

COMPASS: RESPONDING TO THE HEALTH AND WELLNESS NEEDS OF FIRST RESPONDERS

Compass is a project developed by the City of Huntington, West Virginia (US), to improve overall mental and physical wellness of first responders.

HOW DOES COMPASS WORK?

Compass provides healthcare coaches and activities to emergency response departments, ensuring that first responders can give the best care possible to residents. Activities include – 1:1 coaching, group training, and social activities all through a wellness center available exclusively for first responders and tailored to meet their needs.

Compassion fatigue was originally a concern around the opioid crisis in Huntington, but Compass is **proving transferable to address compassion fatigue for all situations first responders face**, including the COVID-19 pandemic, natural disasters, etc.

WHY IS COMPASS INNOVATIVE?

Compass' customized tools, resources and activities help first responders not only increase their mental and physical wellness and self-care, but also **improve at-work, at-home, and community relationships**.

The Compass program highlights the critical role mental and physical health plays in a first responder's life. The program confronts the everyday realities first responders face and provides **resources to prioritize their well-being by creating a culture of support and removing the stigma of personal care**.

With Compass, Huntington was one of the **nine winners of Bloomberg Philanthropies' 2018 Mayors Challenge**, a competition designed to help city leaders think big, be bold and uncover inventive –and, ultimately shareable– ideas that tackle today's toughest problems.

WHAT CHALLENGES CAN COMPASS HELP YOUR CITY TO SOLVE?

- **High levels of mental and physical stress** among public servants, especially but not limited to first responders
- **Lack of tools and resources** to improve wellness and self-care

COMPASS IN THREE STEPS



Provide first responders with **self-care tools designed to promote healthy behavioral changes**.



Give first responders access to **coaches to provide a trusted source of physical and mental health**.



Convene experts to **develop, modify, and adapt training on crisis management to first responder needs**.

WHAT IS COMPASS' IMPACT?

+250 hours
of **Compass coaches' interactions**
with first responders from 2019 - 2020

70%
attendance rate for personal
and family wellness events

WHAT DO USERS SAY ABOUT COMPASS?



“Thank you for doing this for the first responders and their families. **Definitely will brighten the day of many**”
Mark Littlejohn, Fire Department, Huntington

“This was such a fun activity for my kids to do at home during this difficult time. **We thoroughly enjoyed painting the pottery together** and appreciate the opportunity greatly”

Stephanie Coffey, Police Department, Huntington



“If I can get them to open up, talk about mental health — **we can help them**”

Amy Jefferson, Compass' coach

DO YOU WANT TO LEARN MORE ABOUT COMPASS?

We want to disseminate Compass' experience to other cities or organizations which face the same challenges.
Send us an e-mail to: SandersA@Huntingtonwv.gov
Visit our website: compasshuntington.com
Follow us on our Facebook page: facebook.com/CompassSupport