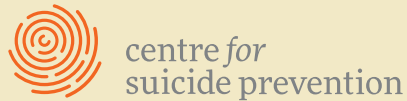


# BUDDY UP GUIDE

A guide for introducing Buddy Up  
to your organization or community





## About Buddy Up

Centre for Suicide Prevention (CSP) is an education centre and an office of the Canadian Mental Health Association. For over 40 years, we've been equipping Canadians with the information, knowledge, and skills necessary to respond to people considering suicide. CSP's Buddy Up communications campaign focuses on men's suicide prevention. Men die by suicide 3 times more often than women, and middle-aged men (45-64) die by suicide more than anyone else. Buddy Up empowers men to have authentic conversations with each other

through an evidence-based, expert-vetted campaign. Everyone has a role to play and knowing how to have a conversation with someone considering suicide can save a life.

We spend upwards of 60% of our waking hours at work; workplaces have an important role to play in promoting employee wellness. Creating a healthy work environment where people are encouraged to pay attention to how others are doing, feel safe having mental health conversations with each other, and know they will be supported, is suicide prevention.

## Championing Buddy Up

The campaign is rolled out by Champions bringing it to their workplaces. Champions are the internal face of the campaign. Workplaces can participate at the level that's right for them; there is no cost to participate.

## Sign up to become a Champion

This campaign needs Champions like you to help spread the word that men's suicide is preventable. Join our community of Champions by visiting [buddyup.ca](http://buddyup.ca).

If you have any questions, concerns, feedback, or success stories, we'd love to hear from you!  
Email Seth McVeity at [seth@suicideinfo.ca](mailto:seth@suicideinfo.ca).

# INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the Buddy Up Guide! This Guide provides instructions on how to implement Buddy Up in your organization. The Buddy Up Plan (the worksheet that complements this Guide) will help you work through the following steps:

## FIND YOUR COMFORT LEVEL

Find your comfort level with involvement in the campaign by determining your organization's readiness and determining goals that align with your desired impact.

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## MAKE A PLAN

Make a plan by identifying what resources already exist, creating timelines, and choosing activities.

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## IMPLEMENT THE PLAN

Take action and implement your plan. Reference Champion case studies for inspiration.

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## REFLECT ON THE CAMPAIGN

Reflect on the impact of the campaign by monitoring and measuring results from your campaign activities.

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# FIND YOUR COMFORT LEVEL

# I FIND YOUR COMFORT LEVEL

## READINESS

To begin, think about how prepared your organization is to receive messages about mental health and suicide prevention. For example, is your team and/or organization willing to adopt Buddy Up right away or is there an existing stigma that needs to be addressed?



Consider the following questions and record your answers in the “Long-term planning” section of the Buddy Up Plan.

? Has your organization focused on suicide prevention in the workplace? What are some barriers that may be encountered when introducing Buddy Up to your group?

? Has your organization championed a mental health campaign before? How was it received? What was the uptake? Do you have any learnings from these past experiences that can guide your Buddy Up implementation?

? Are there available resources and capacity (e.g., Champion’s time, employee time) available to adopt Buddy Up?

? Who are the existing champions for mental health and suicide prevention in the organization? Does this include leadership?

? Are people provided with dedicated time for planning activities for Buddy Up?

? Has there been a suicide in your organization in the recent past? If so, give us a call at 403-245-3900. We can help you navigate the delicate balance of bereavement and prevention.

Determining your organization’s readiness can help inform how your organization rolls out Buddy Up. For example, if this is your organization’s first suicide prevention campaign, consider starting by ordering stickers and posters with some light messaging over email. The following quarter or year, consider distributing educational information like toolkits or webinars. Starting small and meeting your organization where it’s at will help promote long-term success.



# 1 FIND YOUR COMFORT LEVEL

## POSSIBLE CAMPAIGN GOALS

After understanding your organization's readiness, the next step is to determine your goals for the campaign.



Consider the following questions and record your answers in the "Long-term planning" section of the Buddy Up Plan.



What motivated you to sign up as a Champion? What about Buddy Up appealed to you?



What do you want to achieve with this campaign? How will you know you've succeeded?



How does the campaign support your organization's goals?

