



**THE LIGHTHOUSE**  
CENTER FOR WELLBEING



**MENTAL  
HEALTH  
FIRST AID**  
UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

# **TEEN-TO-TEEN**

## MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID (tMHFA)



*Mental Health for  
Everyone, Everywhere*



## WHAT IS IT?

### A 4-hour training course for teens aged 13 - 18 years old.

The tMHFA course gives teenagers the skills they need to recognize and respond to mental health problems and crises in their friends, and to get the help of an adult quickly. Young people will often turn to each other when stressed or upset, and try to help each other, taking too much on. This course teaches them not to try to take on these problems alone. The tMHFA course is the equivalent of physical first aid, for mental health.



THIS EVIDENCE-BASED COURSE IS IDEAL FOR TEENS WHO WANT TO LEARN HOW TO SUPPORT A FRIEND WHO MAY BE STRUGGLING WITH THEIR MENTAL HEALTH.

Students learn about the tMHFA Action Plan, different types of mental health problems and mental health crises situations in young people, and the relationship between thoughts, feelings and behaviors. It teaches students to recognize when a friend is experiencing major changes in their thinking, feeling and behavior, and when these changes may indicate the presence of a mental health problem. This is an education course and is not therapy or a support group.

**Teen Mental Health First Aiders know how to get a responsible and trusted adult to take over and get the struggling teen connected with appropriate help.**



## A TEEN MENTAL HEALTH FIRST-AIDER LEARNS HOW TO IDENTIFY & RESPOND TO:

- Early warning signs that another teen is becoming unwell
- Someone who is currently struggling with their mental health
- Mental health crises

#yourmindmatters #bethedifference

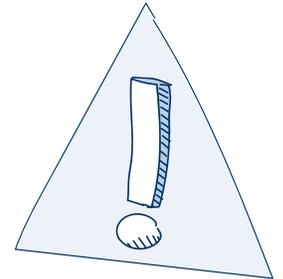
### tMHFA is NOT a training that:

- Teaches teens how to counsel or diagnose
- Expects teens to handle their problems alone

## WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

Half of all mental health conditions start by age 14, but most cases remain undetected and untreated for approximately 8 to 10 years due to lack of awareness and stigma. This is leading to a global epidemic of poor mental health. Depression is the leading cause of illness and disability amongst teens, and suicide is the 3<sup>rd</sup> leading cause of death amongst teens aged 15 to 19 years old.

(National Institute of Mental Health  
[www.nimh.nih.gov](http://www.nimh.nih.gov))



***This program recognizes that teenagers prefer sharing their problems with their friends. It empowers teens to learn the skills to help someone who is becoming unwell, is currently struggling, or is experiencing a mental health crisis.***

## WHO SHOULD TAKE THIS TRAINING?

### REQUIREMENTS:

- Teens must be between 13 to 18 years old
  - Teens must know an adult who is an accredited Mental Health First Aider
- \*Please check with the The LightHouse Arabia to verify if your school has an adult Mental Health First Aider**

### MENTAL HEALTH TOPICS COVERED:

- Depression
- Anxiety
- Eating Disorders
- Addiction

### MENTAL HEALTH CRISES COVERED:

- Suicide
- Self-harm
- Panic Attack
- Bullying

## I WANT THIS IMPLEMENTED IN MY CHILD'S SCHOOL. WHAT CAN I DO?

The LightHouse Arabia's Mental Health First Aid team closely supports schools across the UAE through wellbeing initiatives. Schools can contact The LightHouse Arabia directly to receive more information on how to implement the tMHFA program.

### WHERE TO GET MORE INFORMATION:

- Attend a free of charge MHFA informational session, held every month at The LightHouse Arabia. Please check our monthly event calendar for details.
- See our 'Frequently Asked Questions' documents on our website with more information for teens, parents, and schools.

The training was useful and different to anything I had ever experienced. I know many people who suffer from mental illness, and now I actually know how to respond. In addition to being beneficial, the training was a lot of fun.

