

PUBLIC INFORMATION

(For Group Handbook)

The first Public Information committee in A.A. was formed by the General Service Board in 1956. At the time, the following amended statement of "A.A.'s movement-wide public information policy" was written and approved by the General Service Conference:

"In all public relationships, A.A.'s sole objective is to help still-suffering alcoholics. Always mindful of the importance of personal anonymity, we believe this can be done by making known to still-suffering alcoholics, and to those who may be interested in their problem, our own experience as individuals and as a Fellowship in learning to live without alcohol.

We believe that our experience should be made available freely to all who express sincere interest. We believe further that all our efforts in this field should always reflect our gratitude for the gift of sobriety and our awareness that many outside of A.A. are equally concerned with the serious problem of alcoholism."

As our co-founder, Bill W., wrote:

"Public Information takes many forms – the simple sign outside a meeting place that says "A.A. meeting tonight;" listing in local home directories; distribution of A.A. literature; and radio and television shows using sophisticated media techniques. Whatever the form, it comes down to "one drunk carrying the message to another drunk," whether through personal contact or through the use of third parties and the media."

The needs and experience of people in your own area, large or small, urban or rural, will affect what you decide to do. The suggestions below are just that – suggestions to spark your thinking on how best to work at carrying the message.

SUGGESTIONS FOR LOCAL P.I. ACTIVITY

For groups in small communities where there is no Public Information Committee, you can take a small card or sheet of paper containing the name of your group, meeting location, time, telephone contact and deliver to one or more of the following: police stations; jails; detention centres; hospitals; clinics; physicians; clergy members; churches; social, health, or welfare agencies; large firms; and others.

In larger urban areas, a meeting list could be distributed along with the Central/Intergroup Office address, telephone number, and website address. You might also want to take along an appropriate A.A. pamphlet or an issue of Regmaker. For example, "A.A. in Your Community" is a helpful pamphlet, as well as "A.A. as a Resource for the Health Care Professional," "If You are a Professional...," "Members of the Clergy Ask About A.A.," "This is A.A.," "A Brief Guide to A.A.," and the service piece "Information on Alcoholics Anonymous" all provide helpful information.

Public Information Committee Liaison

Group Public Information representatives (P.I.) usually work with the local intergroup (central office), district or area P.I. committee to carry the A.A. message locally. They periodically inform their home groups of local activity and may arrange for group volunteers to participate in P.I. programs requested by schools, businesses, law-enforcement agencies and other organizations interested in the A.A. approach to recovery from alcoholism.

Most groups realize that alcoholics can't come to A.A. for help unless they know where we are. Using many suggested methods ranging from personal contact to public service announcements on radio and TV, groups and their members reach out, working within the framework of Tradition Eleven. Sometimes a small sign saying "A.A. meeting tonight" outside the meeting-place door points the way. And from A.A.'s earliest days, radio announcements and small newspaper announcements of A.A. meetings have been used to attract alcoholics in need of help.

The Public Information Workbook offers suggested guidelines in furthering this vital group service activity.

Resources on www.aasouthafrica.org.za

There are many resources available on G.S.O.'s A.A. website www.aasouthafrica.org.za. You can download and print a number of helpful service pieces including "Information on A.A.," "A.A. Guidelines".