



Sacramento County Youth Mental Health First Aid and Question, Persuade, Refer for Suicide Prevention Program Highlights

MHSA Steering Committee
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Introductions

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Youth Mental Health First Aid (YMHFA) & Question, Persuade, Refer (QPR) Overview

- ▶ YMHFA and QPR are both funded through the Mental Health Services Act (MHSA), Prevention and Early Intervention (PEI) component.
- ▶ YMHFA was created through the Student Mental Health and Wellness Collaborative (SMHWC) that includes staff, students and family members from the 13 local school districts and other stakeholders working toward a common goal of student mental health wellness.
- ▶ The YMMHFA training program was launched by SCOE in 2014.
- ▶ The QPR program launched in Spring 2020 to support suicide prevention efforts in 5 school districts including Center, Elk Grove, Folsom Cordova, Natomas, and Sacramento City.

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Youth Mental Health First Aid

Youth Mental Health First Aid

- ❖ The MHSA PEI funds help to support 3 school districts (Elk Grove, Sacramento City and Twin Rivers) who provide YMHFA trainings to their staff, parents, administrators, and community.
- ❖ In partnership with Sacramento County BHS, SCOE supports the remaining districts by offering YMHFA trainings to their staff, parents, administrators, and community.
- ❖ Purpose: to educate teachers, school staff, caregivers, community members, law enforcement and other caring adults on how to help adolescents ages 12-18 who are experiencing mental health challenges or crisis

Program Goals

The overarching program goals are:

- ❖ Increase the number of diverse, qualified individuals who have the skills and knowledge to recognize youth mental health or addiction challenges and/or crisis
- ❖ Reduce stigma and discrimination associated with mental illness or addiction
- ❖ Improve attitudes leading to social distance from individuals with mental health problems
- ❖ Increase access to mental health care in the community

Youth Mental Health First Aid Curriculum

Participants learn:

- ❖ The risk factors and warning signs for a range of a variety of mental health challenges common among adolescents, including: depression, anxiety, psychosis, eating disorders, AD/HD, disruptive behavior disorders and substance use disorders
- ❖ Assess for risk of suicide or harm
- ❖ Listen nonjudgmentally
- ❖ Give reassurance and information
- ❖ Encourage appropriate professional help
- ❖ Encourage self-help and other support strategies

Participants do not learn:

- ❖ To diagnose, nor how to provide any therapy or counseling

Countywide Progress

- ❖ Certified Instructors conducted 105 YMHFA trainings for 2,972 district, school site, parents and community members between February 2014 and June 2022

Youth Mental Health First Aid Project Findings

- ▶ 98% of YMHFA course participants agree that the training made them more aware of their own views and feelings about mental health problems and disorders
- ▶ 97% of participants agreed that they could assist a young person or listen to them with compassion if they were experiencing a mental health crisis
- ▶ 97% of participants felt they could reach out to a person in crisis and either assist or direct them to appropriate services
- ▶ Parents, educators and other stakeholders who were YMHFA course participants were grateful for the learning experience and shared that they were better equipped to help youth in crisis

Youth Mental Health First Aid Project Findings

- ▶ YMHFA trainings have positively impacted students, parents, educators and other stakeholders helping to expand their overall knowledge of mental health disorders and aid them in contributing positively to stigma reduction
- ▶ Recent updates in the National Council for Well Being's YMHFA curricula and materials focuses on and expand upon youth voice and cultural considerations when reaching out
 - ▶ Additions include youth art, videos with youth perspectives and stories
 - ▶ Expanded information for cultural considerations taking in to account appropriate measures when reaching out to cultural communities
- ▶ Each participant leaves with a list of county mental health resources, a processing guide, and a YMHFA manual with resources to support their ongoing efforts to reduce stigma and intervene in a crisis

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QPR for Suicide Prevention

What is QPR?

