

# Extend your reach: A quick guide to planning your knowledge mobilization initiative

## About this quick guide

Sharing the latest evidence with the right people at the right time requires careful planning.

Knowledge mobilization (KMb) is about making evidence accessible, clear, and useful for those who need it. KmB helps organizations inform their work by providing access to the best available evidence. It involves meaningfully engaging partners to bridge the gap between emerging evidence and practice.

This quick guide complements our KmB toolkit, [Doing more with what you know](#). In this guide, we outline steps for creating your KmB plan and carrying out KmB activities. We provide practical tips to help you mobilize your knowledge effectively.

This guide is for leaders and service providers in the child and youth mental health and addictions sector, particularly those new to KmB. You may wish to share this quick guide with your team members and key partners. Working together, we can use KmB to achieve better outcomes for infants, children, young people, and families in our sector.

Throughout this resource, “knowledge” means evidence, knowledge, information, and main and key messages gleaned from research.

## What you’ll find in this guide

- **Step-by-step planning:** Collaborate with key partners to organize and plan your KmB initiative.
- **Tailored KmB planning:** Create custom KmB plans for different audiences to ensure your messages are tailored to their specific needs.
- **Skill building:** Train new team members on the best ways to plan and implement KmB strategies effectively.

## Are you ready?

Before creating your KMb plan, it's important to assess your readiness.

Take a moment to consider the following:

- Staff:** Who will lead and support this work? Do you have staff with the necessary skills and expertise, such as a communications specialist or knowledge broker, to lead and monitor the progress of your KMb activities?
- Tools and equipment:** Do you have a website or a social media platform to help you mobilize knowledge? What tools and equipment might you need to create and share your evidence?
- Budget:** Do you have a budget to support this work? For example, you might need funds to cover translation services or honoraria for young people and family members who contribute to your work.
- Timelines:** Have you allocated enough time to complete this work? Have you considered the availability of your team members and key partners?



Tip: If you need more staff resources, consider partnering with organizations that already have these resources in place. Alternatively, you can draw on the expertise of those who specialize in this type of work, such as the Knowledge Institute.



### Embedding equity, diversity, inclusion, and anti-racism in knowledge mobilization (EDIA-R)

Embedding EDIA-R in KMb ensures that knowledge is accessible and relevant to all, regardless of their background or circumstances. We've woven practical considerations for EDIA-R throughout this quick guide to help you create an inclusive KMb plan.

## Step 1. Define your goal

Start with the end in mind.

### What is your goal? What impact are you trying to make?

- Educate your audience to address their knowledge needs.
- Enhance your audience's skills.
- Generate interest and awareness.
- Motivate and inspire others to take action.
- Create a collaborative space where communities can exchange ideas.
- Fulfill funding requirements.
- Other\_\_\_\_\_

Be open to revisiting and refining your objectives, as they might change over time based on evolving circumstances. Here are some examples of factors that may require you to adjust your goals:

- Recent advancements in research.
- Feedback from your audience.
- Evolving discussions with your key partners.
- Events in the community that can draw attention toward or away from your KMb initiative.

Next, determine what messages you want to communicate with your audience.

They should be clear and concise and include key findings, main message, and key messages.



**The key findings** are the most important results from the research or evidence. They tell your audience what you've learned from studying or evaluating something.

**Example:** (Audience: young people) A significant number of young people living in Canada exceed the recommended guidelines for the amount of time spent using digital technology (mobile phone, television, video games).



**The main message** is what you want to convey to your audience. This message explains what the research evidence says and why the key findings are important for your audience.

**The main message is:**

- ✓ Persuasive.
- ✓ Relevant to the intended audience.
- ✓ Focused on one idea.
- ✓ Concise and accessible; uses clear language.
- ✓ Easy to read.
- ✓ Easy to understand and remember.
- ✓ Nonjudgmental; uses inclusive language and tone.

**Example:** (Audience: young people) Spending a lot of time on screens (watching television, using your mobile phone, or playing video games) can negatively affect your mental health and well-being.



**The key messages** help you clarify the main message and make it more impactful for your audience. They focus on the why: Why are you sharing your message with the audience? Why does the main message matter? Why should your audience care?

**Key messages:**

- Are tailored to each audience.
- Are clear, short, and focused. Ideally, you have three to five key messages.
- Indicate the impact the main message has on your audience.
- Focus on sharing the benefits of the message to your audience.
- Explain how your audience may act on the information.

