

How the Affiliate Contact can Contribute to Program Growth and Success

The Affiliate Contact plays a vital role for the growth and success of the Connection program, and the more knowledge they have on the program and your specific state processes, the better. If an affiliate contact is unsure of what their role is in growing and sustaining the program, you can share the following guidelines with them:

- Work with your facilitators and group champions to identify those agencies, mental health centers, and community locations which will be the best places to post the Connection Support program marketing materials, and those newspapers and newsletters that would be good places to publicize your Connection support groups.
- Search for opportunities to promote your area Connection support groups in a variety of ways: speaking engagements, community health and art fairs, newspaper articles, etc...
- Create and keep current a database of the facilitators and groups in your area. Make it a point to stay in touch and know what is going on with the Connection support groups in your affiliate.
- Work with your facilitators to help identify potential facilitators and champions for future trainings in your state and communicate with your State Coordinator to create a running list of potential trainees. Make recruiting for Connection an ongoing task. When a training date is scheduled, work with your state coordinator to be sure that those trainees have applications for the program, and are screened using the Connection screening tool.
- When training dates approach, work with the potential facilitators and champions to secure group locations. Later, if a group location needs to be changed, assist with this change.
- Communicate with your affiliate board about the progress of the Connection support groups in your area. Supply them with the monthly reports of Connection groups.
- Communicate with facilitators, champions, and your state coordinator about any areas of concern and participate in ongoing communication. Make sure that your state coordinator has your contact information.
- Celebrate being together! At least once a year, arrange local get-togethers for your area Connection groups and facilitators and champions. Search actively for ways to recognize and reward dedicated facilitators and champions.