



## Mental Health for All Team Talks About Risks



**Brendan:** One of the main things we were worried about in our study was that people would feel upset talking about bad experiences they had using mental health services. We were also worried that people may be upset talking about how hard it can sometimes be to have depression. I remember being interviewed once and it was so hard to talk about the help I needed that I wasn't getting—it made me sad and angry to remember when I had a counselor who just didn't get how to work with me.



**Micah:** We talked a lot about how to handle these situations. We needed to talk to people about mental health, but we also wanted to keep them feeling good. One thing we decided was that when we talked to people about their experiences, we would always do it one-on-one and never in a group.

**Brendan:** We talked a lot about each question we wanted to ask to make sure they were the important ones —we decided not to use a few questions that might be too personal or upsetting and weren't important to answer our research question.

We also decided some people might like to have someone they know and trust nearby in case they got really upset. So, we let all the people in our study know they could invite someone to come with them and stay in another room while they answered our questions.

**Micah:** I also work at our local Center for Independent Living. I talked with Katie, and we agreed that if anyone got services from us, I would not interview them. I also let them know I wouldn't talk to them about the research study.



**Katie:** I also reminded Micah and Brendan that lots of people with developmental disabilities don't get the mental health services that they need. So, we created a handout with local organizations and hotline numbers that we could share with everyone in our study.

I also made sure that when we did our project training for how to do our interviews that everyone on the team learned some tips for what to do when someone was upset. This included reminding participants that they could take a break and knowing that I could also call another team member for help.



**Ariel:** We also practiced talking to people about the relationship they would have with the researchers, including how it would end.