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Supporting Groups, Supporting You

Chip in to help our support groups here

Feb 2022 Edition:



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[Project Feature: Building Multicultural Support Groups](#)

Support Groups QLD supports people to improve their health and well-being through peer support. We have some ILC (Information, Linkages and Capacity) funding to support multicultural and CALD communities to build disability and health supports in their own groups. We are connecting and working alongside local community workers who understand the complexities of their networks and can connect them with community members with shared lived experiences.

building individual and collective capacity for self-advocacy when engaging with the health and welfare systems.

The project aims to unpack the developmental vulnerabilities of the community – for the child, parents, family, school and engaged health professionals.



Our goal is to:

1. Assist multicultural families experiencing disabilities navigate and accessing support
2. Engage community leaders and workers to build self-sustaining networks in their community
3. Assist community leaders and workers in delivering socio-emotional support
4. Build access to community information and resources
5. Build the capacity of community members to self-advocate.

Get Involved

We are looking for community members and organisations in the multicultural space to collaborate with us on information forums and to connect with multicultural community members. We welcome your insights into this exciting project.

If you are looking for support or want to be connected to cultural leaders and networks, please get in touch with us at info@supportgroups.org.au.

Start Checking In With Each Other

Check-ins are a simple way to help groups reconnect to their purpose be more present and engaged. The purpose of check-ins is to unpack what keeps people worried, preoccupied or distracted. It's personal; each person shares what matters to them. There's no judging – the idea is to provide a safe space.

Unlike a fun icebreaker, checking in creates a moment to focus, reflect, and pay more attention.

Guiding a check-in

There is no one way to do a check-in. Here is a simple format that works for most circumstances.

Have every person check in one by one. This tends to work well if the group is smaller than 8 people and if you have ample time to check-in.

Have the group break up into pairs or groups of 3-4 people and converse for 5-10 minutes. This works well for groups consisting of 8+ individuals. When the whole group comes back together, you can

- Request for a few people to share

Facilitation suggestions

Be sure to note the context of the situation and the general mood of the room. You want to ensure that your check-in question fits with current circumstances.

Note what kind of experience you want the group to have with the check-in. Is it time to be silly, inspired, grateful?

Consider how much time you have for the check-in and what parameters you need to set for the group to participate. For instance, you can use the prompts,

- "in one or two words...."
- "In one or two sentences...."
- "Taking a couple of minutes each...."



Script for introducing a check-in

"Let's do a check-in.

The prompt for today is _____ (choose from the list below).

Everyone pause for a moment to think of your response and what you would want to share. Please remember that you do not have to check-in and say "pass" when it's your turn."

Some check-in question ideas:

1. What is a high and a low from the day/week?
2. What is one thing that you are grateful for right now?
3. What is one thing you will do for yourself (during your shift, after you leave....)?
4. Give a shout out to yourself and a shout out to someone on the team.
5. What funny happened (yesterday, during your shift, this week, etc.)?
There's much research on the benefits of healthy humour.
6. What do you want to remember or remind yourself during your shift/day today?
7. What is one thing that is currently giving you hope?

References:

1. **[Psychological First Aid For Your Team](#)** | (Accelerate 2020) The Resiliency Center's Megan Call and Amy Locke share helpful resources and a list of prompts to connect your team.
2. **[Check-In and Check-Out Questions \(Hyper Island Toolbox\)](#)** Step-by-step beginner facilitation guide for groups 2-40+.

[Queensland Blind Association Support Groups](#)

Queensland Blind Association Inc. is a not-for-profit independent blindness organisation that strengthen and build strategic partnerships with other agencies to promote better outcomes for their members.

Their focus is to provide financial assistance for everyday necessities. This may include financial assistance towards home loans and house maintenance, white goods and select furniture items, water tanks, solar panels, air conditioning, electricity, rates or rent, and tea/coffee vouchers. The Association also offers specialised low vision equipment, available through our office and our online store.

SGQ was invited to attend one of their support group sessions by **Blind Association member and SGQ volunteer Graham**, who shares his journey living with blindness and mental illness. He said, “sharing my story of living with major depression with the group has led others to open up about similar experiences, and we remember we don’t have to be alone in this.”

The attendees expressed feeling hopeful to have access to support groups and people who can share knowledge and resources with them.

The group meets every 2nd Tuesday of the month at 9:30 am at the Mt Gravatt Library.

If you or a loved one could benefit from social support, please **get in touch** with us.

[Parliamentary Inquiry into Loneliness and Social Isolation](#)

On 27 May 2021, the Legislative Assembly agreed to a motion that the Community Support and Services Committee inquire into and report on social isolation and loneliness in Queensland.

There are many respected definitions of the terms social isolation and loneliness. The Department of Communities, Housing and Digital Economy informed the committee that acknowledging and understanding the differences between social isolation and loneliness is important.

SGQ called on medical and health professionals, the government and non-government sectors, to demonstrate an increased commitment to social prescribing. We recommended that people join support groups, patient organisations and social groups that can connect people to other people that share the same journey and stated that peer support should not be an afterthought.

[Read more here.](#)



Listen with curiosity. Speak with honesty. Act with integrity. The greatest problem with communication is we don't listen to understand. We listen to reply. When we listen with curiosity, we don't listen with the intent to reply. We listen for what's behind the words.

— Roy T. Bennett, *The Light in the Heart*



Let us share your group and stories!

Support Groups Queensland assist over 600 support groups in Queensland. We invite you to share about your group with others, through our newsletter, Facebook or website. Please let us know how your group is going.

We are currently building an image bank to brighten up our newsletter and website. We invite you to share your photos with us. Please ensure the photos are high-resolution, captioned, and have been consented to by those featured. If you know anyone or group that'll be interested please let us know, we would love to have you featured on our page.

We look forward to your submissions at admin@supportgroups.org.au!

What to DO when someone discloses suicidal thoughts/self-harm

- Take the person seriously; do not ridicule, minimise or negate their thoughts and feelings
- Stay respectful, patient and calm.
- Let the person know that you care about them and do not want anything to happen.
- Ask them if they are currently having those thoughts

behaviour or point of view

- Let them know before you move on to another person that you'll connect with them at the end of the group to support them accessing crisis services or professional help
- Remind the group at the end of the support available to them and if you're contactable after the session or at any time.



Source:

[QLS Information Sheet: Responding to threats of imminent serious physical harm](#)

SGQ supports you to nurture your, and your groups' well-being. We connect people to support groups across a broad range of health issues, assist people in starting new groups and working with support groups to build their capacity.

121 Lister Street (PO Box 353),
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