



## **Now Accepting Applications from New Jersey High Schools Interested in Offering Teen Mental Health First Aid (tMHFA)**

New Jersey Department of Human Services, Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS), in partnership with the Mental Health Association in New Jersey (MHANJ) funded through the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)

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The COVID-19 pandemic has expanded the behavioral health issues facing high schools across New Jersey. Prior to the pandemic, stress, anxiety, depression, and more serious behavioral health issues were growing. As schools moved to virtual learning, the prevalence of mental health challenges increased for students and their families. As we embrace the “new normal”, it is critical that teachers and students have the tools necessary to notice, connect and support their peers and students.

tMHFA was developed by the National Council for Mental Wellbeing in partnership with Lady Gaga’s Born This Way Foundation. Since 2019, thousands of teens across the country have been trained in tMHFA, including in New Jersey.

tMHFA is an evidence-based training program for teens in grades 10-12, or ages 15-18. It teaches teens how to identify, understand and respond to signs and symptoms of mental health and substance use challenges and crisis among friends and peers. Teens gain the skills to have supportive conversations with their friends and learn how to get the help of a responsible and trusted adult.

This program will provide selected schools the opportunity to train staff at their schools to be tMHFA instructors as well as the materials and support needed to offer the curriculum to the entire 10<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup> or 12<sup>th</sup> grade.

Through tMHFA, schools will increase their capacity to effectively respond to teen mental health needs in a culturally responsive and trauma-informed way.

### **Participating Schools Will Receive:**

- tMHFA Instructor Training for qualified adults (school personnel). The mandatory tMHFA Instructor training is a 3-day virtual training that certifies candidates to teach the in-person delivery model of tMHFA
- A stipend to offset cost of substitutes during instructor training
- Assistance in developing an implementation team and plan
- Manuals and materials for the entire grade
- Mentoring and assistance for school staff
- A supportive online learning community around implementation and teen mental health
- Mental Health First Aid for Adults Assisting Youth (YMHA) training to assist schools in meeting the 10% certification requirement required by the National Council for Mental Wellbeing

**If you are interested in learning more about this program and how to apply or if you have any questions, please contact Ruth Kaluski at [rkaluski@mhanj.org](mailto:rkaluski@mhanj.org).**