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# Step by Step

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*A Guide to Organizing a  
Postpartum Parent Support Network  
in Your Community*

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**Jane I. Honikman, M.S.**



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*by* **Jane I. Honikman, M.S.**

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STAGE 1

# Brainstorming

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Step 1: **Start a Binder**

Step 2: **Create a Core Committee or Task Force**

Step 3: **Identify Personal Qualifications**

Step 4: **Identify the Group**

Step 5: **Identify Your Community**

Step 6: **Choose Committee Members**

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## Step 1: **Start a Binder**

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### **Keep an accurate record of the information you gather.**

Start a binder in which you document all your contacts and ideas. Don't forget to date your notes and list contact names, phone numbers, and e-mail addresses.

Y   N

- I've made a binder or filing system in which I keep relevant phone numbers and documents.**
- This binder/filing system is easy to get to and separated from my personal, home, and work documents.**

If "no," how can I prevent losing the binder and/or make it easier to get to?

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## Step 2: **Create a Core Committee or Task Force**

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*(To be done in conjunction with Step 3)*

### **Who will organize the group or network?**

It's important to find others who are also interested in starting a support group in order to avoid burnout. Just as it's essential for mothers who are going through PPD to share their experiences, organizers must have sympathetic people with whom they can talk about how the organizing is going and the many tasks involved.

**Write the names and numbers of people already interested in joining this project.**

<i>Name</i>	<i>Phone/E-mail</i>	<i>Possible Task</i>
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

## Finding Others

The U.S. group Depression After Delivery (DAD) suggests creating “flyers or letters that specifically cite your interest in hearing from those who would be interested in ‘*joining with others to help start*’ such a group. Include your first name and phone number.... Make copies and post them at places you feel are most appropriate, e.g., grocery stores, laundromats, doctors’ offices, libraries, community centers, and clinics. Mail copies to key people.... You can also have a notice published in your local newspaper or church bulletin.” (Source: *Depression After Delivery: A Guide to Starting and Maintaining a Depression After Delivery (DAD) Support Group*. Belle Meade, NJ.)

Another inexpensive tactic would be to write an editorial for your local paper expressing what PPD is, the community need for information about it, and a call for organizers. Keep both of these methods in mind when it comes time to recruit volunteers and members.

**In order to find people who also want to create a support group, have I contacted the following?** *Check all you have contacted by phone, in person, or through flyers.*

- My PSI regional coordinator
- Other self-help groups
- Resource centers
- Churches/temples
- Social workers
- Schools
- Employee assistance programs
- Hospital chaplains
- Hospital social workers
- Local and state self-help clearinghouses
- Medical and mental health care professionals
- Family and friends
- Acquaintances and others