

# IDEAS TO HANDLE BARRIERS WHEN RUNNING YOUR PROGRAM

Sometimes the person teaching, your team, and your organization may experience barriers when running your heart health program. **What will you do when this happens?** Use this handout for guidance.

## The Person Teaching

Barrier	Suggestion
The person teaching is not well liked by the people in the program.	Find out why this is happening. You might need to provide this person with more training and guidance. If possible, see whether you or someone else from your team, such as an experienced community health worker (CHW), can help co-teach the program. In this way, you can also mentor the person teaching.
A participant talks a lot and does not always give others a chance to participate.	Show that you appreciate what the participant has shared and then ask what others in the room think. If the same participant continues to jump in, ask the person to hold his thoughts while others talk. If necessary, go around the room and allow time for each person to either share something or “pass.”
There are some quiet participants.	Provide different ways for people to share and learn together. Some people may feel uncomfortable talking in front of the whole group but would feel fine talking in small groups or with a partner. Also, after sessions, try talking one-on-one with your quiet participants. Find out what they like, what they find important, and what they know well. The more that people see you are talking about things they relate to, the more likely they are to participate.
One participant always comes late.	Try to talk with the participant one-on-one to see what is going on. Tell him that you enjoy having him in the program and want to see about ways to help make it easier for him to get to sessions on time. Think of ways you can help (e.g., getting bus passes donated, asking others to give him a ride, finding daycare for his child), and see whether he has any ideas. Remind him of the group rules regarding late arrivals and the importance of being on time.
A participant is being difficult in a session.	Show the participant that you are listening to him and understand what he wants. Then redirect the focus from him to what you are teaching. For example, you can say something like, “OK, Reggie, I understand you do not like this activity. Soon we will go over some things you have told me you are interested in, and later we can talk about your ideas of how I can improve this activity. For now, though, I want everyone to get into partners and continue.”

## Your Team

Barrier	Suggestion
A team member leaves.	<p>Be sure to cross-train your team so that they are able to handle all of the tasks required to run your heart health program. This means that if, for example, you have one volunteer who does recruiting and another who is the trainer, train them to do each other’s jobs. This way, if one of them leaves, the other will be able to step in to do the work. Doing this also helps keep staff members interested, because they get to do a variety of tasks.</p> <p>In addition, always look for volunteers or additional staff members to add to your team. For example, consider recruiting graduates of your program or college student interns.</p>

## Your Team cont.

Barrier	Suggestion
A team member leaves. (cont.)	Finally, you may need to step in to do the work for a while or add someone else to your team to help. Talk with your partners to see whether they can help you finish the program.
A team member's schedule changes.	If a team member can no longer work when the program is scheduled, you or someone else on your team will need to take over until the program finishes. You can also see whether the people in your program can meet at other times, though this will require a lot of reorganization and will work only if everyone can do it. You can see who in your program would be interested in meeting for "extra learning" at times when your team member can work. This could be for things like field trips, guest speakers, cooking classes, and other things that you did not originally plan to do.
There are not enough team members to keep the program running.	Bring on new team members who can work temporarily or permanently, depending on your resources. If you need to bring on people right away, think about student volunteers or CHWs who recently graduated and would like to gain experience.
Not everyone agrees on the best way to run the program.	Have regular team meetings to discuss how the program is going, including what is working and what is not. Ask your team to help you come up with goals that everyone can agree on. Review <a href="#">Find Out What You Need</a> in the toolkit for more information. If you are still not in agreement, you may need to ask the leaders of your organization to step in and make the decisions.
You or your team members do not have the skills and experience needed to run the program.	Find out about training opportunities where you live. For example, contact your local CHW association, find out about their trainings, and get signed up. Look for online training opportunities or classes at a local community college. You might find a session, for example, on CHW core competencies. Also, see if the CHWs on your team can shadow a more experienced CHW, either at your own organization or with a partner organization. Check with your partners to see who might be able to provide tips or a formal training.
There is not enough time for planning and preparing.	Pick out the most important things that you must do to have a successful program. Take out the things that are "extra." When your program finishes, think about what you need to cut out the next time you have the program.

## Your Organization

Barrier	Suggestion
Your organization loses funding that helps support your program.	Read <a href="#">Find Out What You Need</a> in the toolkit for ideas on getting in-kind support and donations, doing fundraisers, and applying for grant funds.
You have new leaders at your organization who are not familiar with your program and its benefits.	See whether the leaders would like to observe your program to learn more about it and meet the people in your program. Provide them with a copy of the heart health manual or other program materials. Also, tell them about the points mentioned in <a href="#">Get Support From Leaders</a> in the toolkit. Offer to do a briefing or presentation about the program.
Your organization can no longer provide you with space for your sessions.	Talk with your partners to see who might have space that you can use. Also check with other places where you live that have spaces for community education sessions, such as libraries, community centers, and churches. Ask participants for suggestions as well.