

Community Walk

A way to gain a new perspective of your community

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Spirit – Creating connections to grow the good and increase hope.



Science - Increase our understanding of our community.



Action- Experience your community from a new perspective



Return –Reflect on what you learned and what needs to happen next.



The Science of Restorative Justice

and the Role of the Community

and the Role of the Community

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Funded by MN Department of Human Services, Behavioral Health Division



System created by MN Department of
Human Services Behavioral Health Division
to support substance misuse prevention for
all Minnesota communities.

Resources



Data



1-on-1 Support



You



Successful
Prevention

Prevention Champions

substance abuse professionals,
researchers, law enforcement,
social workers, educators, faith
leaders, community coalitions



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Alcohol, Tobacco, and Other Drugs (ATOD)

REGIONAL PREVENTION COORDINATORS (RPC)



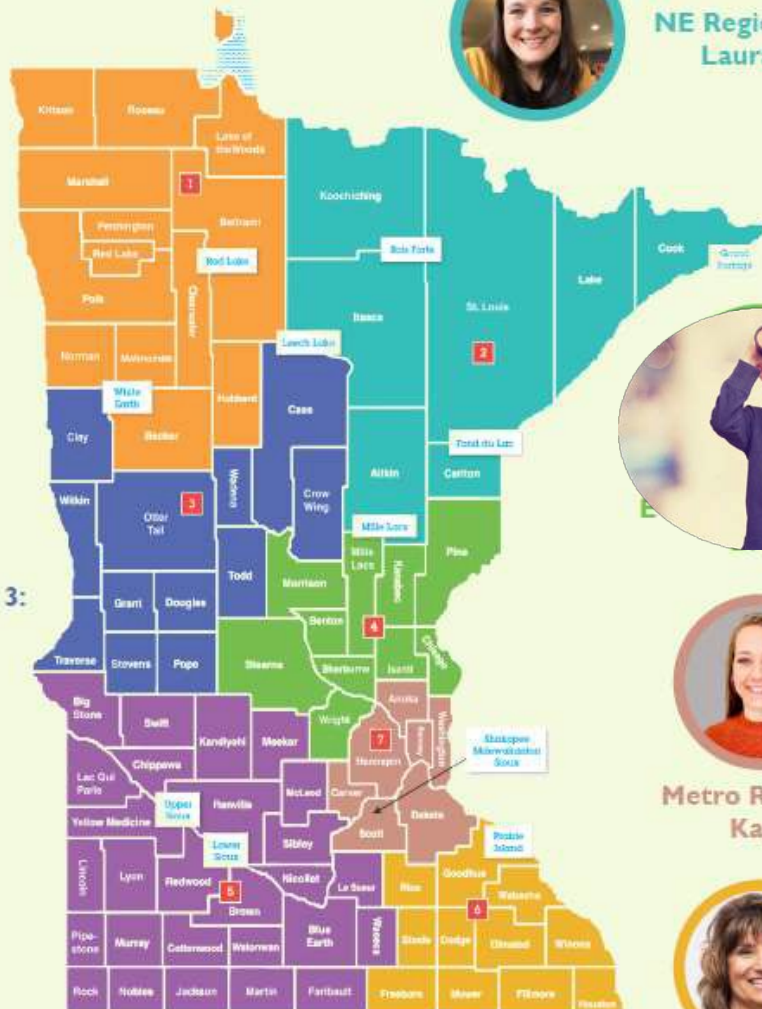
NW Region 1:
Melissa



W Central Region 3:
Nicki



SW Region 5:
Sean



NE Region 2:
Laura



Metro Region 7:
Kayla



SE Region 6:
Paulette

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Regional Prevention Coordinators

Working to help you start
and grow prevention efforts
in your community through
personalized support and consultation on:



- Where to begin
- Getting the right people to the table
- Creating a plan
- Putting the work into action
- Figuring out what's working and what's not



**‘It is far better to see the same
place through 100 pairs of eyes,
than 100 different places
through the same pair of eyes.’
- Marcel Proust**

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Spirit: Why a Community Walk?



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Spirit: Our Why, Purpose, and Intention

- Understand your community at a deeper level
- Create more meaningful connections and relationships
- Help to see whose perspectives, voices, lived experiences might be missing from your data.
- Create awareness of hopes, concerns, gaps, and what other information might be needed to understand your community.



DO I BELONG HERE?

