Al-Anon/Alateen Public Outreach Service G-10

Outreach to the Public/Media

Public Outreach **informs** the general public through the media, professionals, facilities, and organizations about who we are, what we do, and how to get in touch with us. Our goal is to **attract** to our program those whose lives are or have been affected by someone else's drinking, so that those who need our program can find the help and hope we offer. We also strive for name recognition and credibility as a community resource. Public Outreach includes Outreach to the Public/Media, Outreach to Professionals, and Outreach to Institutions. Your area/district may combine these service areas under Public Outreach, or may maintain separate coordinators and/or committees. All those in Public Outreach are encouraged to work together to avoid duplicating efforts.

WHO CAN DO PUBLIC OUTREACH?

A willing and active Al-Anon/Alateen member with an understanding of the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions. It is a way for us as individuals or as a group to grow and develop in our recovery.

WHAT IS OUTREACH TO THE PUBLIC/MEDIA?

Outreach through the media (newspapers, TV, radio, magazines, and the Internet) and other means of reaching the public directly (poster placement, health and community fairs, etc.) are the areas of Public Outreach known as Outreach to the Public/Media (public information or PI) service. The "Public" is the general public who may be families and friends of alcoholics, or know someone who is. Professionals are also members of the public who may see our posters, media efforts, etc.

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF OUTREACH TO THE PUBLIC/MEDIA?

- To get information directly to the public about Al-Anon/ Alateen as a resource.
- To build awareness in the community of what Al-Anon/ Alateen is.
- To inform the media of how Al-Anon/ Alateen can help families and friends of alcoholics.
- To obtain media coverage of Al-Anon/Alateen through our public service announcements (PSAs), press releases, community calendar listings, and personal interviews.
- To make sure that the public can find Al-Anon easily— through telephone book listings, community calendar listings, and other local directories.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES:

- If your district or area doesn't already have a Public Outreach Committee, consider starting one! Use suggestions in *The Best of Public Outreach* (P-90) as a foundation. Concentrate efforts on one or two projects at a time!

- Provide speakers and literature for community events

- Participate/exhibit at health fairs. Use the Al-Anon video (AV-31).

IS YOUR LIFE AFFECTED BY SOMEONE'S DRINKING?
My Father My Friend
My Child My Spouse
To help them, you have to help yourself first.
Call Al-Anon/Alateen
1-888-4AL-ANON (1-888-425-2666)
www.al-anon.alateen.org

- Plan a poster campaign. Posters can be placed in public places, such as community centers, libraries, laundromats, store windows, supermarkets, schools, etc. (with permission of the facility).

- Distribute supplies of literature and meeting lists to public places (with permission of the facility).

- Create artwork for billboards, public transportation, etc.

- Make sure a local Al-Anon number is listed in every local telephone book and resource directory in the community, both printed and on-line.

- Establish a local Web site.

- Stamp literature with a local contact telephone number and/or meeting time and place.

- Invite community leaders and media contacts to open meetings.

- Offer your services to local information centers or local committees on alcoholism (as individuals, not as Al-Anon members).
- Include a PO Box number or telephone number in all stories and announcements.
- Use television and radio announcements available from the WSO with suggestions for using the media to carry the message. Work with your District Representative, local Al-Anon information service, and area Public Outreach/Public Information Coordinator on this.
- Send press releases (available on the WSO Web site, www.al-anon.alateen.org) to all local media. Include your local contact information and offer interviews with local members (maintaining anonymity).
- Contact all local talk shows on radio and television and offer to be interviewed.

HOW DO I GET STARTED?

Ask your Group Representative if your district has a Public Outreach or Public Information (PI) Coordinator/Chairperson, or a Public Outreach Committee. If there aren't any, contact your area Public Outreach/PI Coordinator. Your District Representative, Delegate, Area Chairperson, or the WSO can tell you who the area Coordinator(s) are. We encourage districts and areas to form Public Outreach Committees and to work with their area Coordinators.

WHY DO WE NEED TO WORK WITH AN AREA PUBLIC OUTREACH COORDINATOR?

The area Coordinator can help to get maximum results from the work of Al-Anon and Alateen members involved in outreach projects in the area. By sharing projects implemented nationally by the WSO, the area Coordinator can provide "how to" information that will help local members avoid duplication of effort. Contact with the area Coordinator also gives them the opportunity to share your efforts with other members in your area.

FORM AN OUTREACH TO THE PUBLIC/MEDIA COMMITTEE

As with any area of Al-Anon/Alateen service, the more the merrier. Get a group of members together to come up with a plan for reaching out to the general public and the media. Use *The Best of Public Outreach* (P-90) for ideas.

RESOURCES AND SERVICE TOOLS FOR YOU TO USE:

☛ Your Area Public Outreach or Public Information Coordinator(s)

☛ *Area Public Outreach Coordinator* guideline (G-38)

☛ *The Best of Public Outreach* (P-90)

☛ *Members Interested in Speaking* (G-1)

☛ *Attracting and Cooperating* (S-40)

☛ Al-Anon Video (AV-31)

☛ Al-Anon/Alateen TV and radio PSAs (in broadcast formats, AV-30/A-30)

☛ Media Kit (K-19 and K-19c)

☛ Local meeting schedules

☛ Create cards with local and WSO Web site addresses

☛ S-15 Catalog for a full list of carrying the message materials.

☛ Read the *Al–Anon/Alateen Service Manual* (P-24/27), Digest of Al–Anon/Alateen Policies section on Public Relations
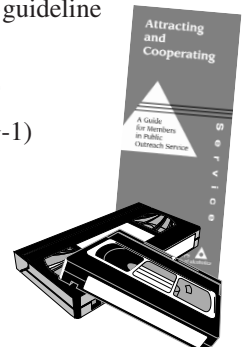
REMEMBER: Reaching out to the media in your community need not be complicated or time consuming. Work with other members, your district or area Public Outreach Coordinators, or a local PO committee. We need never do anything alone in Al-Anon!

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