourage trainees to join Wisconsin Emergency Assistance Volunteer Registry (WEAVR) - to offer MHFA and PFA assistance in case of disaster and/or emergency situations.**

Future Work cont.

Overall outcomes:

- To assist the community with disaster and trauma recovery through individuals trained in identifying crisis situations, assisting with healthy recovery and stress management techniques, and knowledge of available resources
- Trainees will be invited and encouraged to join the Wisconsin Emergency Assistance Volunteer Registry (WEAVR) and CAC will track trainees who agree to join

Discussion

questions?

Contact us



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Thank you!



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