When we walk into a room, we automatically assess the environment to see if we belong.

Will I be seen for all of who I am?

Will my voice be heard?

Will my contributions be valued?

Will I be treated with respect and equity?

www.amazeworks.com

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Community Walk - How can this be used?

- Walking meeting
- Way to connect and build relationships with coalition members / community partners
- Recruitment strategy
- Opportunity to identify hopes and concerns
- Opportunity to learn more about your community





Science: How do you take a Community Walk?





Community Walk

A way to gain a new perspective of your community and deepen understanding.

This Community Walk Tool can help to better understand your local community from a new perspective. The Community Walk process can contribute to meaningful relationships with community partners as well as meeting new people. It can create awareness of hopes, concerns, gaps and what other information might need to be gathered to better understand the community. Utilizing a reflection process with the Community Walk will increase your understanding on whose perspectives, voices, lived experiences might be missing or invisible from your current data.



The Spirit, Science, Action, Return cycle of transformation is a part of the Science of the Positive Framework created by Dr. Jeff Linkenbach and The Montana Institute.



The core purpose of a Community Walk is to understand your community at a deeper level. This will allow for more intentional work to occur through meaningful connections and relationships that honor all perspectives, voices, lived experiences.

"It is far better to see the same place through 100 pairs of eyes, than 100 different places through the same pair of eyes." - Marcel Proust

As individuals we only notice so much; this Community Walk process is designed to be conducted in pairs or small groups. It is important to consider how to model respect as you explore different parts of your community. Being able to discuss ideas with another person helps us to be aware of our own biases, see things from another perspective, and learn from another's experiences and wisdom.

Where will you walk? Seek out familiar and new diverse places in your community to observe. A Community Walk gives us permission to slow down and intentionally notice to our surroundings. How are does our community communicate that people are welcome and belong here?



We support Minnesota communities in their efforts to prevent youth substance misuse. RPC grants are funded by the MN Department of Human Services, Behavioral Health Division. Community Walk Tool 2022.

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Community Walk – at a glance

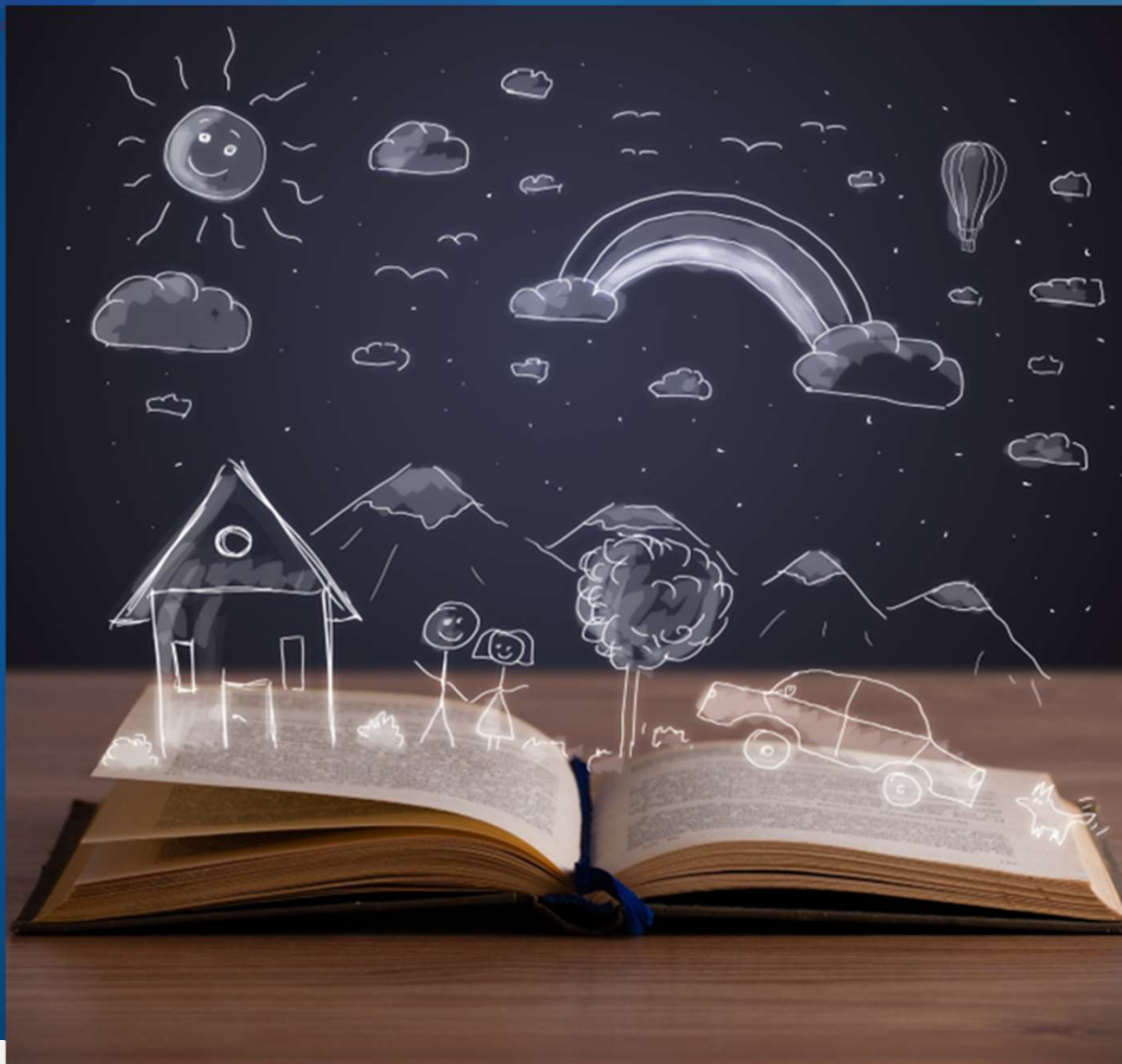
- Walk together.
- Observe what you see, hear, smell, and feel.
- Talk about what you notice.
- Take pictures to share.
- Report back observations and any new insights that have been discovered.
- Use this new information to:
 - Facilitate conversation about local behaviors, strengths, and needs;
 - Evaluate different areas of possible projects;
 - Learn more about issues facing the community.

