

PASS Kit Distribution Guide

We developed this guide to help community leaders distribute and explain the PASS Kit to a group. It's important to talk about mental health, but the stigma around it can make it difficult to start the conversation. Below you'll find some low-pressure, friendly activities you can use while you're distributing the kits to a group of people. You're welcome to adapt the activities to suit your organization.

1. Share Your Story

This activity consists of a discussion led by a community leader and is a great way to inform your group about mental health resources.

The leader starts by sharing a story about a time when they experienced stress or anxiety. The goal of this story is to show how normal these feelings are. The leader should also share what resources or strategies they used to manage their stress, and what lessons they learned. For example, at a university orientation, the leader may talk about a time when they were stressed because they had an upcoming exam for which they didn't know the material. They may then talk about how they got help from an academic advisor, professor, study group, or counsellor, and that they learned to study more throughout the term and ask for help if needed.

After the leader shares their story, they may ask the group what resources they're aware of or have used in the past. This could extend to supports such as close friends or strategies such as deep breathing. Once the group has come up with several ideas, the leader can take out a PASS Kit and remind the group that each one of them received a kit. They can then take out the contents and describe briefly how they can be used (following the instruction sheet in the box).

The leader may want to close out the session by transitioning to another topic, briefly going over some of the resources again, or reminding the group of their support (e.g. "If any of you need anything, I'm always here to talk.").

2. Partner Discussions

This activity is great to take away the pressure that some people experience while sharing in large groups.

To do this activity, everyone separates into groups of 2-3, with each group having at least one PASS Kit or set of cards. If there is space, encourage the groups to spread out to allow for some privacy.

There are a few different activities you could suggest each group do with the PASS Kit:

- Each person goes through the cards and picks out one card that resonates with them, then shares it with the group

- This can be repeated with different prompts. For example, they could share one card with a strategy they use already, or with a strategy they'd like to try
- The contents of the kit are divided between the group members. For each item, the group member explains one or two situations where they could see themselves using that item
- If the group members know each other well, you may want to send them off without any specific activity, but encourage them to look through the kits and share times in their lives when they've felt stressed

3. How To Use Session

This activity is a great way to inform your group about the contents and the use of the PASS Kit.

Start by taking out a PASS Kit and spreading out the contents in front of you. One by one, hold up each item and explain what it is and how you could use it. You may want to look at the contents of the kit ahead of time so you can get a good idea of the contents and how you might use each. Here are some sample descriptions for the items:

- PASS Cards: Provide behaviours and perspectives as strategies to manage stress
- Stress Star: Encourages the tense and release of muscles to promote blood flow to reduce stress
- Earplugs: Blocks out noise, for sleep and for focus
- Eye mask: Blocks out light for naps, headache relief, and for forcing yourself away from the screen for a break
- Chewing gum: Assists focus and deter undesired consumption habits

4. Helping a Friend

In this activity, the leader facilitates a discussion around how to help a friend who is stressed or experiencing trouble with their mental health. This conversation accomplishes several goals; not only do group members learn how to look out for other people, but they learn strategies to help themselves handle stress. As well, many people may be more comfortable talking about a hypothetical friend struggling than their own challenges, which keeps the conversation low-pressure and may lead to more participation.

This discussion could take many different forms and depends on what group of people you're working with and what your goals are. You may want to talk about a scenario when a friend would be feeling stressed and then brainstorm as a group how you would help that friend. For example, if a friend was feeling overwhelmed with schoolwork, you could recommend study groups or student support services, or help them do a breathing exercise. During this brainstorming session, you should also bring up the uses of the items in the PASS Kit, as outlined under activity 3, so your group is aware of the kit. It

may be helpful to write a list of resources and strategies if your group has a common space you can display the list in.

We hope these activities will help you and your group get the most out of your PASS Kits. If you try one of these activities or design your own, we'd love to hear about it! Please send us a message at hello@mypasskit.com to tell us about your experience distributing PASS Kits.