



Recruitment

One of the challenges in conducting a social support group is recruiting participants. Some people join groups readily, others are hesitant, and still others will not attend at all. Here are a few ideas to keep in mind when recruiting participants:

Characteristics of the participants

Who are they? Age, ethnicity, primary language or health condition, concern or need
Do they have experience in attending groups?

Barriers to participation

Is the site accessible by public transportation or is private transportation necessary?
Are there child care issues?
Are there gate keepers to attendance?
What time of day is best to meet? How long is the meeting?
Is there a cost for attendance?
Are there other groups that offer similar services?

Awareness building

What are the ways in which prospective participants get information?
What are multiple sensory ways for advertising? Flyers, radio, oral communication

Bridging techniques

Who endorses the social support group and are they trustworthy?
Should group staff or volunteers make personal contact by telephone or home visiting?
Can persons other than the target participants attend?

Incentives

What might be acceptable incentives? Food, Friends, Fun or Free Gifts?
What topics might engage the interest of the participants?