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Plan your walking route to go where your students, families, community members live and in spaces people typically are walking.



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Considerations when planning your route

- Use a map to plan your route. Check for construction.
- Utilize Google Maps or another tool to predict how long your route will take to complete.
- Check the weather forecast.
- Check sunrise and sunset time.
- Plan ahead if you will be walking in the dark.



During your walk, be observant of:

- Accessibility/transportation
- Business and Organizations
- Opportunities for recreation
- Open spaces and parks
- Gardens
- Signage
- Advertising
- Art
- Construction /renovations/ repair
- Resources
- Abandoned buildings
- Graffiti
- Litter/Drug paraphernalia



Pay attention to your experience in the space

- What does it look, sound, smell, and feel like?
- What do I see that is available?
- How accessible is it for walking?
- Does it feel welcoming? Does it feel safe? Why?





Action: Taking a Community Walk



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ACTION:

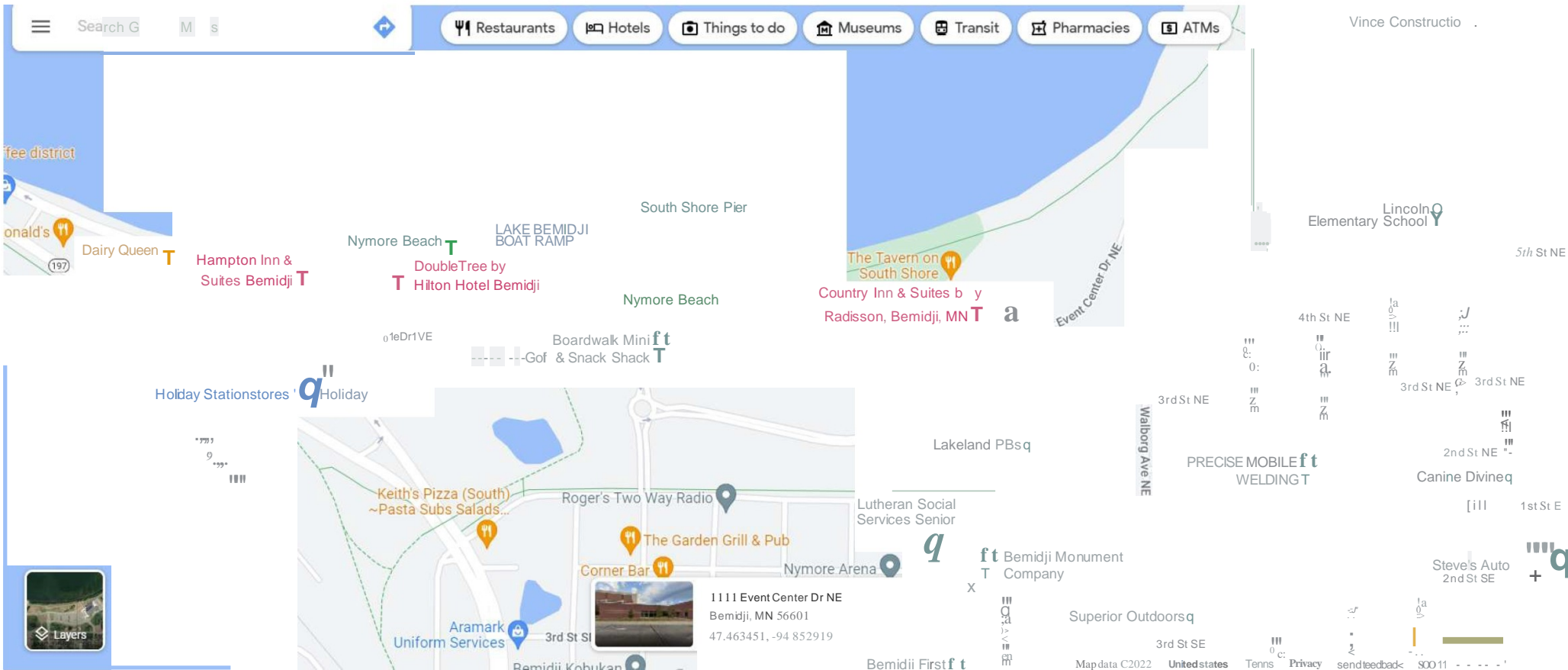
- Travel in small groups, no larger than five.
- Each group travels on their own route.
- Talk with group members to find out about their hopes, concerns/challenges and to get to know a bit about the neighborhood.
- Take pictures and notes to help you in processing, understanding or remembering. Use caution so the camera or notebook don't act as a barrier, or a means of detaching from the experience. Consider using an audio notes app on your cell phone.
- Participants will report back after the activity on what was observed, discovered, and any insights gained.








 Restaurants
  Hotels
  Things to do
  Museums
  Transit
  Pharmacies
  ATMs



Let's Practice!

- Get into groups of 2-4
- Use Community Walk handout to help you during the walk.
- Take 7 minutes to walk around the conference center
- Keep record of your observations





Return: Reflections from your experience during the Community Walk



