

COVID-19 Response

Virtual trainings have allowed agencies to increase collaboration enabling the network to meet the training needs of their communities. As the pandemic continues and the mental health needs of our communities increase, VCP has seen an increased demand for virtual Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) trainings.

In FY21 Vermont Care Partners utilized Vermont Department of Mental Health funding to certify an additional 15 Teen MHFA (tMHFA) instructors. Since certification, Teen MHFA trainers have delivered 4 full Teen MHFA series' within Vermont schools.

"tMHFA teaches teens in grades 10-12, or ages 15-18, how to identify, understand and respond to signs of mental health and substance use challenges among their friends and peers" (Mental Health First Aid)

A student at Bellows Falls Academy who participated in a Teen Mental Health First Aid training has started a blog. Below is the link to her blog on the national MHFA site: <https://www.mentalhealthfirstaid.org/2021/08/tmhfa-taught-me-to-take-care-of-my-mental-health-as-a-student-athlete/>

Since 2016, over 5,600 Vermonters have been trained as Youth or Adult Mental Health First Aiders by VCP agencies and their community partners.

These Mental Health First Aiders have referred over 5,800 people to formalized mental health services.

Mental Health First Aid: A Statewide Network of Prevention



DESCRIPTION

Mental Health First Aid is a public education program introducing people to the unique risk factors and warning signs of mental health problems. It builds an understanding of the importance of early intervention, and teaches how to help when a person is experiencing mental health challenges.

Last year, the VCP network and their community partners focused on providing in-person and virtual Youth and Adult Mental Health First Aid trainings and building our statewide infrastructure. Due to 30 new instructors being trained in the past two years, there are now more than 70 instructors providing trainings statewide. The VCP infrastructure has been primarily supported through The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) with additional support from the Vermont Department of Mental Health.

IMPACT

Mental Health First Aid trainings have a direct impact on the wellness of our communities. In FY21, our statewide network of instructors trained 1,107 Vermonters in the virtual curriculum. Trainings were held with school districts, colleges and universities, first responders, and community members. As a result, in FY21, First Aiders were able to recognize the signs and symptoms of a mental health challenge and refer 1709 Vermonters (youth and adults) to formalized mental health services.



Teen Mental Health First Aid Training, Bellows Free Academy St. Albans