



changemakers®

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Vote Now to Rethink Mental Health

(WASHINGTON, DC November 23, 2009) In the *Rethinking Mental Health: Improving Community Wellbeing* competition, changemakers around the world submitted smart programs and bold solutions to expand our understanding of mental health and wellness.

These include a school campus initiative that is raising awareness about the effects of suicide by using a striking display of 1,100 backpacks; a team of personnel specialists who are trained to work with mental health clients and their potential employers; and an outreach program targeting autistic youth in refugee camps.

In the fifth collaborative competition, Ashoka's Changemakers and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation provided a platform to change our society's narrow perceptions and improve the rights and resources for individuals living with serious mental illnesses.

We received more than 340 inspiring solutions from 42 countries, and selected a group of 12 finalists for their vision, impact, and unique approach. Now the online community must vote for the three best solutions to receive a USD \$5000 prize.

"These finalists have proven that communities worldwide will now have the resources and support to address mental health care needs," said Changemakers' executive director Charlie Brown. "We are thrilled to highlight and encourage each solution and look forward to continuing our efforts to radically rethink mental health."

Visit [Changemakers](#) from November 24 until December 9th to cast your vote. Congratulations to the finalists!

1. [National Council for Community Behavioral Healthcare](#), USA
2. [JDW National Referral Hospital, Department of Psychiatry](#), Bhutan

3. [Buckelew Programs, Inc.](#), USA
4. [The South African Depression and Anxiety Organisation](#), South Africa
5. [Active Minds](#), USA
6. [Anjali](#), India
7. [Schizophrenia Research Foundation](#), India
8. [Tiyatien Health](#), Liberia
9. [University of Washington School of Social Work](#), USA
10. [Center for Rural Mental Health Studies](#), USA
11. [FORGE](#), Zambia
12. [Jefferson Center for Mental Health](#), USA

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About the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation focuses on the pressing health and health care issues facing our country. As the nation's largest philanthropy devoted exclusively to improving the health and health care of all Americans, the Foundation works with a diverse group of organizations and individuals to identify solutions and achieve comprehensive, meaningful and timely change. For more than 35 years the Foundation has brought experience, commitment, and a rigorous, balanced approach to the problems that affect the health and health care of those it serves. When it comes to helping Americans lead healthier lives and get the care they need, the Foundation expects to make a difference in your lifetime. For more information, visit www.rwjf.org.

About Ashoka's Changemakers

Changemakers is an initiative of Ashoka, an organization with over three decades of finding, funding, and expanding the work of social entrepreneurs across the globe. It is a global online community of action that connects people to share ideas, inspire and mentor each other, and find and support the best ideas in social innovation. The Changemakers online community builds on this history and expands the Ashoka vision by creating an "Everyone a Changemaker" world through networking, relationship-building, and the sourcing of funding opportunities.

Through its collaborative competitions and open-source process, Changemakers' has created one of the world's most robust laboratories for launching, refining, and scaling ideas for solving the world's most pressing social problems.