Observations and Reflections

- What did you see?
- Who did you meet?
- What surprised you? What about this stood out?
- What are the impressions of the community based on your observations?
- What are your assumptions about the community and people based on your observations?
- What other information needs to be gathered for a better understanding?
- Whose perspective, voices, lived experiences might be missing? How can they be included?



- What went well?
- What didn't? Why?
- What do you think was the best moment of the activity? Why?
- Did anything surprise you?



THANK YOU

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Spirit

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"It is far better to see the same place through 100 pairs of eyes, than 100 different places through the same pair of eyes." - Marcel Proust

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Where will you walk? Seek out familiar and new diverse places in your community to observe. A Community Walk gives us permission to slow down and intentionally notice to our surroundings. How does our community communicate that people are welcome and belong here?



Science

This process can be casual or very formal and can serve many purposes. At its simplest level, it gives us greater understanding of what life is like in different parts of our community.

The results of the Community Walk can include observational data as a narrative describing the experience along with photos and videos. This information can be utilized in a community assessment. It can help provide context when creating a communication plan by having opportunity to see how messages currently are and can be shared in the community. This process also creates awareness of and documentation of hopes, strengths, and concerns. It allows you to see gaps in your own knowledge and experience which can help you to know what other information might need to be gathered to better understand the community.

Prepare some prompting questions that align with your reason for using a Community Walk process. During the walk document your observations.

