



## Adolescent Mental Health Training for School Resource Officers and Educators Course Outline and Objectives

### COURSE OVERVIEW

The ***Adolescent Mental Health Training for School Resource Officers and Educators (AMHT)*** is a 12-hour training designed to help school resource officers and educators better identify and respond to students who are suspected of having a mental health need. The AMHT is intended to help school resource officers develop the critical skills and capacity for appropriately responding to the many predictable behavior issues that are typically observed among adolescents with mental health problems.

The AMHT course is designed for school resource officers, school administrators, school security, teachers and other school personnel. A school safety team approach helps to ensure that all team members are receiving consistent information, as well as to have the opportunity to jointly discuss any issues related to school-based policies and procedures that may arise during the training.

This course provides information that can serve as a framework for interactions with youth. It will help participants understand how using a school-community specific approach can have important benefits for all: students, SROs, teachers, and families.

#### **Course Objectives:**

- Recognize the impact of adolescent brain development on behavior.
- Describe mental health and how to recognize the signs of mental health conditions in adolescents.
- Compare and practice crisis prevention and intervention techniques.
- Apply knowledge gained of adolescent mental health to each area of the NASRO SRO Triad.

**TEACHING METHODOLOGY / CLASS FORMAT:** This course uses a combination of classroom instruction, interactive learning, PowerPoint presentations, videos, and practical scenarios. Students will be provided a training manual.

**ATTENDANCE POLICY:** Attendees will be allowed to miss no more than a maximum of 1 hour. *This requires pre-approval from the course Instructor and must be an unavoidable absence (such as a court appearance).*

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## **COURSE OUTLINE**

### **Unit One: Introduction to Mental Health**

Goal: Understanding the mental health crisis in young people is critical. This module will explain what mental health is and define mental illness categories.

Learner Objectives:

- Develop an understanding of mental health and why it matters.
- Examine how youth mental health differs from that of adults.
- Apply knowledge gained of adolescent mental health to improve each area of the NASRO SRO Triad.

### **Unit Two: Adolescent Brain Development**

Goal: This module will explain the basics of adolescent brain development. We will look at why emotions tend to drive adolescent behaviors from a neurological perspective, as well as their impulsive and risk-taking behaviors. Understanding what an adolescent brain needs to thrive is essential in mitigating mental health issues. The section will also explore the causes that disrupt normal neurological development. Disruptions are often what can create or contribute to mental health challenges.

Learner Objectives:

- Describe the development and functioning of the adolescent brain.
- Connect what adolescent brains need to thrive to your role as a supportive adult.
- Discuss the impact of disruptions to normal brain development on adolescent mental health.

### **Unit Three: Behavior as Communication**

Goal: Adolescents communicate more information, or more honestly, through body language rather than words. Therefore, we need to understand and pay attention to nonverbal communication. This module will focus on learning to understand nonverbal communication.

Learner Objectives:

- Explain how nonverbal communication can be used when working with a student in crisis.
- Describe the four trauma responses.
- Devise non-judgmental ways to problem-solve with adolescents.

### **Unit Four: Techniques for Crisis Prevention and Intervention**

Goal: The relationships you build with youth *before* a crisis happens will have a dramatic influence on your ability to de-escalate them and avert crises. This module focuses on preventative tools to develop relationships of trust with adolescents.



Learner Objectives:

- Identify how to develop trusting relationships with adolescents.
- Apply tools to strengthen rapport with an emphasis on listening skills.
- Expand and practice tools for intervening in an adolescent mental health crisis.

### **Unit Five: Adolescent Mental Health Conditions**

Goal: This module will provide a broad understanding of common adolescent behavioral health conditions and how these conditions may present in a school environment. How to identify and respond to a student's risk for suicide or self-injurious behaviors will also be discussed.

Learner Objectives:

- Describe common mental health conditions in adolescents.
- Discern the signs of mood and behavioral disorders.
- Discuss warning signs for suicidal ideation.

### **Unit Six: Emotional Disorders and Disabilities**

Goal: Adolescents with Emotional Behavioral Disorders (EBDs) have a pattern of disruptive behaviors causing problems in school, at home and in social situations. This module will discuss EBDs most often seen in students. Effective strategies for working with students with EBDs will be discussed.

Learner Objectives:

- Connect new knowledge of various disorders to your work as informal counselor/mentor with struggling students.
- Discuss two differences in a typical adolescent's brain development to those adolescents whose brains are struggling with various disorders.

### **Unit Seven: Practical Application**

Goal: While there are specific strategies to work with mental health diagnoses, many intervention techniques work across different situations. This module will provide case studies where strategies can be applied and new skills can be developed.

Learner Objectives:

- Create a list of techniques learned that will improve interactions and relationships with students.
- Analyze and discuss the case studies.



## Unit Eight: Adult Self Care

Goal: Self-care should be a priority. Your job is stressful, both physically and emotionally, therefore it is crucial that you are aware of your own stress level and signs of overload. This module will provide tools to recognize and acknowledge your stress and strategies for improved self-care.

Learner Objectives:

- Identify and modify your own stress management skills to be a supportive adult.

## COURSE AGENDA



## Adolescent Mental Health Training for School Resource Officers and Educators

### Day One

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8:00 – 9:00 am	<b>Introductions and Pre-test</b>
9:00 – 11:00 am	<b>Introduction to Mental Health</b> Defining Mental Health Mental Illness Categories Positive Mental Health Model
11:00 am – 12:00 pm	<b>Adolescent Brain Development</b> Normal Brain Development Disruptions to Brain Development Risk and Protective Factors
12:00 – 1:00 pm	<b>Lunch</b>
1:00 – 2:00 pm	<b>Adolescent Brain Development, <i>continued</i></b>
2:00 – 3:00 pm	<b>Behavior as Communication</b> Nonverbal Communication Trauma Responses
3:00 – 5:00 pm	<b>Techniques for Crisis Prevention and Intervention</b> Top-Down Techniques for Crisis Prevention Bottom-up Techniques for Intervention Techniques



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**Day Two**

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- 8:00 – 9:00 am **Adolescent Mental Health Conditions**  
Statistics and Overview  
Mood Disorders  
Behavioral Disorders
- 9:00 – 10:00 am **Emotional Disorders and Disabilities**  
Emotional Disorders  
Disability Disorders
- 10:00 – 11:00 am **Practical Application**  
Adding to Your Toolbox  
Case Studies
- 11:00 - 11:30 am **Self-Care**  
Self-regulation  
Success Tools
- 11:30 am – 12:00 pm **Post-test and Wrap-up**