Consider the questions on the left and then examine the four ways to implement Buddy Up, below. Based on your readiness, choose the activities that work for you.

### Participate

Participate in the year-round campaign and drive connection within your organization.

### Promote

Promote the campaign within your organization and in your sector to raise awareness and reduce stigma.

### Learn

Learn more about suicide prevention, access Buddy Up Skills Training, and bring it to your organization.

### Support

Support the campaign through donations and help Buddy Up reach a larger audience.



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# MAKE A PLAN

## 2 MAKE A PLAN

# WHAT RESOURCES AND OPPORTUNITIES ALREADY EXIST?

Identify currently available resources, programs and upcoming events within your organization that can complement Buddy Up. For example, does your organization host an annual “wellness day”? Consider including Buddy Up resources and materials. Identify internal and external resources that can support Buddy Up, such as an existing Employee and Family Assistance Program (EFAP) or the crisis line (Suicide Crisis Helpline, 9-8-8).



Consider the following questions and record your answers in the “Long-term planning” section of the Buddy Up Plan.



What departments and roles are involved in promoting safety and mental health? Which internal champions will be involved with implementing Buddy Up?



What community resources are available to support mental health for staff? What support is available to individuals experiencing suicidal thoughts within your organization?



Are there existing programs, events, or services that could complement Buddy Up? (e.g., EFAP, mental health committees, or safety meetings)



## 2 MAKE A PLAN

# TIMELINES

Buddy Up is year-round – you can start at any time. What timeline makes sense for your organization?



Consider the following questions and record your answers for each activity in the Buddy Up Plan.



What's your timeline for implementation?  
When are you aiming to start?



When do you want to evaluate the plan?  
When do you want to update the plan based on your evaluation?

# PRIORITIZING SELF-CARE

Suicide prevention can be a difficult topic. It's important the people implementing Buddy Up intentionally take care of themselves to maintain their own mental wellbeing. Refer to the resources you outlined in the “Long-term planning” section of the Buddy Up Plan if you need support. Being diligent about self-care can help us avoid burnout.



## 2 MAKE A PLAN

# LEVEL OF INVOLVEMENT

There are four ways to take part in Buddy Up: Participate, Promote, Learn and Support. You can determine your own level of involvement!

### Participate

Participate in the year-round campaign and drive connection within your organization.

### Promote

Promote the campaign within your organization and in your sector to raise awareness and reduce stigma.

### Learn

Learn more about suicide prevention, access Buddy Up Skills Training, and bring it to your organization.

### Support

Support the campaign through donations and help Buddy Up reach a larger audience.



Consider the following questions and record your answers in the Buddy Up Plan.



What activities have you chosen?



Who will be responsible for carrying out the tasks involved with each chosen activity?



What is the timeline for each activity?

## 2 MAKE A PLAN: LEVEL OF INVOLVEMENT

# PARTICIPATE

Buddy Up consists of quarterly mini-campaigns: three, week-long mini-campaigns and one month-long campaign in June. These campaigns provide opportunities throughout the year for your organization to participate. You may choose to participate in all activities or specific activities that work well with your calendar and goals. You may also decide to use these as inspiration for your own activities or participate at whatever time of year works best for you.

### Power Up

Strengthen your body and mind



### Lift Up

Acts of kindness

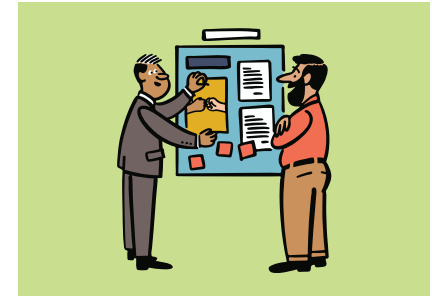


### Build Up

Work on a project



### Buddy Up Month



Not sure how to begin? Here are some suggestions with various levels of engagement.


