



HOW TO START A HOPEgroup

What is a HOPEgroup?

Before we get started with how to form a HOPEgroup it would be worthwhile to take a couple of minutes to talk about what a HOPEgroup is.

In its simplest terms a HOPEgroup is a gathering of teens, often facilitated by a trusted adult, to talk openly about struggles with depression and anxiety.

The goal is simple, if we can openly and honestly share our struggles, fears, hopes, dreams, etc., in a safe environment then we can begin to arrest the alarming increases in teen suicide.

Pressure on teens has never been greater and yet, as a society we continue to keep the topics of stress, depression, anxiety, and other strong emotions in the shadows. It is time to change that dynamic.

HOPEgroups were started and sponsored by the Robbie's Hope Foundation. Their goal is to support local activists who want to make a change in their community by providing resources, training, and support.

HOPEgroups are locally run, in a way that works best for you and your peers. There is no "template" that you need to follow. We have one simple ask:

As you schedule and publicize meetings please place the HOPE logo somewhere on your post. It does not need to be big or prominent. We hope to one day have that logo as the universal sign for a stranger entering a new city that this is a safe place for them to seek support.

After our website is fully developed and running you will be able to update meeting times and locations for your local chapter.

Ok, So How Do I Get Started?

1. Find a group of teens with a similar passion for this topic. There is no size that is too big or too small. We have groups with a few as a half dozen teens to groups that have several hundred. Start small and grow over time.
2. Find a trusted adult to help sponsor and lead the group. You will need them for a variety of things including reserving meeting space, sponsorship, etc.
3. Decide on a name and if fits your group a logo. What are you going to call yourself?
4. Find a meeting location. There are tons of free meeting spaces in most communities including people's homes, libraries, community centers, schools, etc.
5. Determine how often and when you will meet. Again there is no single answer to this question, find what works best for your group and adjust later if you need to. We have groups that meet weekly, every other week, and monthly.
6. Schedule your meetings. Please keep Robbie's Hope up to speed on when you are meeting. They will give shout outs on social media and add you to the Facebook Calendar. Eventually you will be able to update this information on your own, directly to the website, in the meantime just email info@robbies-hope.com
7. *In the future* . . . download the small group facilitation packets from the Robbie's Hope website. These will be "meetings in box", everything you need to know and do for the topic of your choice.

Thank you again for your interest and passion in this area. Together we will destigmatize teen depression, anxiety and suicide.

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