- ▶ The QPR Institute began as a three-year joint effort between Spokane Mental Health and the founder to launch a national suicide prevention training program, the Institute became an independent organization in July of 1999.
- ▶ The training teaches three intervention strategies to Question, Persuade, and Refer or QPR, and are the three simple steps anyone can learn to help save a life and prevent suicide.
- ▶ Just as people trained in CPR and the Heimlich Maneuver help save thousands of lives each year, people trained in QPR learn how to recognize the warning signs of a suicide crisis and how to question, persuade, and refer someone to help.

Sacramento County's QPR Project

- ❖ In January 2018, SCOE hosted a cost recovery training of trainers and was advertised to the SCOE Bullying Prevention Program's District Leads and Youth Mental Health First Aid District Leads.
- ❖ QPR was added to provide an easily accessible, time-conscious option for the community that could also be offered more frequently than YMHFA is offered.
- ❖ The training of trainers was attended by district and school staff from 9 out of the 13 districts in Sacramento County as well as SCOE staff.
- ❖ The program launched in Spring 2020 to support suicide prevention efforts and 5 school districts opted to participate including Center, Elk Grove, Folsom Cordova, Natomas, and Sacramento City.
- ❖ SCOE conducts at least 4 QPR trainings per year and advertises to non-participating districts, community-based organizations, law enforcement and other youth serving organizations.

QPR Workshop Goals

- ▶ To enhance general awareness about suicide
- ▶ To teach the myths and facts about suicide
- ▶ To introduce the warning signs of suicidal thinking and behavior
- ▶ To teach **THREE** basic intervention skills that can help avert the tragedy of suicide

QPR Is...

- ▶ not intended to be a form of counseling or treatment.
- ▶ intended to offer hope through positive action.
- ▶ intended to teach the possible warning signs and suicidal communications of people in trouble in hopes to prevent a possible tragedy.

QPR Findings From Pre-/Post Surveys

After completing the training:

- ▶ 80% of Participants Reported a High Knowledge of Suicide Prevention Facts
- ▶ 81% of Participants Reported a High Knowledge of Suicide Warning Signs
- ▶ 81% of Participants Reported a High Knowledge of Local Resources for Help with Suicide
- ▶ 82% of Participants Reported They Are Always Likely to Ask Someone if They Are Thinking of Suicide
- ▶ 78% of Participants Reported a High Understanding about Suicide and Suicide Prevention
- ▶ 91% of Participants Reported the Quality of the Training to Be Excellent or Very Good
- ▶ Numbers Served: over 325 participants since 2020-21

QPR Findings From Pre-/Post Surveys

After completing the training:

- ▶ Parents, educators and other stakeholders who attend QPR trainings grateful for the learning experience and shared that they were better equipped to help youth in crisis
- ▶ QPR is a 2-hour training that affords participants the opportunity to ask questions and role-play scenarios if need be, and can also be offered virtually
- ▶ QPR trainings have positively impacted students, parents, educators and other stakeholders helping to expand their overall knowledge of mental health, creating shared knowledge about warning signs taking in to account cultural considerations in their schools and community
- ▶ Each participant leaves with a list of county mental health resources and a QPR booklet with resources to support their on-going efforts to reduce stigma and intervene in a crisis

QPR in Action: Center U.S.D.

Impact of Covid on YMHFA and QPR Trainings

- ▶ SCOE and district partners pivoted and created, purchased, and disseminated mental health wellness resources for school staff, parents/guardians and youth. District partners also trained new school staff in both modalities to prepare for post-pandemic trainings.
- ▶ Challenges of conducting YMHFA/QPR trainings virtually
 - ▶ National Council for Mental Wellbeing finalized a new curriculum for virtual trainings in late Spring 2021 and trainers became certified to use and conduct trainings.
- ▶ Next Steps

Closing Remarks and Looking Forward

These programs are funded by the Division of Behavioral Health Services through the voter approved Proposition 63, Mental Health Services Act (MHSA).