Example: Participate in the Build Up campaign		
Light	Medium	All in!
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Send staff a Buddy Up event email inviting them to participate; include the Buddy Up educational infographic</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Send staff a Buddy Up event email inviting them to participate; include the Buddy Up educational infographic</li> <li>Host an event for staff to build a project together, provide prizes to incentivize participation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Send staff a Buddy Up event email inviting them to participate; include the Buddy Up educational infographic</li> <li>Host an event for staff to build a project together, provide prizes to incentivize participation</li> <li>Encourage staff to register and attend the Build Up live event (virtual)</li> <li>Share photos of your organization's participation on social media</li> </ul>





## 2 MAKE A PLAN: LEVEL OF INVOLVEMENT


# PROMOTE BUDDY UP


Buddy Up Champions who actively promote the campaign report an increase in conversations about suicide prevention within their organization. This helps raise awareness for suicide prevention and create a safe space for sharing. Promoting Buddy Up can happen in a variety of different ways, including:


 Posting on social media

 Putting up posters

 Using a Buddy Up virtual background

 Sending an email

 Utilizing swag

 Adding Buddy Up to your email signature

Not sure how to begin? Here are some suggestions with various levels of engagement.

Example: Utilize swag		
Light	Medium	All in!
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Order a poster and display it in a shared space</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Order posters and display in shared spaces</li> <li>Distribute posters, stickers, air fresheners, and help cards to staff</li> <li>Encourage staff to learn more about Buddy Up</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Order and distribute all types of swag and distribute to staff</li> <li>Encourage staff to learn more about Buddy Up</li> <li>Encourage staff to display swag in visible places (e.g., stickers on water bottles, laptops, hard hats; air fresheners in fleet vehicles)</li> </ul>


Example: Post on social and send an email		
Light	Medium	All in!
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Like and share posts made on social media by CSP and other Champions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create and share social media posts from templates found on the Buddy Up website</li> <li>Write an email about Buddy Up for staff from templates found on the Buddy Up website</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Take pictures and videos of staff involvement in the campaign and share on social media, tagging #BuddyUp</li> <li>Add information about Buddy Up on the company's Intranet and newsletters</li> <li>Encourage staff to add the Buddy Up logo to their email signatures</li> </ul>





## 2 MAKE A PLAN: LEVEL OF INVOLVEMENT


# LEARN MORE ABOUT SUICIDE PREVENTION

Learning about suicide prevention can help raise awareness and teach people to identify and support someone having thoughts of suicide. There are a variety of knowledge and skills-based training possibilities:

 [Watch the Buddy Up webinar](#)

 [Book a workshop](#)

 Host an education session

 [Read the toolkit](#)

 Implement Buddy Up Skills Training  
(To learn more, contact Seth McVeity, at [seth@suicideinfo.ca](mailto:seth@suicideinfo.ca))

Not sure how to begin? Here are some suggestions with various levels of engagement.

Example: Educating staff on suicide prevention		
Light	Medium	All in!
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Introduce Buddy Up to staff by sending out a pre-recorded webinar to everyone</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Invite CSP to deliver a live presentation or webinar to introduce suicide prevention and Buddy Up</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide some level of suicide prevention training for all staff – ‘Buddy Up Skills Training’ – everyone will watch the Buddy Up webinar and some take further suicide prevention training, e.g., a half-day suicide awareness workshop or two-day suicide intervention workshop</li> </ul>



## 2 MAKE A PLAN: LEVEL OF INVOLVEMENT

# SUPPORT THE GROWTH OF BUDDY UP

Has the Buddy Up Campaign been meaningful to you and your organization? Consider supporting the campaign financially to help Buddy Up continue to make an impact and reach new audiences.

 Donate to Buddy Up: [suicideinfo.ca/donate](https://suicideinfo.ca/donate)

 Sponsor activities

Not sure how to begin? Here are some suggestions with various levels of engagement.

Example: Donate to Buddy up		
Light	Medium	All in!
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Donate the costs associated with your swag order</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Host an event to raise funds for Buddy Up</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Include Buddy Up in your organization's annual giving or corporate social responsibility plan</li></ul>



## 2 MAKE A PLAN

# EVALUATION AND MEASUREMENT

Does Buddy Up work? Will it make a difference in your organization? Evaluation is key – and we can help with that. Before launching, consider how you can evaluate the effectiveness of your activities to know if they're achieving your objectives, and identify where you can grow Buddy Up in the future.



Consider the following questions and record your answers for each activity in the Buddy Up Plan.



What are you trying to achieve with this activity?



What will success look like when the activity is complete?



How will you measure the activity's success?

