

Reaching Out to Peers

Facilitator's Guide



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The American Heart Association (AHA) thanks you for facilitating the Reaching Out to Peers training for the EmPOWERED to Serve™ network and the Opioid Response Network. The purpose of this module is to facilitate, or *aid*, a difficult discussion between your younger community members about misusing substances. This training will help your community members mentally prepare themselves to approach their peers who are misusing substances. It will also help people to understand how to change the way they approach conversations when discussing difficult topics with younger community members.

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MODULE OVERVIEW

During this course, you will facilitate

- Introductions
- A video with teaching points and a scenario demonstrating how to get into the right “heart-set” to engage with peers
- Discussions with your group
- A closing session

EQUIPMENT

You’ll need a space that has room to pair off participants for a large group activity. You’ll also need to show a video by either streaming from the internet directly or using the Reaching Out to Peers USB drive.

ROLE OF THE FACILITATOR

Any motivated person who wants to help their community members learn how to have more active and engaged interactions with younger community members can facilitate this training. You don’t need to be an expert in this area. You just need to be willing to listen, encourage, and help participants learn and practice these skills. This is a video-based course. The lessons in the course video will teach your students the skills of reaching out to their peers.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE VIDEO

This module includes a video vignette of 2 young people having a conversation. There are points in the video where you will stop and lead a discussion. After the questions, you’ll read aloud the included learning point as a closing statement for the discussion.

INTRODUCTION

- Welcome everyone as they walk into the room.
- Begin the session by thanking everyone for joining.
- Introduce yourself. Then, let the participants introduce themselves and their reason for attending.
- Tell participants that the purpose of the session is to help them become more comfortable reaching out to their peers, especially younger community members.
- Tell participants that you will start and stop the video at different points throughout the session. This is so they can all talk about what they're learning about and seeing in the video.

SECTION 1: GETTING INTO THE "HEART-SET" DESCRIBE THE ACTIVITY

Play the Section 1: Getting Into the "Heart-set" video.



FACILITATOR'S QUESTIONS

Next, ask participants the following questions:

- What are your thoughts on getting into the right heart-set?
- Think of a situation when you used one of the 4 key heart-set components to help you connect with someone else. These components are partnership, acceptance, compassion, and strengths-based approach.
 - Can you share more about the way you connected with the other person?
 - How did that person react to you?

After the discussion, read the following learning point:

People don't need to be equally comfortable with all 4 of these components at the same time. Each person who reaches out to someone is comfortable with different parts of these heart-set components. The point is to work on ourselves and our skills over time in applying the heart-set components more effectively in our outreach. Think about which way of connecting is most natural to you.

SECTION 2: STARTING TO TALK

Play the Section 2: Starting to Talk video.

FACILITATOR'S QUESTIONS

Next, ask participants the following questions:

- What can you do when your friend doesn't want to discuss the situation?

After the discussion, read the following learning point:

Remind your friend that you are here for them. You will not judge them. You want to support them and are worried about their well-being. Remember, don't push too hard if they're not ready to talk. You may need to check in with the person later and talk to them at a different time or place.

SECTION 3: TRYING TO CONNECT

Play the Section 3: Trying to Connect video.

FACILITATOR'S QUESTIONS

Next, ask participants the following questions:

- What do we do when we are concerned about the path our friend or family member is going down?
- How can we connect with people who are using substances so that they'll feel comfortable talking to us?



After the discussion, read the following learning point:

We often think about how we can get people to stop using substances. But we must understand that people who are using get some benefit from their use. Try to engage with the person to figure out how they feel the substance helps them with their problems. This opens the door for them to talk about some of those stressors or challenges. At some point, we may be able to help them find other ways to cope with problems or stressors.

SECTION 4: READY FOR CHANGE?

Play the Section 4: Ready for Change? video.

FACILITATOR'S QUESTION

Next, ask participants the following question:

- Is there something you want to change about yourself? If you're comfortable sharing with the group, tell us what you want to change and where you are on the path for change.



After the discussion, read the following learning point:

Sometimes, finding out where someone is on the path to change can help you figure out how best to talk to them. You may even be able to connect them with resources if they're ready for it.

SECTION 5: THE INTERNAL STRUGGLES

Play the Section 5: The Internal Struggles video.

FACILITATOR'S QUESTIONS

Next, ask participants the following questions:

- Knowing that it will take more than one talk, what do you think was helpful about how Brianna approached this last part of the conversation?
- What would you have done differently?

After the discussion, read the following learning point:

People often feel ambivalent about making a change in their lives. Ambivalent means having mixed feelings about something, someone, or how to act. Alex says he doesn't like having problems with his family members and doesn't know what to do about it. After that, he says he doesn't think the pills are causing these problems. They're not a big deal. This is an example of the seesaw of ambivalence. He doesn't like what's going on with his family, but he isn't ready to consider that his substance

use is playing a role in the issues at all. When people struggle with what they should do or not do, it's important to try not to push the person in one direction. So, Brianna's response of being there for Alex is a good way to not push too hard. It helps to keep the channels of talking open.

SECTION 6: 4 MONTHS LATER

Play the Section 6: 4 Months Later video.

FACILITATOR'S QUESTIONS

Next, ask participants the following questions:

- What do you value?
- Are there things that motivate you to change? If so, what are those things?
- Now, think about the person who is closest to you. Do you know what they value? What would motivate them to change?



After the discussion, read the following learning point:

When we know someone well, we may not listen to what really matters the most to them. Thinking about what the other person values, what goals they have, or what motivates them can be important the next time you talk to them.

SECTION 7: MOTIVATING TOWARD CHANGE

Play the Section 7: Motivating Toward Change video.

FACILITATOR'S QUESTIONS

Next, ask participants the following questions:

- What did you notice about the way Brianna responded to Alex in the last part of the video?
- What was different about the way Alex responded during this later part of the talk compared with earlier?

After the discussion, read the following learning point:

Seeing how differently the talk can go just by changing your own attitude and mental state is key. Brianna changed the way she approached Alex. This helped Alex make the change Brianna wanted for him. This is a good example of how you can use the heart-set components to help motivate someone to change.

SECTION 8: SUMMARY

Play the Section 8: Summary video.

WRAP UP

- Ask if anyone has any more thoughts they'd like to share about the video or what they've learned today.
- Thank everyone for attending the session.
- Encourage them to follow up and practice what they've learned.
- Remind them that the heart-set components (partnership, acceptance, compassion, and strengths-based approach) will help them mentally prepare to have a difficult talk.
- Offer resources for further training, if available.

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The Opioid Response Network (ORN) is a federally funded national initiative that provides education and training in the prevention, treatment, recovery and harm reduction of opioid and stimulant use disorders. ORN provides educational resources, training and consultation, acting as a kind of temporary agency, meeting the specific local needs of organizations, communities, healthcare systems, states and individuals—all at no cost.

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