

With thanks to Mrs. Wilsusen and Mrs. Boetticher, Jefferson Township High School is proud to partner with JT Connect to bring a teen mental health first aid program to our students. Please see the recent press from The National Council Council for Mental Wellbeing below.

The National Council awards teen Mental Health First Aid training to 36 New Jersey schools and youth-serving organizations at no cost

WASHINGTON, D.C. (November 17, 2021) – Dozens of schools and youth-serving organizations throughout New Jersey will provide free teen Mental Health First Aid (tMHFA) training to the youth they serve through an innovative grant program established by the National Council for Mental Wellbeing in partnership with Born This Way Foundation.

This mental health education program will equip about 6,300 youth ages 15-18 with skills to identify, understand and respond to signs of mental health and substance use challenges and crises experienced by their friends and peers.

As the COVID-19 pandemic stretches on, many people have reported that their mental health has suffered. According to research conducted on tMHFA, over 85% of teens report stress and problems resulting from the changes they've made in their day-to-day lives because of the pandemic. And Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) data shows that roughly 50% of the population will, at some point in their lives, face a mental health challenge.

The grant recipients:

- Bogota Jr./Sr. High School *in partnership with Care Plus N.J., Inc.* (Bogota)
- Bordentown Regional School District *in partnership with Prevention Plus of Burlington County* (Bordentown)
- Camden County Family Support Organization (Cherry Hill)

- Camden County Juvenile Detention Center (Blackwood)
- Center For Family Services (Camden)
- Center for Pre-college Programs at Rutgers University – Newark (Newark)
- Cornerstone Family Programs/Morristown Neighborhood House (Morristown)
- Cranford Schools (Cranford)
- Daelight Foundation Inc. *in partnership with Big Picture Learning Academy, Rising Leaders Global and Charles E. Brimm Medical Arts High School* (Camden)
- East Brunswick Youth Council (East Brunswick)
- Glen Rock High School (Glen Rock)
- Greater Jersey Hudson River Region of BBYO (Scotch Plains)
- Hearts Empowerment Counseling Center *in partnership with theAcademy365, Inc.* (East Orange)
- Henry P. Becton Regional High School (East Rutherford)
- Hunterdon Central Regional High School (Flemington)
- iEvolve Experience *in partnership with Weequahic High School* (Newark)
- Jersey City Department of Health and Human Services *in partnership with Lincoln High School* (Jersey City)
- JTCONNECT *in partnership with Jefferson Township Public Schools* (Oak Ridge)
- Keansburg School District (Keansburg)
- LEAP Academy (Camden)
- Lyndhurst High School (Lyndhurst)
- Manasquan High School (Manasquan)
- Maple Shade School District (Maple Shade)
- Metuchen High School – Wellness Committee and Empowerment Group (Metuchen)
- Palisades Park Board of Education (Palisades Park)
- Prevention Education Inc., t/a PEI Kids *in partnership with Ewing Public Schools* (Ewing)
- Prevention Links *in partnership with Eport Community Center* (Roselle)
- Ramsey High School (Ramsey)

- Raritan Bay Area YMCA *in partnership with Perth Amboy Public Schools* (Perth Amboy)
- Riverside High School (Riverside)
- Saddle Brook High School (Saddle Brook)
- The Bridge *in partnership with Irvington Public Schools* (Irvington)
- The HUBB Arts & Trauma Center (Newark)
- Vernon Township High School (Vernon)
- Wayne Valley High School (Wayne)
- Youth Training and Development Systems, Inc. (YTADS) *in partnership with the Boys and Girls Club of Atlantic City* (Atlantic City)

“teen Mental Health First Aid provides young people with actionable steps to support themselves and each other in the face of challenges. It is needed now more than ever before as the pandemic continues to disrupt the social and academic landscape so many young people rely on,” said National Council President and CEO Chuck Ingoglia. “We applaud the selected schools and organizations for their commitment to bring mental health training to their communities and look forward to working with them in the coming year.”

[tMHFA](#) is an evidence-based training program brought to the United States by the [National Council for Mental Wellbeing](#) in partnership with [Born This Way Foundation](#).

The training teaches teens in grades 10-12, or ages 15-18, how to identify, understand and respond to signs of mental health and substance use challenges and crises among friends and peers. The training gives teens the skills to have supportive conversations with their friends and teaches them how to get help from a responsible and trusted adult.

These mental health trainings are made possible due to funding provided by the New Jersey Pandemic Relief Fund (NJPRF) through the Community Foundation of New

Jersey (CFNJ), as the National Council [announced in February](#). Through this initiative, approximately 6,300 young people will receive tMHFA training in the 2021-2022 school year. Participating sites will have the opportunity to train additional teens in the 2022-2023 school year.

As part of this opportunity, selected sites will join a professional learning community and receive technical assistance and implementation support from the National Council. Schools and organizations will increase their capacity to effectively respond to teen mental health needs during and after the COVID-19 pandemic in a culturally responsive and trauma-informed way. The program will also increase the mental health literacy of the educators and young people trained and give young people the opportunity to share their stories through a youth advisory council.

For more information about the eligibility and requirements for this grant, [visit our web page](#).

About Us

Founded in 1969, the [National Council for Mental Wellbeing](#) is a membership organization that drives policy and social change on behalf of nearly 3,500 mental health and substance use treatment organizations and the more than 10 million children, adults and families they serve. We advocate for policies to ensure equitable access to high-quality services. We build the capacity of mental health and substance use treatment organizations. And we promote greater understanding of mental wellbeing as a core component of comprehensive health and health care. Through our [Mental Health First Aid](#) program, we have trained more than 2.5 million people in the U.S. to identify, understand, and respond to signs and symptoms of mental health and substance use challenges.

About Born This Way Foundation

Born This Way Foundation, co-founded and led by Lady Gaga and her mother, Cynthia Germanotta, supports the mental health of young people and works with them to build a kinder and braver world. Through high-impact programming, youth-led conversations, and strategic, cross-sectoral partnerships, the Foundation aims to make kindness cool, validate the emotions of young people, and eliminate the stigma surrounding mental health. Learn how the Foundation encourages people to practice kindness toward themselves and their communities through its website bornthisway.foundation and its storytelling platform Channel Kindness at channelkindness.org.