



## **MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** Trustees

**FROM:** Julia López, Program Committee Chair **BOARD ACTION REQUIRED**

**DATE:** November 10, 2022

**SUBJECT:** Appropriate \$50K in CCSF Emerging Needs Funding to Support Youth Mental Health First Aid Training

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### **BACKGROUND**

In October 2021, The American Academy of Pediatrics, American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, and the Children's Hospital Association jointly issued a *Declaration of a National Emergency in Child and Adolescent Mental Health* calling on policymakers at all levels of government and advocates for children and adolescents to join with them in advocating for specific recommendations to address the crisis.

Later in December 2021, U.S. Surgeon General Vivek Murthy, MD, MBA, issued an advisory, *Protecting Youth Mental Health*, used for significant public health challenges that require the nation's immediate awareness and action. The Surgeon General's advisory provides recommendations for supporting the mental health of children, adolescents, and young adults. Among the recommendations for educators, school staff, and school districts are:

- Learn how to recognize signs of changes in mental and physical health among students, including trauma and behavioral changes. Take appropriate action when needed.
- Provide a continuum of support to meet student mental health needs, including evidence-based prevention practices and trauma-informed mental health care.

### **YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID**

Shortly after the release of the Surgeon General's Advisory, MHB increased its collaboration with the St. Louis County Children's Service Fund (CSF) to identify specific strategies to jointly address the national youth mental health crisis. Youth Mental Health First Aid, an evidence-based practice was selected as the initial strategy to support teachers and other school staff in identifying behavioral health issues in youth and equipping them with the tools to support youth in seeking help.

MHB and CSF partnered with the Missouri Institute of Mental Health (Missouri's designated training provider for Mental Health First Aid, Youth Mental Health First Aid, and Teen Mental Health First Aid) to conduct two in-person and two virtual trainings held November 5 and November 8 for teachers and school staff in St. Louis City and County. MHB and CSF funding covered trainer stipends, course materials, light refreshments, and lunch for in-person course participants, as well as stipends for teachers and school staff to attend.

As a result of the October 24 school shooting at St. Louis Public Schools' Central Visual and Performing Arts/Collegiate School of Medicine and Bioscience High Schools, interest in the training increased dramatically in its aftermath resulting in wait lists to attend YMHFA training. The per participant cost to provide the in-person course is \$371.40 and the virtual course is \$187.27. In general, participants prefer the in-person course that offers opportunities to roleplay new skills. Some schools have expressed an interest in offering Teen Mental Health First Aid for students. This requires that teachers and staff at the school be trained in Youth Mental Health First Aid. Additionally, some schools and/or districts may want to train teachers, school social workers, guidance counselors, school leaders, and other staff to serve as trainers. The cost to receive Missouri YMHFA Instructor Certification is \$2K per person.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

In order to meet the increased demand for Youth Mental Health First Aid training for teachers and school staff in St. Louis City, it is recommended that \$50K from the Community Children's Services Emerging Needs Fund be appropriated to provide the training free of cost with stipends for the remainder of FY23. Teachers and staff from middle and high schools will be prioritized for training over those from elementary schools.



# YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID

## WHY YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID?

Youth Mental Health First Aid teaches you how to identify, understand and respond to signs of mental health and substance use challenges among children and adolescents ages 12-18.

**10.2%**

of youth will be diagnosed with a substance use disorder in their lifetime.

Source: Youth Mental Health First Aid\*\*

**1 IN 5**

teens and young adults lives with a mental health condition.

Source: National Alliance for Mental Illness\*

**50%**

of all mental illnesses begin by age 14, and 75% by the mid-20s.

Source: Archives of General Psychiatry\*\*\*

## WHO SHOULD KNOW MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID?

- Teachers.
- School Staff.
- Coaches.
- Camp Counselors.
- Youth Group Leaders.
- Parents.
- Adults who Work with Youth.

## WHAT MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID COVERS

- Common signs and symptoms of mental health challenges in this age group, including anxiety, depression, eating disorders and attention deficit hyperactive disorder (ADHD).
- Common signs and symptoms of substance use challenges.
- How to interact with a child or adolescent in crisis.
- How to connect the youth with help.
- Expanded content on trauma, substance use, self-care and the impact of social media and bullying.

## THREE WAYS TO LEARN

- **In-person (2nd Edition)** – Learners receive their training during a 6.5-hour, Instructor-led, in-person session.
- **Blended** – Learners complete a 2-hour, self-paced online course, and participate in a 4.5- to 5.5-hour, Instructor-led training. This Instructor-led Training can be:
  - » A video conference.
  - » An in-person class.

## Learn how to respond with the Mental Health First Aid Action Plan (**ALGEE**):

- A**ssess for risk of suicide or harm.
- L**isten nonjudgmentally.
- G**ive reassurance and information.
- E**ncourage appropriate professional help.
- E**ncourage self-help and other support strategies.

### Sources

\* National Alliance on Mental Illness. (n.d.). Kids. <https://www.nami.org/Your-Journey/Kids-Teens-and-Young-Adults/Kids>

\*\* Mental Health First Aid. (2020). *Mental Health First Aid USA* for adults assisting children and youth. National Council for Mental Wellbeing.

\*\*\* Kessler, R., Berglund, P., Demler, O., Jin, R., Merikangas, K.R., Walters, E.E. (2005, June). Lifetime prevalence and age-of-onset distributions of DSM-IV disorders in the National Comorbidity Survey Replication. *Archives of General Psychiatry*. 62(6); 593-602. doi: 10.1001/archpsyc.62.6.593

**CITY OF SAINT LOUIS MENTAL HEALTH BOARD OF TRUSTEES**  
**APPROPRIATE COMMUNITY CHILDREN'S SERVICES EMERGING NEEDS FUNDING**  
**TO SUPPORT YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID TRAINING**

**RESOLUTION**

**WHEREAS**, the City of St. Louis, Missouri has levied taxes pursuant to the laws of the State of Missouri to fund the Community Children's Services (CCSF); and

**WHEREAS**, this Board is desirous to implement its responsibilities to ensure the provision of high-quality behavioral health and prevention services for children within the City of St. Louis; and

**WHEREAS**, a National Children's Mental Health Emergency was declared in October 2021, by the American Academy of Pediatrics, American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, and Children's Hospital Association, and in December 2021, the U.S. Surgeon General issued an advisory *Protecting Youth Mental Health*; and

**WHEREAS**, on October 24, 2022, a devastating school shooting took the lives of three people at Central Visual and Performing Arts High School in the city of St. Louis; and


**WHEREAS**, Youth Mental Health First Aid is a nationally recognized evidence-based practice for teaching adults how to identify, understand, and respond to signs of mental health and substance use challenges among children and adolescents ages 12-18; and

**WHEREAS**, MHB has partnered with the St. Louis County Children's Service Fund and the Missouri Institute of Mental Health to offer Youth Mental Health First Aid training free of charge to teachers and school staff from St. Louis City and St. Louis County School Districts in response to the National Children's Mental Health Emergency;


**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:**

The Board hereby appropriates up to \$50,000.00 to be used toward the provision of free Youth Mental Health First Aid training for teachers and school staff at St. Louis City schools provided by the Missouri Institute of Mental Health. Funding shall also cover stipends for participation, training materials, other course costs, and dedicate a portion of the funding to be used for instructor certification training for schools.

**APPROVED THIS 17<sup>th</sup> DAY OF NOVEMBER 2022**

Board Chair/Officer Name (printed):	Signature: 
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**ATTEST:**

Board Officer Name (printed):	Signature: 
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