

3. Build a network

Building a network is all about connecting with people and exchanging ideas. By talking to people, businesses, services and organisations, you'll be able to find others who are concerned about the same issues and are willing to help. You might find that a group or organisation is already addressing the alcohol-related issue that you are concerned about. If they are, you could join them. If not, you might want to **form a community** group from scratch.

Where do I start networking?

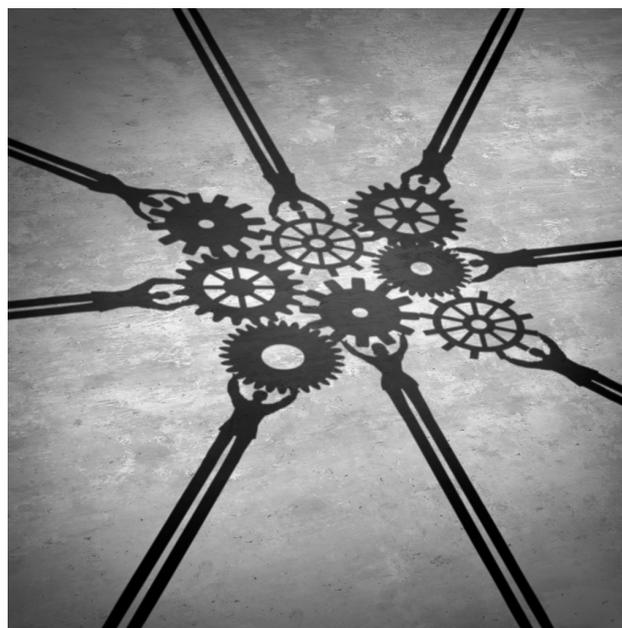
Your specific concerns about alcohol will point you toward who you could start speaking with. For example, if you're worried about young people drinking, you could start by running your ideas past your local youth organisations. Other local groups and organisations you could approach include:

- non-government organisations
- local business
- hospitals
- police
- ambulance services
- local council
- local MP
- GPs

TIP: Make sure you keep a list of everyone you have contacted.

Stakeholders

While you're networking, you'll come across people/groups/organisations who want to help and contribute to the project. We call these stakeholders. They might be workers in organisations who



can provide resources (for example a member of the Queensland Police Service), or people in the community who have certain skills you may need (such as computer skills to build a website). To help manage your contacts we've designed a [stakeholder list template](#).

Resistance to your project

When you go through the networking process, you're bound to come across people who don't want to get involved or who oppose your project. Don't be put off by people refusing to get involved. While knowing who will help you is important, it's equally important to find out who won't help and why. It could be that people are interested, but don't have the time, knowledge or skills. Don't push them or make them feel guilty. You might actually find they'll be ready to help further down the track. So keep in contact with them. If you come across people who are opposed to your project, keep an open mind and listen to their opinion. Find out why they don't agree and try to address their concerns. As with all community issues, not everyone will agree about a problem or a solution.