

# YOUTH AWARE OF MENTAL HEALTH



YAM Texas

Youth Aware of Mental Health (YAM; [www.y-a-m.org](http://www.y-a-m.org)) is a five-session evidence-based program promoting increased knowledge and awareness of mental health in adolescents. Students build problem-solving skills and emotional intelligence through lectures, discussions, and role-plays.

YAM focuses on six main themes:

1. What is Mental Health?
2. Self-Help Advice
3. Stress and Crisis
4. Depression and Suicidal Thoughts
5. Helping a Friend in Need
6. Who Can I Ask for Advice?



When compared to other similar programs, YAM was proven to be more effective in improving adolescent mental health and is associated with significant reductions in suicide attempts and severe suicidal ideation.

## 01. How does a school engage?

Any principal, counselor, teacher, staff member, parent, community member or student can contact their YAM-providing institution to start the process of bringing YAM to their ISD or school.

Once contact is made, we strongly encourage information sessions be held and attended for all stakeholders including the superintendent, school board members, principals, school staff, parents, community members, and students to ensure all questions about the program are addressed.

## 02. How much money and time will YAM cost my school?

**Investment:** The program is offered at no cost to public and charter schools/districts in Texas and the estimated value of this program is incalculable when considering its correlation with healthy adolescent development, depression prevention through fostering resilience, and increased mental health literacy and help-seeking behaviors.

**Time:** Please work with your YAM provider to create a YAM class schedule that works best for your school and students. YAM is often provided in two and a half 90-minute sessions or five 45-60-minute sessions.

### 03. Who participates in YAM?

The program is appropriate for 8th through 12th graders. YAM is a universal evidence-based program that promotes mental health in youth, meaning all students within a grade should participate in the program, not just a subset of students. As in keeping with fidelity of the program, students can participate as much or as little as they want.

### 04. What is my role in YAM?

We ask for your help in the planning stages to:

- (1) identify the grade level, teacher, and class where YAM can be delivered most effectively;
- (2) designate a point-of-contact to take the lead on logistics and communication;
- (3) determine how and what information to disseminate to parents about the program; and
- (4) plan a safety protocol in the event of an emergency during YAM delivery.

### 05. Is parent consent required to participate in YAM?

As an education offering, parental consent is a campus/district decision.

### 06. Who leads YAM?

A certified YAM facilitator and helper will work with students. All facilitators:

- Have prior experience working with groups of youth as teachers, social workers, counselors, school psychologists, or youth workers.
- Are completely vetted and screened.

### 07. Why aren't teachers of record encouraged to be in the room during YAM?

A key objective of YAM is to provide students with a space in which facilitator-student confidentiality is assured, where they can openly and safely discuss mental health issues, which can include topics that some students might not feel comfortable discussing in front of teachers or staff members they interact with on a daily basis.

Facilitators will inform the appropriate school personnel if they are concerned, at any time, for a student's mental health concerns.

If there is a student who requires a paraprofessional to be with them during YAM that is perfectly fine! The YAM instructor will spend a few minutes before the first session begins to let them know what is going on and how to best support the student during YAM.



**tcmhcc**  
Texas Child Mental  
Health Care Consortium

**YAM**

YOUTH AWARE  
OF MENTAL  
HEALTH



**UT Tyler**  
SCHOOL OF MEDICINE  
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