



Creating Community Solutions

Part of the National Dialogue on Mental Health

FAQs on Creating Community Solutions

A part of the National Dialogue on Mental Health

What are the goals of the Creating Community Solutions component of the National Dialogue?

Our goals for supporting Creating Community Solutions are to:

- Get Americans talking about mental health to break down misperceptions and promote recovery and healthy communities.
- Find innovative community-based solutions to mental health needs, with a focus on helping young people.
- Develop clear steps for communities to move forward in a way that complements existing local activities.

...but as with any good public engagement effort, you ought to think about and plan toward your own goals for organizing these events – as well as the reasons why people in your community might want to take part.

How can I get involved?

There are many ways to get involved in Creating Community Solutions. You can help spread the word about the initiative in your networks and through social media. You can step forward to organize a CCS event by putting a pin in the online map at www.creatingcommunitysolutions.org. You can participate in the online dialogues already going on at <http://theciviccommons.com/mentalhealth>. Once planning has begun in your community, you can help recruit participants or volunteer to be a facilitator. Finally, you can participate yourself in one of the CCS events.

How do I put my pin in the map?

Putting a pin in the map signifies your commitment to organizing some kind of Creating Community Solutions event. Go to www.creatingcommunitysolutions.org and click on “Signup” in the top right corner. After establishing your account, click on the “Dialogues” tab and you will see a big button on the right that says “Add your dialogue to the map.”

How can I find other allies in my area?

The easiest way is to look at the map – you can zoom in if there are a number of pins in your area. If there are events in your area, click on the event to view the event details. On the right



Creating Community Solutions

Part of the National Dialogue on Mental Health

side of the screen, you'll find an "Organizers" box. Click "Contact Organizer" to send the organizer a message.

You can also contact us directly to find out if we know other potential allies in your area; email mattl@deliberative-democracy.net or mary.jacksteit@gmail.com.

How can I find other public engagement practitioners in my area?

The public engagement networks involved in this initiative – including the National Coalition for Dialogue and Deliberation, the International Association for Public Participation, and the Deliberative Democracy Consortium – have hundreds of members who are accomplished public engagement practitioners. These are people you might turn to for help with organizing an event, training facilitators, recruiting participants, or other aspects of your planning. Some of these people and groups already have pins in the map. You can also contact us directly to find out if we know other practitioners in your area; email mattl@deliberative-democracy.net or mary.jacksteit@gmail.com.

Is there training available?

We have begun holding webinars on some of the main tasks involved in organizing CCS activities, including:

- Intro to Creating Community Solutions
- Organizing a large-scale deliberative event and local planning process
- Facilitating effective small-group dialogue
- A walk-through of the CCS discussion guide and info brief
- Recruiting large, diverse numbers of participants
- Reporting outcomes and moving from dialogue to action
- Moderating online discussions on Civic Commons
- Finding and presenting local data on mental health

For a complete schedule, view the Training Opportunities section of our Resources page: <http://www.creatingcommunitysolutions.org/resources>. For help in finding local allies and trainers, contact mattl@deliberative-democracy.net or mary.jacksteit@gmail.com.

What kinds of organizations are involved in Creating Community Solutions?

All over the country, local and county governments, school systems, nonprofit organizations, faith communities, health care providers, local funders, civic groups, colleges and universities, libraries, and many other kinds of organizations are involved in hosting events, recruiting participants, finding and training facilitators, providing local information on mental health, and other aspects of Creating Community Solutions. National associations such as the National League of Cities, YWCA of the USA, United Way Worldwide, National School Public Relations



Creating Community Solutions

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Association, and Grassroots Grantmakers have encouraged their members and affiliates to participate - See www.creatingcommunitysolutions.org/partners for a complete list.

What is the timeframe for Creating Community Solutions?

We anticipate that Creating Community Solutions events will take place throughout the rest of 2013, and into 2014. The National Institute for Civil Discourse will maintain the www.creatingcommunitysolutions.org online map, listing events and outcomes, for at least the next eighteen months.

Where can I find the toolkit materials?

The toolkit materials – the discussion guide, information brief, and organizing guide – will be available soon at www.creatingcommunitysolutions.org/resources.

Will the toolkit materials be available in languages other than English?

The toolkit materials will be available in Spanish. Communities may also translate the toolkit materials into other languages. We'll post toolkit materials that have been translated into other languages under "Sample Materials" on the Resources page of our website: www.creatingcommunitysolutions.org/resources.

How much flexibility is there in the discussion guide?

The discussion guide is structured according to a simple, proven sequence for public engagement: it invites people to talk about why they care, then identify challenges, then discuss options, then brainstorm action ideas. The guide encourages participants to add new viewpoints and questions to the discussion. For more information on the guide, or how to adapt it to your community, contact Matt Leighninger at mattl@deliberative-democracy.net.

Can I provide participants with information about the local context?

Yes – one easy way to do this is to provide participants with a handout that provides local data on mental health, as well as local programs, treatment facilities, and other resources. Consult www.mentalhealth.gov for ways to find local data and resources. We will be posting examples of local handouts at www.creatingcommunitysolutions.org.

Can I add new materials to the discussion guide itself?

Some local organizers have asked about adding discussion questions, viewpoints, exercises, or whole sessions to the guide, in order to help participants understand the local context, consider local planning options, or link mental health to other important issues in the community. For



Creating Community Solutions

Part of the National Dialogue on Mental Health

advice on how you might do this, contact Matt Leighninger at mattl@deliberative-democracy.net.

Does the discussion guide encourage conversation on how different cultures approach this issue?

Yes, there are questions in the guide, and data in the info brief, on how people's cultural identities seem to affect how they think and talk about mental health. But this is certainly an area where local knowledge, and the cultural competence of facilitators, can be extremely valuable. Think about these issues as you organize your dialogues and prepare facilitators, and talk with other people in your community who might have good ideas on how to proceed.

Do I need to raise funds to support this effort locally?

There is no cost for any of the materials, webinars, or technical assistance provided by the Creating Community Solutions partners. The local costs of public engagement efforts vary dramatically, and have been met in a variety of ways. Many projects, even some large-scale efforts involving hundreds of people, have been supported entirely through in-kind resources and volunteer time. However, many of these efforts have been staffed and supported by professional public engagement practitioners, and funded by grants from local foundations or contracts with local organizations. Contact

Should we promote social media at our community event?

Absolutely. We've created a Facebook page: www.facebook.com/creatingcommunitysolutions and a Twitter account: @MentalHealthCCS. We are also using the national hashtag #MentalHealthMatters. We hope communities will promote social media so they can tie into the national conversation and share what their community is doing.

What are the guidelines for using the Creating Community Solutions logo and banner for marketing our event?

We encourage you to use our logos and banners for your events. You can find JPEGs of our banner and logo under the "Sample Materials" section of our Resources page: www.creatingcommunitysolutions.org/resources.