



MENTAL  
HEALTH  
FIRST AID™

[www.MentalHealthFirstAid.org](http://www.MentalHealthFirstAid.org)

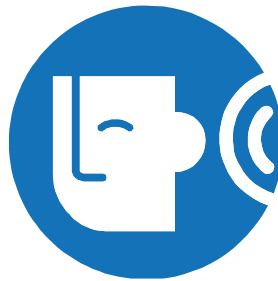
Sarah Schwartz, MSW, MBA, MHA  
Executive Director, MHA of Georgia



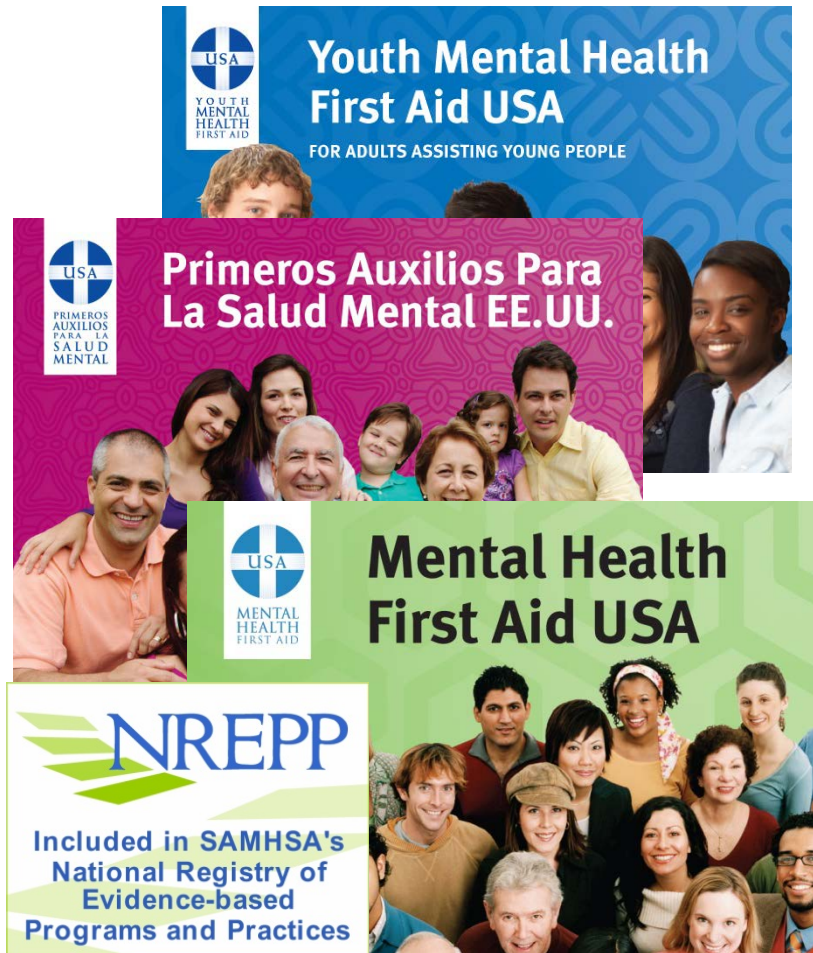
Mental Health First Aid USA is coordinated by the National Council for Behavioral Health, the Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, and the Missouri Department of Mental Health.



**Mental Health First Aid** is the help offered to a person developing a mental health problem or experiencing a mental health crisis. The first aid is given until appropriate treatment and support are received or until the crisis resolves.







# Mental Health First Aid



- ✚ Origins in Australia and currently in 20 countries
- ✚ Adult MHFA course for individuals 18 years of age and older
- ✚ Youth MHFA is designed to teach caring adults how to help an adolescent (age 12-18) who is experiencing a mental health or addictions challenge or is in crisis
- ✚ Included in SAMHSA's National Registry of Evidence-based Programs and Practices
- ✚ Partnership with Maryland and Missouri State Governments

# What Participants Learn

-  Risk factors and warning signs of mental health concerns.
-  Information on depression, anxiety, trauma, psychosis, and substance use.
-  A 5-step action plan to help someone developing a mental health concern or in crisis.
-  Available evidence-based professional, peer, and self-help resources.

