

Mental Health First Aid

The Department of Corrections and Department of Social Services collaborated to have all staff working in correctional facilities trained in Mental Health First Aid (MHFA).

Mental Health First Aid is an evidence-based training that provides education in four key areas:

- *Signs of addictions and mental illnesses;
- *Impact of mental and substance use disorders;
- *5 step action plan to assess a situation and help; and
- *Resources and where to turn for help.

DOC and DSS sent select staff out-of-state to attend the Mental Health First Aid instructors training sponsored by the National Council for Behavioral Health. This allows for on-going training of new staff as they are hired and allow DOC and DSS to sustain this training internally.

Recognizing that there are situations that are unique to the correctional world, DOC and DSS trained MHFA instructors complete an additional training module targeting the public safety field. This will allow the instructors to provide MHFA training and tailor this training more specifically to a correctional setting.

DOC and DSS trained instructors co-facilitated MHFA trainings during the 2016 annual in-service training for all staff working in a correctional facility. This training is now provided by DOC and DSS MHFA instructors to newly hired staff during pre-service training.

The MHFA training is an 8-hour session.