

Locating and Collaborating with Community Partners for Mental Health Quick Start Guide

This brief Guide provides a framework for identifying and collaborating with community partners to support mental health initiatives, enhancing resource availability, outreach, and sustainable support networks.

Identify Key Partners

- **Local Mental Health Organizations:** Collaborate with groups like NAMI and mental health centers for insights and support.
- **Healthcare Providers:** Partner with local clinics and hospitals for referrals and professional services.
- **Schools and Universities:** Work with educational institutions to develop youth-focused mental health programs.
- **Community Organizations and Nonprofits:** Engage groups serving specific populations to ensure culturally sensitive support.
- **Faith-Based Organizations:** Involve religious groups to reach diverse communities and reduce stigma.
- **Local Businesses:** Collaborate with employers to promote workplace mental health resources.

Engage and Build Trust with Partners

- **Community Assessments:** Locate existing assessments. If necessary, conduct surveys and focus groups to identify needs and involve partners from the start.
- **Clear Communication:** Maintain regular communication and meetings to foster collaboration.
- **Transparency and Inclusivity:** Ensure all partners are informed and involved in decision-making to build trust.

Foster Collaboration and Sustain Partnerships

- **Collaborative Structure:** Form a steering committee or coalition to guide initiatives.
- **Leverage Networks:** Utilize existing networks and relationships to maximize impact.
- **Cross-Sector Collaboration:** Encourage partnerships across different sectors to create a comprehensive support network.

Evaluate and Sustain Efforts

- **Regular Evaluations:** Use feedback to assess and improve partnerships and initiatives.
- **Promote Success Stories:** Share positive outcomes to maintain engagement and support.
- **Sustainable Funding:** Secure diverse funding sources to maintain and grow initiatives.

By identifying key partners, engaging community members, fostering collaboration, and sustaining efforts through continuous evaluation, organizations can build effective and lasting partnerships to promote mental health in the community.

Access the full guide at

<https://www.nlm.gov/guides/mental-health-information-community-partnerships-toolkit>