# What Participants Learn

- ⊕ Prevalence of Mental Health Problems
- ⊕ Signs and Symptoms of Depression
- ⊕ Crisis First Aid for:
  - > Traumatic Events
  - > Acute Psychosis
  - > Overdose and Withdrawal



# MHFA Action Plan



Assess for risk of suicide or harm



Listen nonjudgmentally



Give reassurance and information

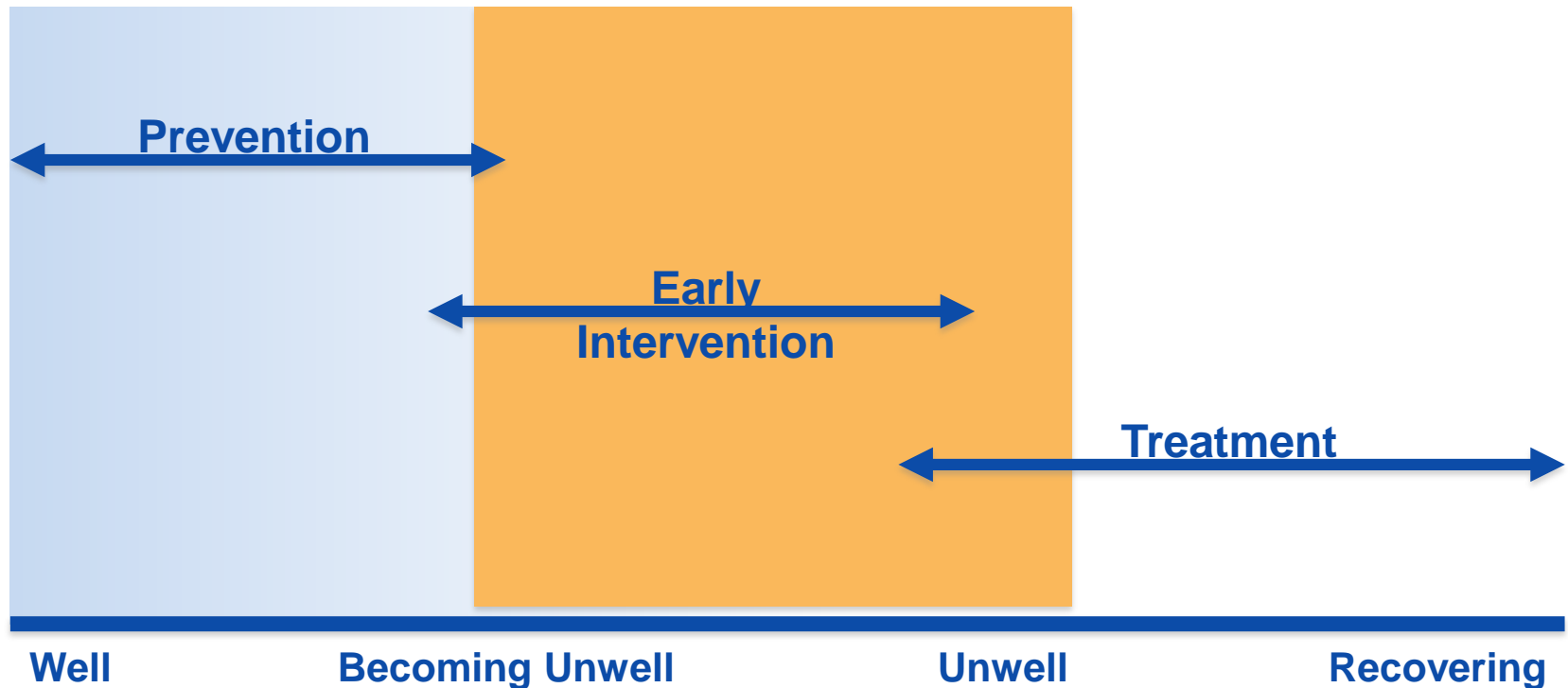



Encourage appropriate professional help








Encourage self-help and other support strategies

# Where Mental Health First Aid Can Help



 Where Mental Health First Aid can help on the spectrum of mental health interventions

