



## **Hampshire County Scouts**

### **Mental Health First Aid Policy**

#### **Introduction**

Following a number of International Expeditions where Mental Health issues have occurred, Hampshire County Scouts have introduced a policy on the requirement to have leaders trained in Mental Health First Aid (Youth) (MHFA Youth) on all International Expeditions involving young people, and similar activities (such as large events within the UK). The provision of the training has received positive feedback from expedition leaders, with reports of the training assisting in situations occurring whilst overseas on numerous occasions. This policy has therefore been extended for another two years.

It is recognised that these courses will not enable leaders to be experts in Mental Health First Aid, but hopefully will enable leaders to be able to recognise signs and symptoms, to provide initial support, to be able to request additional help and to point people in the correct direction for additional help.

#### **1. Required MHFA Youth Training**

The appropriate number of leaders are required to have completed a 2 day MHFA Youth course. Hampshire County Scouts will provide subsidised courses as required, however, expeditions (after 1<sup>st</sup> September 2026) will be required to contribute £50 per person towards the cost of the course.

#### **2. Alternatives to required training**

If leaders have attended similar courses, these will be taken into consideration. For example,

- a. Mental Health First Aid at Work (minimum of 2-day course)
- b. Mental Health First Aid in Social Services (minimum of 2-day course)

Details of alternative courses being requested to be considered should be supplied as part of the Visits Abroad process, and confirmation received that this has been accepted.

At least 50% of the required number of leaders must have undertaken the specific accredited MHFA Youth course.

#### **3. Validity of Training**

Course certificates (or refresher certificate) must be dated a maximum of 3 years prior to the expedition return date.



#### 4. Number of leaders required to be trained

At least two leaders must have completed the MHFA Youth course for all expeditions (unless very small). Also, additional leaders may be needed for larger expeditions. Please see the table below for a guide.

	Very Small	Normal	Large	Very Large
Young People (under 18)	8 or less	Up to 30	Up to 45	Up to 60
Leaders	2	Over 2	Over 2	Over 2
MHFA Youth Recommended	2	2	4	4
<b>MHFA Youth Required</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>

The majority of expeditions will fall within the "Normal" grouping.

#### 5. Large Expeditions that are split into smaller teams.

Where larger expeditions are broken into smaller teams / subcamps (such as the P series, Swiss adventure etc.), then each smaller team should be considered to be an individual expedition and base the number of required MHFA Youth leaders as per the above table. It is recommended that some of the Core Leadership team overseeing the separate teams also have MHFA Youth training, so that they have an overall understanding of MHFA.

#### 6. Mixed under and over 18 Expeditions

If an expedition has a significant number of over 18's, then this may increase the number of required MHFA Youth trained leaders.

#### 7. Over 18 Only Expeditions

These expeditions need to follow similar requirements as laid out above that at least two leaders must have completed a MHFA course (unless very small e.g. Explorer Belt teams.) Also, additional leaders may be needed for larger expeditions. Please see the table below for a guide.

	Very Small	Normal	Large	Very Large
18 or over members	8 or less	Up to 30	Up to 45	Up to 60
Leaders	2	Over 2	Over 2	Over 2
MHFA Recommended	2	2	4	4
<b>MHFA Required</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>

Appropriate first aid courses for all adult groups could include:

- Mental Health First Aider
- Mental Health Youth First Aider
- Mental Health First Aid at Work
- Mental Health for Social Workers



**8. Responsibility for Checking MHFA provision for Internationals**

The County International Sub Team Leader (CISTL) will make sure that this policy is sent to all expeditions when a Visits Abroad Part A is submitted.

The CISTL will then check that these requirements have been completed when a Visits Abroad Part B is processed and before approval is given. Any exception must be agreed and confirmed by the County Lead Volunteer.

**9. Events within the UK – Expeditions to Northern Ireland, Isle of Man, Scilly Isles, Scottish Highlands & Islands, Jersey and Guernsey.**

Technically these are not International expeditions (and therefore, do not fall under the Visits Abroad process), but it is recommended that these follow the same requirements for MHFA Youth courses.

Mental Health will need to be covered in the Expedition Risk Assessment, with appropriate risk reduction measures, which could indicate a requirement.

**10. Large County Events within the UK (over 50 Young People) – Such as week-long County Camps:**

It is recommended that provision is made within the organisation of any large County event for MHFA Youth. This should be covered within the risk assessment of the event, with appropriate risk reduction measures, which could indicate a requirement.

Policy Approval Date: 02 October 2025

Signed:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "S Thomas", with a horizontal line underneath.

Sarah Thomas

County Chair

Policy Review Date: October 2027