



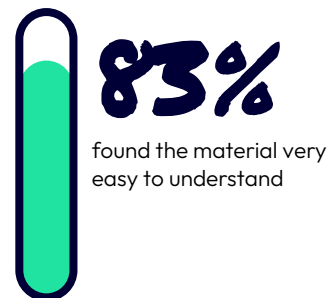
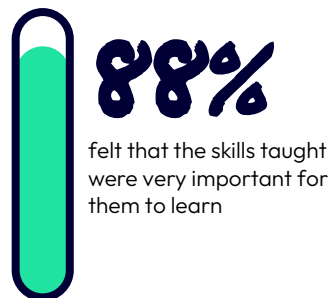
Peer to Peer Teen Mental Health First Aid Training

Be Well, the youth mental health initiative at Jewish Federations of North America, provides this peer to peer, evidence-based certificate course, in partnership with the [National Council for Mental Wellbeing](#) (NatCon). The following 2023-2024 data set highlights the impact of this 6-hour early intervention. It was delivered by trained instructors to 501 teens ages 14-18 at 11 Jewish summer camps and 9 day schools and youth movements across eight communities.* The goal is to teach teens how to identify, understand and respond to signs of mental health and substance use challenges among their friends and peers, utilizing scenarios specific to the Jewish community.



THE EDUCATION AND SKILLS ARE HIGHLY VALUED

Across all courses:



“ This class helped me become more aware of common mental health issues such as depression, anxiety, and substance abuse.

“ I was glad to learn new skills and concepts for dealing with real life problems around me.

“ I think this could be super helpful for the future and I can see myself using it.

The participants highlighted **acting out scenarios (skits)** and **group discussion** as particularly helpful methodologies.

*While still very high, satisfaction during the school-year course was slightly lower; 86% would recommend the school-year course to a friend.

WHAT TEENS DEAL WITH*

The **biggest challenges** according to respondents

- Anxiety
- Depression
- Substance Abuse
- Suicidal Thoughts
- Self-Harm

✓ Respondents felt these topics were **well addressed** in the course.

Less commonly mentioned challenges according to respondents

- Academic Pressure
- Eating Disorder
- Body Image
- Parental Pressure and/or abuse
- Effects of Social Media

☹️ Respondents were **less satisfied** with the extent that these topics were covered in the course.

*In other surveys, teens have expressed that their mental health is impacted by antisemitism. Antisemitism is not specifically addressed in this course.

TEENS RECEIVED CONCRETE, ACTIONABLE LEARNING

The teens reflected on the most valuable topics they learned:



How to talk to a friend going through a mental health crisis



Recognizing signs of a mental health crisis



Other important resources (such as 988, the Suicide and Crisis Lifeline)



The importance of consulting trusted adults

“

This class has helped me become more aware of common mental health issues such as depression, anxiety, substance abuse.

“

Many people experience mental health challenges and need help. You can help by connecting them with a trusted adult.

TEENS WERE INTERESTED TO LEARN MORE ABOUT



Substance abuse (drugs and alcohol)



CPR/First Aid for mental health-related crises



Anxiety and stress management



Mental health self-awareness and self-care



Academic pressure



Social media's impact on mental health



Dealing with suicidal thoughts, panic attacks, or other mental health crises

“

The biggest challenge is stress and pressure from school...I think it would be good to learn about what to do about stress, mental health related issues, and what to do to fix or help it.

“

[The course should include] more [discussion of] confidential ways to get help—some kids are scared to come forward with their problems.

PARTICIPANTS DESIRE MULTIPLE MODALITIES

Many participants mentioned they would appreciate the course including



More interactive activities



More discussions



More opportunities for group work