

# TODD: Who is Best to Lead the Team?

Team leadership has been a topic in several CARE, BIT and threat team surveys and research.<sup>1</sup> The general principles of good team leadership are not that different from those of the team leaders or chairs that oversee various early education, high school, college, university and workplace committees and groups, but with a few important distinctions. Team leaders in the college and university setting are typically in administrative leadership functions such as the dean of students, vice president of student affairs or something similar.

While there may be some local differences and reasons to make exceptions to these guidelines, ideally team leaders should be singular by design and plan to serve longer terms than might be expected on other committees. This may be a shift from most committee meetings where team leadership rotates more frequently, particularly in academic and faculty settings. Those with high degrees of information sharing restrictions and privacy, such as counseling, medical directors and law enforcement, are typically not in leadership positions due to the potential conflict in their roles and the importance of keeping

these positions working effectively in their areas of responsibility. If there is a second team chair or leader, the roles between the two should be clearly defined so tasks and responsibilities are not left behind. If having two leaders is non-negotiable at your location, consider having one person more focused on leadership, future direction and working with upper administration and the other more in tune with the day-to-day



requirements needed to manage the team.

Good team leaders have the respect of the team and the community they work within. Respect and connection around the community helps reduce concern about the team's scope of practice, provides an easier way to engage the team leader if they are concerned about a practice and keeps the team moving toward longer-range strategic goals. They use a timely, well-defined process and bring with them an air of consistency, clear process and stability. Good leaders project a sense of patience and can engage in collaborative problem solving when overcoming obstacles. They encourage discussion among team members, stress the importance of continuous improvement and training while ensuring the assessment and intervention measures are created from a culturally competent manner with an eye to mitigating implicit bias. As Dr. Poppy Fitch says, "A good team leader is **inclusive, caring, and connected**. Strong team leaders understand the relationship between themselves, their team members, and the success of the team. They **self-reflect** and encourage others to do so."<sup>2</sup>

The team leader ensures the team is running a peak performance. This means holding regular meetings, even when people are tired and frustrated. It means keeping the team focused on data-driven, culturally competent questions, assessments and interventions, even when this may take more time and effort. They are problem solvers, community builders, good communicators and above all, they stay centered on the team's mission of helping those in their community stay safe.

1 [www.nabita.org/blog/data-matters/](http://www.nabita.org/blog/data-matters/)

2 <https://cdn.nabita.org/website-media/nabita.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/17113159/Leadership-of-the-BIT-Whitepaper-FINAL.pdf> (Page 9)