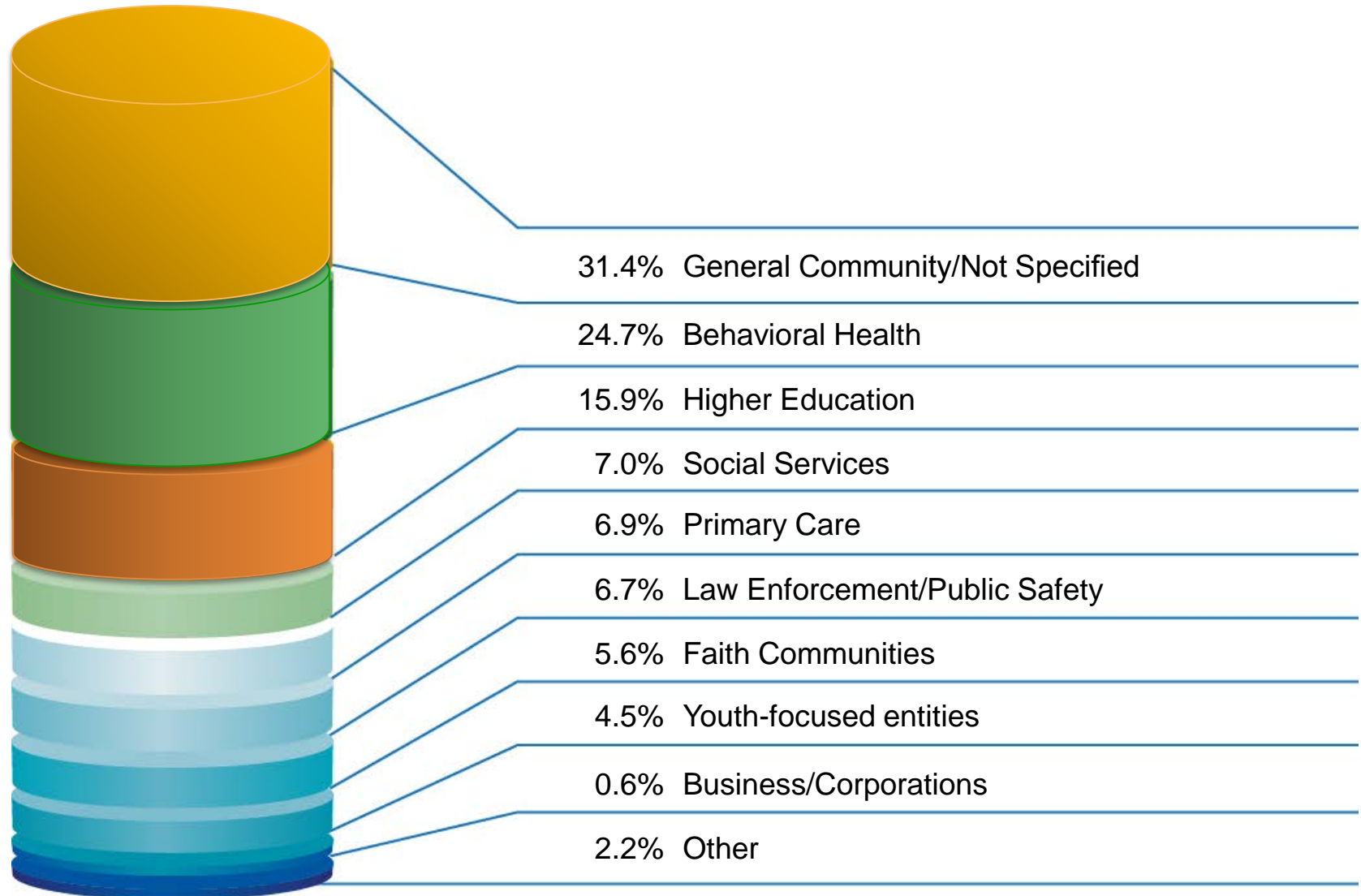
# Why Mental Health First Aid?

-  Mental health problems are common
-  Stigma is associated with mental health problems
-  Professional help is not always on hand
-  Individuals with mental health problems often do not seek help
-  Many people...
  - > are not well informed about mental health problems
  - > do not know how to respond



# Audiences

12,600 Courses (through April 2014)



# Evidence

## *Mental Health First Aid....*



...increases knowledge and understanding

...encourages people helping people

...supports people getting help

...decreases social distance

...increases mental wellness



Included in SAMHSA's  
National Registry of  
Evidence-based  
Programs and Practices

# Mental Health First Aid in the News



The Washington Post



THE  
HUFFINGTON  
POST



January 8, 2014 | by Jennie Grabel

[What has changed since Jan. 8, 2011, in Tucson and beyond?](#)

January 2, 2014 | by Patrick Skahill

[A "First-Aid" Response to Mental Illness](#)

December 27, 2013 | by Kathleen Megan

[After Newtown, Building A Stronger System Of Mental Health Services](#)

October 13, 2013 | by T. Rees Shapiro

[Mental Health Program Helps Fairfax County Teens Cope](#)

March 12, 2012 | by Kim Painter

[Classes Teach 'First Aid' for Mental Health Crises](#)

October 18, 2011 | [For Your Health](#)

## What people are saying...

N.Y.U. has also added a **mental health first aid** training course. Employees who work in campus hot spots learn to identify mental illness symptoms as well as how to defuse a tense situation until help arrives. A hot spot is any place prone to frustrate, including the financial aid office, the bursar's office, and the registrar's office.

**The New York  
Times**

January 23, 2011

Attend a traditional first aid class, and you will learn checklists for assessing and responding to cuts, burns and strokes. [In **Mental Health First Aid**] students consider how they would respond to...a stranger having a panic attack, a friend expressing hopelessness, or a client distressed over an illness.

 **USA  
TODAY**

March 12, 2012

**Take a Course.  
You could be the help someone needs.**

**Contact Us:**  
**Sarah@mhageorgia.org**  
**678.904.1970**



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