

## **Project Abstract**

The proposed project titled *Project Recognition, Empowerment, and Action for Child mental Health (REACH)* focuses on training a broad community network of people in North Central Florida to recognize the signs of mental health concerns among youth and to intervene appropriately. To expand current mental health programming, the project will provide training in multiple counties in North Central Florida and includes the following two components: (a) adult trainings in multiple settings, and (b) a social marketing campaign. Project staff will use the Youth Mental Health First Aid (YMHFA) curriculum to train adults in the community who have frequent contact with youth. The project staff will offer 10 trainings in Year 1 to train 300 adults, 12 trainings in Year 2 to train 360 adults, 14 trainings in Year 3 to train 420 adults, and 16 trainings in Year 4 and 5 to train 480 adults for each of these two years (30 participants for each training session). Expected outcomes include increased numbers of trained community members in YMHFA, reduced stigma of mental health disorders in youth, and increased referrals for mental healthcare. The ultimate goal of Project *REACH* is to train 2,040 adults throughout the grant-funding period. Referral sources are also identified in all participating North Central Florida counties and related information about the referral process will be provided during trainings. Project staff will train pre-service professionals, including pre-service teachers, principals, medical professionals (e.g., doctors, nurses), and other college students seeking careers with frequent contact with youth at the University of Florida and Santa Fe College. For pre-professionals, supplementary instruction will be provided in rural mental health and risk factors for diverse and underserved youth. To reach underserved populations of youth, Project *REACH* staff will conduct regular trainings in rural and high-poverty communities throughout the catchment area in North Central Florida with the support of the housing authority, rural school districts, afterschool programs, and churches. Project *REACH* will implement a social marketing campaign designed to promote greater awareness of mental health concerns and reduce stigma across the North Central Florida region. By training an array of community members and pre-service youth professionals, Project *REACH* will create a sustainable network for continuing to enhance mental health literacy following the completion of the grant period.