

## **FREE Youth Mental Health First Aid Training**

### *What is Youth Mental Health First Aid?*

VIRGINIA BEACH, Va. (July 17, 2018) — Youth Mental Health First Aid USA is an eight-hour public education program that introduces participants to the unique risk factors and warning signs of mental health problems in adolescents, building understanding of the importance of early intervention, and teaches individuals how to help an adolescent in crisis or experiencing a mental health challenge. The course uses role-playing and simulations to demonstrate how to assess a mental health crisis; select interventions and provide initial help; and connect young people to professional, peer, social and self-help care. The free training opportunity for individuals interested in Youth Mental Health First Aid is taking place on Monday, July 23, 2018 from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the Virginia Beach Convention Center, 1000 19th St., Room 4A) and is offered by City of Virginia Beach Behavioral Health and Wellness Prevention Services.

The course teaches participants the risk factors and warning signs of a variety of mental health challenges common among adolescents including anxiety, depression, psychosis, eating disorders, AD/HD, disruptive behavior disorders, and substance use disorder. Participants do not learn to diagnose, nor how to provide any therapy or counseling – rather, participants learn to support a youth developing signs and symptoms of a mental illness or in an emotional crisis by applying a core five-step action plan:

- Assess for risk of suicide or harm
- Listen nonjudgmentally
- Give reassurance and information
- Encourage appropriate professional help
- Encourage self-help and other support strategies

The Youth Mental Health First Aid USA curriculum is primarily focused on information participants can use to help adolescents and transition-age youth, ages 12-18. Anyone 18 or older can take Youth Mental Health First Aid, but it is recommended for those who regularly have contact with young people ages 12-18 — teachers, coaches, social workers, faith leaders and other caring citizens.

Seating is limited to 24 participants. Registration is required. For more information or to register please call Vanessa Harvey at 757-385-0803 or email [vharvey@vb.gov](mailto:vharvey@vb.gov).

The mission of the Human Services Department is to provide Virginia Beach citizens the opportunity to achieve the highest possible level of self-sufficiency, safety and quality of life through an array of coordinated services delivered in a climate of dignity, respect and accountability. Learn more about Human Services at [www.VBgov.com/hs](http://www.VBgov.com/hs).

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