



ROCKYMOUNTAIN YOUTH CORPS

A stepping stone to new opportunities

December 15, 2016,

Dear Parent or Guardian,

My name is Victoria Flores and I am a Mental Health First Aid Instructor with Rocky Mountain Youth Corps. In response to tragedies regarding youth suicides in Taos, I have been working with the Taos Municipal School District and area charter school staff to discuss how to support the mental health needs of youth in our community. I would like to offer a mental health first aid certification course to mature teens who want training regarding mental health. The course is an 8 hour, nationally certified course that discusses signs and symptoms of mental health disorders, as well as an ACTION PLAN to respond to possible crisis situations amongst teens. The strongest support system can often be peers, and this is an opportunity to provide training to mature teens who want this training. For further information regarding this course please read the attached handout, which includes a description and website for further information. Please note that the content of this course can be challenging and students may need to seek support. For this reason, community services and resources will be made available to them. Attendance is VOLUNTARY, and if at any point a student does not wish to continue they are welcome to call a parent/guardian to pick them up.

PARENT/GUARDIAN

I give permission to allow my child, _____ to attend the Youth-Mental Health First Aid training on **January 21, 2017** (Sponsored by Rocky Mountain Youth Corps)

STUDENT/TEEN

I (*student name*) _____ agree to participate in the Youth-Mental Health First Aid course, and understand the mature content of the material covered discussing suicide, mental health disorders, and youth who may be in crisis.

Sincerely,

Victoria Flores
Mental Health First Aid Instructor
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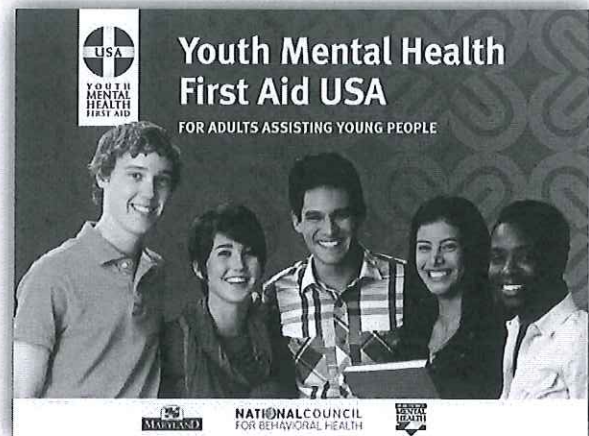
Youth Mental Health First Aid

Youth Mental Health First Aid USA is an 8 hour public education program which introduces participants to the unique risk factors and warning signs of mental health problems in adolescents, builds understanding of the importance of early intervention, and teaches individuals how to help an adolescent in crisis or experiencing a mental health challenge. Mental Health First Aid 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.

WHAT WILL PARTICIPANTS LEARN?

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.

WHO SHOULD TAKE THE COURSE?

The course is designed for adults who regularly interact with adolescents (teachers, school staff, coaches, youth group leaders, parents, etc.), but is being tested for appropriateness within older adolescent groups (16 and older) so as to encourage youth peer to peer interaction. In January 2013, President Obama recommended training for teachers in Mental Health First Aid. Since 2008, the core Mental Health First Aid course has been successfully offered to hundreds of thousands of people across the USA, including hospital staff, employers and business leaders, faith communities, law enforcement, and the general public.

WHO CREATED THE COURSE?

Mental Health First Aid USA is coordinated by the National Council for Behavioral Health, the Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, and the Missouri Department of Mental Health. Mental Health First Aid USA worked with experts at the National Technical Assistance Center for Children's Mental Health at the Georgetown University Center for Child and Human Development to develop the youth program.

WHERE CAN I LEARN MORE?

To learn more about the Mental Health First Aid USA, or to find a course or contact an instructor in your area, visit www.MentalHealthFirstAid.org.