

Be Sensitive, Be Brave for Mental Health

SUPER: Substance Use Prevention Evidence-Based Resource, UCLA ISAP

Developer website: <https://communityconnections.net/training/bsbb/bsbbmh/>

Practice record last updated August 29, 2025

Cost	Practice Focus
Under \$500	MH

Practice Summary

Be Sensitive, Be Brave for Mental Health (BSBBMH) is an interactive two-hour workshop that infuses cultural concepts into education about mental health and mental health conditions. Designed for high school students, adults, and older adults, with a focus on how mental health challenges may present differently among different demographic and cultural groups. The training teaches participants how to recognize mental health problems, what to do when someone needs support, and steps that they can take to promote mental wellness.

Practice Details

Substance Use Prevention Category	• Not Applicable
Practice Level	• Individual • Relationship • Community or Society
Substance Use Prevention Strategy	• Not Applicable
Practice Components	Individual • Communication Skills Training • Connection to More Services • Cultural/Religious Focus • Education • Psychoeducation • Skills Training Relationship • Support Networking Community/Society • Shifting Community Norms
Population Age	• Age 13-17 • Age 18-20 • Age 21-24
Populations of Focus	• Asian • General Population • Hispanic or Latino
Settings	• Home • School (K-12) • College or University • Community-based program • Broader community or society • Other

Parent/Caregiver Involvement	• No parent or caregiver involvement
Recommended Staffing	• Community members
Prevention Focus	Substance Use Prevention Focus • None Mental Health Wellness and Promotion Focus • Depression • Mental Health - General
Training and Technical Assistance	There are several training options for BSBBMH, including in-person and self-paced online trainings. Live trainings can be requested by emailing community.connections.psych@gmail.com .
Program Costs	Under \$500. Please visit the developer's website listed above for updated information about implementation costs.
Adaptations	BSBBMH is currently available in Spanish, Chinese, Vietnamese, Tongan, Tagalog, and Korean, and it is also being translated into Hindi. The developers are also in the process of tailoring versions of the program for middle school audiences and Black/African American youth. There is also an adaptation of the program focused on suicide prevention.

Risk and Protective Factors

Youth Substance Use Risk and Protective Factors

Level	Risk Factors	Protective Factors
Individual	• Negative emotional state	• Emotional self-regulation • High self-esteem
Family and Relationships	• None	• None
School, Peer, and Community	• None	• Opportunities for the development of skills and interests

Youth Mental Health Risk and Protective Factors

Level	Risk Factors	Protective Factors
Individual	• Low self-esteem • Poor social skills (e.g., communication, problem-solving skills) • Negative emotional state	• Emotional self-regulation • High self-esteem
Family and Relationships	• None	• None
School, Peer, and Community	• Community-level stressful/traumatic events or violence	• None

Shared Substance Use and Mental Health Risk and Protective Factors

Level	Risk Factors	Protective Factors
Individual	• Negative emotional state	• Emotional self-regulation • High self-esteem
Family and Relationships	• None	• None
School, Peer, and Community	• None	• None

Empirical Evidence of Impact

Prevention Focus	Outcome	Population Age	Evidence Strength and Study Populations of Focus
Mental Health (General)	Behavior, Attitudes, and Functioning	General	Promising (General Population) [References 1]

References

[1] Chu, J. (2025, November). The Culturally-Infused Be Sensitive Be Brave for Suicide Prevention and Mental Health Community Helper Trainings. In *APHA 2025 Annual Meeting and Expo*. Retrieved from <https://apha.confex.com/apha/2025/meetingapp.cgi/Paper/579264>

What California Providers Are Saying

What They Like About Be Sensitive, Be Brave:

- Designed for cultural responsiveness — explicitly addresses how different cultures express suicidality and how to have those conversations differently.
- Short 90-minute format makes it realistic for educators, who rarely have eight hours of professional development time.
- Highly interactive — emphasizes audience participation and activities over the didactic style of older gatekeeper trainings.
- Lower training and materials cost than comparable programs like MHFA.
- Downloadable, fillable PDF booklet that participants can personalize.
- Pre/post survey data shows consistent statistically significant gains across knowledge, attitudes, and behavior measures.
- Comparison data found BSBB performed comparably to or better than alternative gatekeeper trainings.
- Open-ended participant feedback consistently highlights the short length, free access, and relevance of the material.

Tips and Recommendations for Implementing Be Sensitive, Be Brave:

- Choose trainers who are passionate about the material — training-the-trainer is intensive and many candidates drop off.
- In-person delivery has stronger impact than the self-paced online version; plan trainer capacity accordingly.
- Be ready with a short elevator pitch — the program is not yet listed on major registries, and audiences will ask why.
- When working with contract providers, build fidelity expectations into the contract; flexible-delivery habits can erode quality.
- Adapt marketing and logistics, not the curriculum — use community-appropriate channels (e.g., WeChat for older Chinese-American audiences) and incorporate food when culturally relevant.
- Use locally relevant examples and statistics to tailor the training for specific cultural or demographic groups.
- Frame the training as a lifesaving skill, not strictly mental-health or suicide-prevention — comparable to CPR.