**Example:** (Audience: young people) Moderation is key: Balance screen time with other activities you enjoy. Managing the time spent on screens will help you maximize the benefits and minimize negative impacts on your well-being. If you notice that your mental health and well-being are affected by screen use, reach out for support.

## Step 2. Engage key partners

KMb is about fostering relationships and engaging with key partners to create and share knowledge. By prioritizing relationship-building and meaningful engagement, your KMb activities can make a genuine impact.

### Who are the key partners you will collaborate with to develop and share this knowledge?

- |  |  |                                      |
|--|--|--------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Young people      | <input type="checkbox"/> Community members   | <input type="checkbox"/> Researchers |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family members    | <input type="checkbox"/> Content experts     | <input type="checkbox"/> Other       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Service providers | <input type="checkbox"/> Funders             |                                      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Community leaders | <input type="checkbox"/> Government partners |                                      |

Next, together with your key partners, determine roles and responsibilities in the KMb process. For example, you can leverage their strengths and expertise to create and share KMb resources, such as tipsheets or infographics.

Consider using our engagement planning tool provided in [Appendix A](#). This tool will help you keep track of information about your partners and their roles in your KMb initiative.



### Considerations for engaging your partners

In keeping with EDIA-R, consider whether you meaningfully engage with individuals from diverse communities to co-develop your key messages. People from diverse cultural communities, ethnicities, ages, genders, sexual orientations, abilities, and life experiences can add valuable perspectives.

## Step 3. Identify your audience

Take the time to understand who your audience is. Gain insights into their interests and discover what information is relevant and meaningful to them.

### Who do you want to share your knowledge with?

- |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Young people      | <input type="checkbox"/> System leaders    | <input type="checkbox"/> Community members |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family members    | <input type="checkbox"/> Researchers       | <input type="checkbox"/> General public    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Clients           | <input type="checkbox"/> Funders           | <input type="checkbox"/> Media             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Service providers | <input type="checkbox"/> Community leaders | <input type="checkbox"/> Other             |

If you plan to reach multiple audiences, you can use a simple planning matrix, like the one provided in [Appendix B](#). It will help you develop separate plans for each audience and address their unique needs and considerations.

## Step 4. Choose your strategy and delivery method(s)

Next, decide how you will implement your KMB plan. Consider the following:

- How will you deliver your message to your audience? For example, will you be posting information on your website? Do you have a monthly newsletter or social media channels you can use?
- How does your audience access and engage with information? Do you need to use multiple methods or strategies to reach different audiences?

Select your delivery methods. What type of resources will you develop?

- Knowledge products** can include reports, fact sheets, infographics, and toolkits.
- Events** can include conferences, webinars, forums, debates, workshops, and TV or radio interviews.
- Networks** can include communities of practice, online forums, advisory groups, social media, and message boards.



Tip: Consider using different kinds of resources and multimedia elements, like videos, images, and infographics. This will make your content more engaging and interactive. Ensure accessibility by complying with the [Web Content Accessibility Guidelines \(WCAG\)](#).

### Tips to engage your audience



- Are you working to ensure that everyone, regardless of background or abilities, can easily access and understand your information?
- Are you using inclusive language that respects and reflects the identities and experiences of your audience?
- Have you considered incorporating cultural nuances to make your key messages more culturally appropriate and relevant?
- Do you provide your messages in languages other than English? If yes, do you ensure the translated content is accurate and culturally appropriate?
- Are you meaningfully engaging young people and family members in co-creating your messages to ensure the content is relevant and relatable to your intended audiences?



## Step 5. Consider timing

Timing is crucial! Sharing information at the right time can ensure your message is well-received, increasing the chances of achieving your KMb goals.

### Are there activities or events within your organization that may conflict with implementing your KMb plan?



For example, if your organization has scheduled an all-staff training session around the time of your KMb initiative, it could create scheduling conflicts and draw attention and resources away from your KMb efforts. To maximize the impact of your initiative, stagger all internal KMb activities.

### Have you aligned the timing of your KMb efforts based on the availability of your key partners?



For example, if you collaborate with staff from a local mental health and addictions agency, their availability might be impacted by fundraising events, community outreach campaigns, or training sessions. Adjust your KMb activities accordingly to accommodate their schedule and ensure meaningful collaboration.

### Are there other events in your community that might boost the uptake of this knowledge, such as social or cultural gatherings, holidays, or regional events?



For example, launching mental health awareness campaigns at the beginning of a school year may increase engagement among educators, parents, and students.