Measuring an activity's effectiveness as you go along will help you see the merits of Buddy Up. Integrating suicide prevention to your workplace is long-term work. Celebrate incremental wins! Before you begin your activities, choose how you will measure outputs, outcomes and impacts and start measuring as soon as you launch.

Outputs you can measure include: calculating attendees at an event, quantity of swag distributed, or shares of a social media post. Outcomes you can measure include asking questions that would indicate behavioural change or stigma reduction in pre and post surveys, such as 'How confident do you feel to talk to someone considering suicide? (Not confident, Somewhat confident, Very confident)'.

Refer to these resources to learn more about evaluation and data collection:

- [Better evaluation](http://betterevaluation.org) – Information and tools for specific evaluation approaches. ([betterevaluation.org](http://betterevaluation.org))
- [Build Better Data](http://policywise.com/buildbetterdata) – PolicyWise – Resource for collecting demographic data. ([policywise.com/buildbetterdata](http://policywise.com/buildbetterdata))

On the next page, you will find an example of how to set up an activity in the Buddy Up Plan.

Make your own Buddy Up Plan [here](#).



## 2 BUDDY UP PLAN: ACTIVITY (EXAMPLE)

Activity: Buddy Up BBQ

Date: Event – July 26

Goal: Promote Buddy Up and begin to build recognition of the campaign amongst staff.

### Implementation

- July 12: Communications team starts promoting; Sends out all-staff email with a calendar invite and message on the staff chat and reminders.
- July 15: Activity committee meets to plan event and allocate responsibilities.

#### At the event:

- BBQ – hot dogs, hamburgers, soft drinks, chips, salads
- Buddy Up swag bags (air fresheners, stickers, toolkit) provided including company-branded items
- Draw to win cooler with company logo
- Live music (staff member band)

After the event: Communications team will send a survey to attendees asking for suggestions on future activities and first impressions of Buddy Up.

### Measurement

#### We will record:

- How many people attended
- How many swag bags were given out
- Suggestions and impressions from post-event survey

### Evaluation

#### At the Jul 26 event:

- 47 people attended
- 47 swag bags distributed

#### 24 survey responses:

- Overall event rating: 4/5
- Attendees want more Buddy Up themed events
- Attendees want to learn more about suicide prevention and how they can be involved

### Reflection

The event was a great opportunity for staff to connect and build recognition for Buddy Up. The survey showed positive reception with a desire to learn more. For next steps, we will have a discussion with Centre for Suicide Prevention about the potential for hosting a suicide awareness presentation and/or training workshop.





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# **IMPLEMENT YOUR PLAN**

## 3 IMPLEMENT YOUR PLAN

Now that you've decided what you want to do, it's time to implement!



Consider the following questions and record your answers for each activity in the Buddy Up Plan.



What steps are required to set up this activity?  
Who needs to be involved?



How will you communicate the activity to your group?

## RESOURCES

We've compiled a list of resources to support Buddy Up implementation. The resources include case studies from Champions who have been actively implementing Buddy Up within their group. Tap into their experience and expertise to inform your own Buddy Up implementation.



[View the case studies here.](#)

We also have several Buddy Up Champions who are willing to connect with you! These Champions have taken unique approaches when implementing Buddy Up. If you're interested in connecting with other Champions, reach out to Seth McVeity at [seth@suicideinfo.ca](mailto:seth@suicideinfo.ca) for more information.



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# REFLECT ON THE CAMPAIGN

## 4 REFLECT ON THE CAMPAIGN

During this stage, take some time to reflect on the results of your plan. Go back to the “Make a Plan” section of the Buddy Up Plan and review each activity.



Consider the following questions and record your answers for each activity in the Buddy Up Plan.



How did the success of certain activities compare with others? Why do you think the results were different?



What could be done differently in the future to promote a specific activity?



What will be involved in the next iteration of your plan?

We encourage you to share your findings with management in your organization to help build support for future participation in Buddy Up.



# WE'D LOVE TO HEAR FROM YOU!

CSP and other Buddy Up Champions can learn so much from your feedback and experience.

If you would like to share your experience, contact Seth McVeity at [seth@suicideinfo.ca](mailto:seth@suicideinfo.ca).

