

## **FIRST LASER Robotics members become mental health first aiders for youth**



3/11/2019

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Youth Mental Health First Aid programming focuses on how to recognize signs of psychological issues, addiction challenges or other crises in adolescents (ages 12 to 18). This program is designed for parents, family members, caregivers, teachers, school staff, neighbors, health and human services workers, and other caring citizens. Amy Bartels, a human development and family science field specialist, from MU Extension in Camden County, lead the class.

Participants in the eight-hour course became certified as Mental Health First Aiders for Youth. Attendees learn a five-step action plan to help adolescents in crisis and in non-crisis situations connect with appropriate professional, peer, social and self-help care.

Topics include anxiety, depression, substance use, disorders in which psychosis may occur, disruptive behavior disorders (including AD/HD), and eating disorders.

The course was originally designed for adults who regularly interact with adolescents, but was opened up to adolescents 16 years old and older.

The Camdenton FIRST LASER team will be vying for their third consecutive World Championship safety division title this competition season.