Create a list of activities, events, and timing considerations. A team calendar or editorial calendar may be useful for organizing your activities and communicating with your partners.

## Moving forward together

We hope this quick guide has helped plan your KMb activities. Now that you have completed your planning, you are ready to mobilize your knowledge. We encourage you to share your knowledge widely with diverse audiences. Remember to monitor your activities, evaluate their impact, and listen to your audience's reflections and feedback.

We can all work together to use KMb to bridge the gap between evidence and practice. This will help us achieve better outcomes for infants, children, young people, and families in our sector.



Are you looking for a resource to help you evaluate your KMb activities?

Check out our [program evaluation toolkit](#).

### If you have questions about this resource, please get in touch with us at:

The Knowledge Institute: [info@cymha.ca](mailto:info@cymha.ca).

## Appendix A: Engagement planning tool

Our engagement planning tool can help you identify key partners who will collaborate with you to ensure your KMb initiative is successful. By using this tool, you can keep track of essential information about your key partners, including their roles and responsibilities, level of engagement and potential barriers to engagement.

Your partners should be able to decide how they would like to be engaged in the KMb initiative. The International Association for Public Participation (n.d.)<sup>1</sup> describes the following levels of engagement:

- Inform: “We will keep you informed.”
- Consult: “We will acknowledge your concerns and gather feedback.”
- Involve: “We will work with you to ensure your concerns are understood.”
- Collaborate: “We will partner with you to identify the right solutions.”
- Empower: “We will implement what you decide.”

Key partner	Role and responsibilities	Motivation for engagement	Levels of engagement	Benefits for the key partner(s)	Barriers to engagement
Name of person or group who will be engaged in your KMb initiative.	How can you leverage the strengths and expertise of the key partner?	What is their interest in your KMb initiative?	What level will they be engaged at (Inform, Consult, Involve, Collaborate, Empower).	What are the benefits of the KMb initiative or engagement with the key partner?	What could make engagement difficult? Are there time or resource limitations that could affect engagement?
Example: Community leader	Example: Content expert: Contribute insights from the community’s perspective to ensure the workshop is culturally appropriate and relevant to the audience.	Example: Raise awareness about the impact of screen use on young people.  Improving mental health and well-being of young people.	Example: Collaborate (developing workshops for young people).  Involve (developing a promotional campaign).	Example: Increased community support.	Example: Limited availability due to other community responsibilities.

1 International Association for Public Participation. (n.d.). [IAP2 spectrum](#).

## Appendix B: Knowledge mobilization (Kmb) planning matrix

KMb activities that involve multiple target audiences require a structured and organized planning approach. The table below can help you achieve this. Use it to create separate plans for each of your target audiences. As you work through the planning process, consider the specific needs of each group. This will enable you to craft messages that are tailored to each audience.

Audience	Objectives	Engagement	Strategy	Messages	Barriers	Accessibility	Timeline
Identify the specific group(s) you want to share knowledge with.	Determine what you would like to achieve by sharing knowledge with this audience. Think about your short, medium, and long-term goals.	Identify the key partners involved in your Kmb efforts.	Determine what strategies and delivery methods will resonate with your audience.	Identify what messages will effectively convey the importance and impact of your Kmb initiative.	Determine what barriers prevent this audience from accessing and using your knowledge.	Identify any specific accessibility needs of this audience.	Determine the best time to implement your Kmb initiative. Note any significant dates, events, or considerations affecting your timeline.
Example: Service providers and leaders in the child and youth mental health and addictions sector.	Example: Short-term: Provide immediate access to evidence-based resources for crisis response related to the COVID-19 pandemic.  Medium-term: Facilitate knowledge exchange among service providers and leaders in the sector.  Long-term: Enhance the sector's preparedness in crisis response and recovery.	Example: Collaborate with young people, family members, service providers, and agency leaders.	Example: Develop webinars and evidence summaries on pandemic-related topics to support service planning.	Example: From crisis response to recovery planning. The mental health of children, young people and family members has been affected by the pandemic.  We are dedicated to helping service providers and agencies navigate the post-pandemic landscape and overcome new challenges while considering clients' evolving needs.	Example: Limited time for attending webinars.	Example: Provide recordings of webinars for on-demand access.  Ensure evidence summaries are available in both French and English.	Example: Launch a series of webinars within the next month to address the immediate concerns and crisis response strategies.  Develop and share evidence summaries within the next three months to support service planning and decision-making.