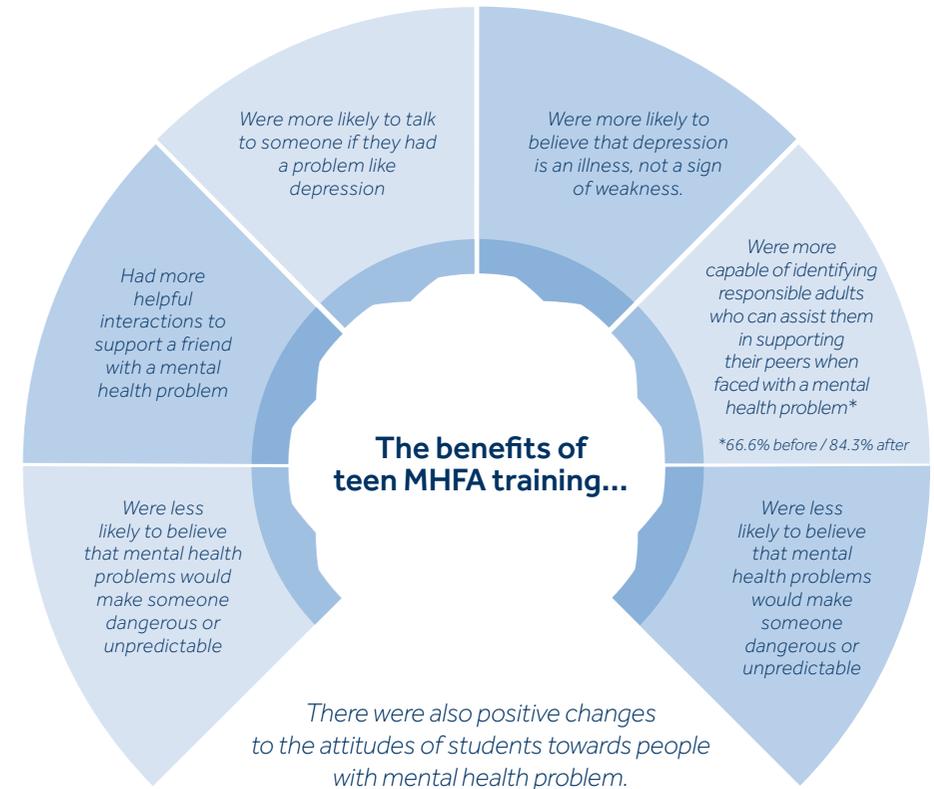
Male, 15 years old

It was such an amazing experience. I think every teen should attend this course. It really opened my eyes to what mental health problems look like, and how to respond.

Female, 14 years old

## WHAT EVIDENCE SUPPORTS THIS PROGRAM?

Mental Health First Aid is an evidence-based program. Research demonstrates that teens who have taken the course report increased confidence in being able to identify and respond to a friend who is struggling with their mental health.



### STUDENTS:

were **LESS LIKELY** to believe that mental health problems are dangerous



showed **LESS DESIRE** for **social distance** (likelihood of rejecting a person with a mental illness in a certain situation, such as working on a school project together)



were **LESS LIKELY** to believe that mental health problems are a **sign of personal weakness**



For more information on the research, visit:

<https://mhfa.com.au/sites/default/files/teen-MHFA-infographic.pdf>

# LEARN MORE ABOUT BRINGING tMHFA TRAINING TO YOUR SCHOOL

**For more information, please contact:**

**FARAH DAHABI, LCSW (US)**

*Clinical Social Worker &  
Mental Health First Aid Director*  
Email: fdahabi@lighthousearabia.com

**CHRISTINE KRITZAS, M.A. (SA)**

*Psychologist & Education Director*  
Email: ckritzas@lighthousearabia.com



**tMHFA trainings** take place online via Zoom every month with The LightHouse Arabia.

For our full event calendar, please visit [lighthousearabia.com/mhfa](https://lighthousearabia.com/mhfa)

*Mental Health for Everyone, Everywhere*

*The LightHouse Arabia is the only authorized and licensed provider for MHFA training in the U.A.E.*



821 Al Wasl Rd  
Al Safa 2  
P.O. Box 334273  
Dubai, UAE  
**T.** +971 (0)4 380 2088  
**E.** [info@lighthousearabia.com](mailto:info@lighthousearabia.com)



@lighthousearabia  
[lighthousearabia.com](https://lighthousearabia.com)