- Observation questions:
 - What do I see people doing?
 - What do I hear people saying?
 - What does the neighborhood look and feel like?
 - What resources are available?
 - Does it feel welcoming? Safe? Why?
 - What appears to be the values of this area? How do you know this?
 - How are they interacting with each other? With their surroundings?
 - What do I notice about myself as I interact with or observe people in my community? (My thoughts, feelings, physiological responses)
- Self-Reflections / Personal Check-in
 - What is my bias, stereotypes, assumptions in relation to what I am observing?
 - What are my experiences and feelings related to what I'm observing? How can I let go of them so I can be in the moment to observe without judgment?
 - What are my impressions of the community based on my observations?
 - What are my assumptions about the community and the people in the community based on my observations? What are my assumptions about their:
 - Values and beliefs
 - Needs and concerns
 - Social identities: Race/ethnicity/culture, Socioeconomic status, Sexual orientation, Abilities, Ages, Gender identities, Religion/faith
 - What other information do I need to gather in order to better understand my community?
 - Whose perspectives, voices, lived experiences might be missing or invisible from this community walk? How will I learn about and include them in meaningful ways?



Action

Time to go on a Community Walk! Have fun and notice something new.

Things to pay attention to:

- Accessibility/transportation
- Business and Organizations
- Opportunities for recreation
- Open spaces and parks
- Gardens
- Signage (street signs, location identifiers)
- Advertising
- Art
- Construction /renovations/ repair
- Resources
- Abandoned buildings
- Graffiti
- Litter/Drug paraphernalia

Additional considerations for your walk:

Be an Upstander. If you see something, say something or seek help.

Plan for the weather and if you will be walking during daylight or evening hours.



Return

After the walk, take time to reflect on the walk as an entire experience and what information and insights were gained. Viewing your data from an evaluation lens to interpret and analyze what was observed and how it impacts the community is beneficial in helping to understand additional challenges community members are facing and opportunities available. It can highlight the strengths of your community and inspire new ideas to continue to grow what is good in your community.

Reflection questions:

What did you see?

Who did you meet?

What surprised you? What about this stood out?

What are the impressions of the community based on your observations?

What are your assumptions about the community and people based on your observations?

What other information needs to be gathered for a better understanding?

Whose perspective, voices, lived experiences might be missing? How can they be included?

What are your hopes and concerns?

Reflect on what would it be like in your community if changes were made?

What would have happened and how would it feel in those spaces?

Acknowledgements



The Spirit, Science, Action, Return cycle of transformation is a part of the Science of the Positive Framework created by Dr. Jeff Linkenbach and [The Montana Institute](#).

Consultation with Rebecca Slaby – [AMAZEworks](#) to adapt and update our original Community Walk handout and process.

Resources

Edutopia COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

Community Walks Create Bonds of Understanding

<https://www.edutopia.org/blog/community-walks-create-bonds-understanding-shane-safir>

Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union with Andra Tanase [Community Mapping tutorial](#)

University of Minnesota, College of Education and Human Development [Essential Tools Improving Secondary Education and Transition for Youth with Disabilities Community Mapping Resource](#)

Roots & Shoots [Activity Community Mapping 101](#)

[Community Mapping: A Tool for Community-Based Assessment and Skill Building](#)

Lindsey Anderson, George Washington University

[Community Mapping through Transect Walks](#)



Community Walk & Reflection

Creating change requires understanding of a community's nuances. **How does it feel? Who is a part of it? What are its characteristics?**

Begin learning the answers by walking through your community. Take time to reflect on what you notice. Find a sunny day and enjoy a reason to get out of the office!

1

Map out your coalition's community



Community can be defined multiple ways. Decide which definition(s) make sense for you and where you will go during this activity by:

Looking at the geographic boundary of your coalition's service area. You might start by simply walking around town.

Asking: what other communities exist here? (i.e. faith, parents, veterans, LGBT, neighborhood, arts, schools)

Keep these ideas handy - we will use them again!

2

Keep the Goal in Mind



The route you choose does not need to get you to 10,000 steps. The purpose of this activity is to:

View your community(s) from a fresh perspective. Taking a *walk* is a great way to observe details you don't see when driving through.

Learn something new about the community (especially if you're a resident)! Take more than one walk if you cannot get to everything you want to see at one time.

Have FUN! Any work can be overwhelming at times. Finding ways to enjoy it and have fun is important.

3

Find a Tour Guide or a Tour Group



Invite coalition members to join you as you walk. Make it an opportunity for getting to know them better and to learn from their reflections.

Consider inviting a community member you want to join your coalition to give you a tour of the place he or she is connected to.

4

Take Notes



Write your answers to the following questions:

What did you see? Who did you meet?

In your observation, what does the community care about?

What did you notice about yourself? What were you thinking along the way?

What surprised you?

Ready, set, go!

