



## Making Connections for Wellbeing

Prevention Institute and the Movember Foundation, in partnership with 16 communities across the U.S., are leading a major initiative to improve mental health and wellbeing for men and boys. [Making Connections](#) employs an innovative approach that leverages the power of communities and connection to create more opportunities for wellbeing and resilience.

The initiative is guided by the groundbreaking Prevention Institute report, [Making Connections for Mental Health and Well-Being Among Men and Boys in the U.S.](#) Prevention Institute is leading a robust community of practice to help participating communities, which span the country in urban, rural, and suburban locations, develop and implement prevention-oriented action plans that address community conditions that interfere with mental health and wellbeing. The Institute provides technical assistance and training to help communities identify the most effective processes, tools, and approaches to improve mental health outcomes.

Challenges to achieving mental wellbeing for boys and men in the U.S. include:

- Disconnection and isolation—from community, peers, family, children, and culture
- Male socialization that discourages expression of needs or emotions
- Risks and stressors produced by environmental conditions such as lack of economic opportunity, an unstable economy, growing inequality, and exposure to violence

Making Connections prioritizes those who have a particularly high need for community-level attention to mental wellbeing, such as veteran communities and families, and boys and men of color and their families. In addition to exploring changes in the built environment and economic environment, communities are developing strategies to restore and strengthen the social connections that are key to building intergenerational wellbeing and resilience. These strategies will meet men and boys where they are—where they naturally gather and gain support—and draw on indigenous customs as part of ongoing wellness.

Participating sites include: Albuquerque, NM; Florence, SC; Canton, CT; New Orleans, LA; Honolulu, HI; Tacoma, WA; Boston, MA; Chicago and Kankakee, IL; Los Angeles, San Diego, and Stockton, CA; Houston, TX; Denver, CO; Lincoln, NE; and Oklahoma City, OK.

Prevention Institute is a nonprofit, national center dedicated to improving community health and wellbeing by building momentum for effective primary prevention.

The Movember Foundation is a global men's health charity that raises funds to deliver innovative, breakthrough research and support programs that enable men to live happier, healthier, longer lives.



**The Making Connections initiative in the Farmington Valley Health District in Connecticut includes co-training a service dog.**