



PILLAR 3. BUILDING YOUR NETWORK OF INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL MENTAL HEALTH ASSETS - INTRODUCTION

Creating a community of care in sport means learning about and identifying **internal** and **external mental health assets**. Mental health assets are internal and external mechanisms to maintain positive mental health outcomes and well-being in an individual. They are tools, or support that can help you to promote and to maintain positive mental health outcomes and well-being. These might include the following:

Mental Health Assets

- **Internal** – eg. Self-regulation and coping skills. Check out our Navigation Tools for examples and support for internal training, detection and prevention.
- **External** – eg. Support system, compassionate leaders, experts

In this section, we share our **Build Your Club Network** tool that will allow you to identify the individuals, resources, education, and support that form the basis for your club's network of support for mental health. When you work through the tool, here are some important points to consider:

- ✓ Your network should be made up of a wide variety of stakeholders such as the following:
 - expert practitioners
 - researchers
 - sport sector leaders (coaches, sport organization leadership)
 - athletes and parents navigating the system in their lived experience

Note: This team should represent the diversity of the sport and the mental health sector in your community.
- ✓ Include organizations and support agencies where you can refer individuals for specialized care and expertise if appropriate. In some cases, our role is not to “solve” but rather to support an individual to get help from those trained to respond.
- ✓ Consider a range of resources that are culturally sensitive and based on inclusive principles – for example: a holistic athlete approach which is introduced in resources from Indigenous communities such as [ISPARC BC](#) and the [San'yas: Indigenous Cultural Safety Training Program](#).
- ✓ Don't forget about sport-specific mental health resources in BC such as [Buddy Check for Jesse](#) which provides -based mental health in sport advocacy and peer support groups
- ✓ The different sections of this toolkit also can form part of the resources that you gather for your support network, including training, skills, strategies, and techniques that can be used as part of your internal and external assets.

Next Steps

Tools and Templates in this Pillar

- 6.1 Identifying and Building Internal Mental Health Assets
- 6.2 Identifying and Building your External Mental Health Assets
- 6.3 Training and Resources for Enhanced Mental Health Literacy

- Work through the two next sections: Identifying and *Building your Internal Mental Health Assets* and *Identifying and Building your External Mental Health Assets*. These might be helpful to do in a small group so that you can source information and identify support together.
- Complete the “Build Your Club Network Tool” so that you have a document that summarises external support in one place. Distribute this to program leaders, coaches, and other key individuals - and consider adding the *Mental Health Emergency Action Plan* tool from the Navigation Tools so that every person has a written guide to how to handle mental health emergencies and situations.
- Use the checklist in the *Identifying and Building your internal Mental Health Assets* section to educate and share training, tips, and resources throughout your organisation. Don't forget that this does not need to happen all at once! Plan out a phased implementation that is reasonable for you.

