

# ACEs Connection Network

*Healthy, happy kids grow up to create a healthy, happy world.*



## HOW TO: START A GROUP

If you're interested in starting a group on ACEs Connection, here are suggestions to guide you:

1. Review the [ACEs Connection Network Overview](#), which describes [ACEsConnection.com](#), a social network for people who are implementing trauma-informed and resilience-building practices based on ACEs. It also describes [ACEsTooHigh.com](#), the companion news site for the general public.
2. If you want to start a neighborhood, city, county or state group, you can read case studies of how other communities have started on their journey to implement trauma-informed and resilience-building practices in the [Community Resilience Cookbook](#). If you'd like to see an infographic of the steps communities have taken, check out the [Roadmap to Resilience](#), and its [accompanying guide](#). We can put you in touch with people in other communities that are becoming trauma-informed.
3. Contact an ACEs Connection staff member to complete the ACEs Connection group start-up assessment -- [Questions to answer before starting a group](#).
4. When you and people in your community are ready to start a group, which may take a few months as you meet in person to review your goals and recruit people to the group, you'll receive initial training and ongoing mentoring and support from an ACEs Connection community manager.
5. You can slowly expand the group by inviting people in the community to informal meet ups, such as breakfast, lunch, coffee, or early dinner.
6. It's a good idea to identify three to four community managers for the group. Groups work best if they're a collaborative responsibility, rather than "owned" by one organization.
7. Once you have community managers selected and enough steering committee members (you can do this with 10 or so people), begin holding regular in-person meetings, along with the informal in-person meet-ups.
8. It's also a good idea to invite people from as many sectors in your community as possible to join the group; these folks will become the steering committee. Some communities have 20 or 30 people. Some communities are doing well with 60 people.
9. Design the online group -- write a description and choose an image. Run this by an ACEs Connection community manager, who will launch your group.
10. On the group, create shared document collections -- goals, action plan, etc. Post meet ups and other events in the calendar.
11. One of the first steps after the group is launched is to work with an ACEs Connection community manager to create ACEs-, trauma-informed, and resilience-

building assets and growth opportunities charts to identify who's already doing trauma-informed/resilience-building work, and who isn't.

12. We will invite the group's community managers to join the ACEs Connection Community Managers group -- this is where community managers from all groups share information, resources, and support.
13. You can blog meeting notes, program updates, upcoming events, and member profiles from assets map (at least one/week). It's a great way to build the history of the group, which you can use if/when you're applying for funding.
14. Feel free to cross-post information from main site and other relevant sites into your group, if you think the information is important for your members.
15. Mentor and support members to attend in-person meetings, blog activities and updates, to create topic discussions, to contribute to shared documents, and to invite others to join the group.
16. Grow the group slowly. Focus on quality of membership, not quantity of members. If it's a community that's becoming trauma-informed, it's a five+ year process, and the group will become integral to the community's work.