



BERNARDS TOWNSHIP HEALTH DEPARTMENT
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CELEBRATE MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS MONTH: GET TRAINED IN MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID

Basking Ridge, NJ (April 11, 2024) -- The Bernards Township Municipal Alliance Against Substance Abuse, Bernards Township Health Department, Community in Crisis, and Empower Somerset will be sponsoring both a Mental Health First Aid and Youth Mental Health First Aid training during May to honor Mental Health Awareness Month. The Youth Mental Health First Aid class will take place on Wednesday, May 8th from 9:00 am – 3 pm. The Adult Mental Health First Aid course will take place on Wednesday, May 22nd from 9:00 am – 4:30 pm. Both programs will take place at the Bernards Township Library located at 32 S. Maple Ave, Basking Ridge, NJ 07920.

One in five Americans has a mental illness, but many are reluctant to seek help or might not know where to turn for care. Unlike physical conditions, symptoms of mental health and substance use problems can be difficult to detect. For friends and family members, it can be hard to know when and how to step in. As a result, those in need of mental health services often do not get them until it is too late. Just as CPR helps assist an individual having a heart attack, Mental Health First Aid prepares participants to interact with a person experiencing a mental health crisis. Mental Health First Aiders learn a 5-step action plan that guides them through the process of reaching out and offering appropriate support.

Youth Mental Health First Aid helps give adults the tools to identify when an adolescent age 12-18 might be struggling with a mental health or substance use problem and to connect them with appropriate support and resources when necessary. This course is recommended for parents, teachers, coaches, social workers, faith leaders, and other caring citizens who regularly interact with young people ages 12-18. Adult Mental Health First Aid teaches adults how to identify, understand and respond to signs of mental health and substance use challenges among adults 18+. Learn more about what both courses offer at <https://www.mentalhealthfirstaid.org/>

Both training courses are free and open to all members of the public over the age of 18. All program materials and light refreshments will be included during the day of training. Participants must attend the entire training to be certified Mental Health First Aiders. Both classes require participants to complete 2 hours of online self-guided learning before attending the in-person session. For more information, contact Susan Visser at svisser@communityincrisis.org. To view program flyers and access registration, visit the Bernards Township Health Department website at www.bernardshealth.org and either click “May Mental Health First Aid Trainings” or click directly on the program link on the calendar.

The mission of the Bernards Township Municipal Alliance Against Substance Abuse is to provide consultation, programs, training and resources to members of the Bernards Township community with the goal of preventing and reducing the use of alcohol, tobacco and other drugs through education, support of events and programs and presence in the community. For more information, visit www.bernardshealth.org

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