

People of Action:

Kansas Rotary Mobilizing on Mental Health



The People

Rotary's mission: We provide service to others, promote integrity, and advance world understanding, goodwill, and peace through our fellowship of business, professional, and community leaders.

Kansas **Rotary Districts 5710 and 5680** led this project.

The Opportunity

Bring Rotary Clubs across Kansas together to pilot a new model for collective action, with a focus on improving mental health outcomes:

- Kansas was ranked 51st in the nation in 2023 by Mental Health America due to the high prevalence of mental illness and low rates of access to care (22nd in 2024).
- America's Health Rankings put Kansas at 40th in the nation for the number of adolescent suicides between 2020-2022.

The Intervention

To inform Kansas Rotary efforts to build collective action across clubs, a planning project was commissioned with support from the Kansas Health Foundation. Data was generated through:



10 interviews with key people and organizations connected to Rotary, mental health, and/or civic engagement efforts



Survey of Kansas Rotary members with 721 responses (18.5% response rate)



Research on mental health in Kansas, models of engagement, and other relevant issues

The Findings

Rotary has a positive reputation as a well-established organization with a history of bold action.

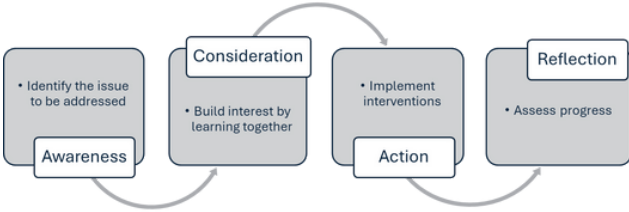
Partners perceive Rotary's extensive, diverse network of members as a significant strength.

Kansas Rotary has a very positive organizational culture. Survey respondents indicated they enjoy working with their fellow club members, understand Rotary's mission, and believe their club has the skills to make a positive difference in their communities. They also prefer hands-on, locally focused, community service projects.

Of survey respondents: **78%** feel like Rotary can make a meaningful contribution to improving mental health in Kansas, **83%** are interested in learning more about mental health issues in Kansas, and **58%** would like to be a part of Rotary-driven efforts focused on mental health.

Priorities across all data sources showed consensus around stigma-free, youth-centered, and behavioral health workforce efforts.

4 Stages of the Engagement Model



This engagement model could be utilized to strategically intervene on any issue important to Rotary members into the future.

The Action

As a result of the information gathered, Kansas Rotary leaders are:



Building out representation on the Kansas Rotary Mental Health Taskforce, who will help lead these efforts



Raising awareness about the project with presentations at Rotary International and Kansas Rotary conferences



Starting a Kansas Rotary Action Group on Mental Health



Piloting the engagement model focused on mental health with interested local clubs