

LET PEOPLE KNOW ABOUT YOUR MEETING!

You can publicize your meetings in lots of ways. Here are a few. For more information, contact your local intergroup or region office, or get the *Public Information Service Manual* from the WSO.

❖ **Group Registration** Register your group and keep that information current with the WSO AND your intergroup. Many people call the WSO seeking information about meetings in their area. The WSO depends on you to make sure the information we are giving out is up to date.

❖ **Bulletin Boards** Post notices of OA meetings and special events on community bulletin boards in shopping malls, grocery stores, libraries, schools, waiting rooms, hospitals and other public places where permitted. You may use the *Bulletin Board Attraction Cards* available from the WSO.

❖ **Classified advertisements** Many newspapers and neighborhood “shoppers” offer free listings to nonprofit organizations. Send these to the appropriate department head, or a department name may be sufficient. Publishers often require that ad copy be sent in weekly, usually by postcard. Length is usually limited to a specified number of words or lines. Many groups and intergroups prepare a month’s worth of notices in advance and mail one each week on the same day.

Sample Classified Ad Copy

#1—30 words

Do you worry about the way you eat? Overeaters Anonymous may have the answer for you. No weigh-ins, dues or fees. Call for a meeting location in your neighborhood.

#2—20 words

If food rules your life, call Overeaters Anonymous. No dues, fees or weigh-ins. Call for the nearest meeting location.

#3—15 words

Are you a compulsive overeater? Overeaters Anonymous can help. For more information call _____.

❖ **Public Service Announcements (PSAs)** on radio or TV A PSA is usually a ten-, fifteen-, or thirty-second radio or television spot with a short message about OA and the phone number of the World Service Office and/or the local intergroup. While broadcast stations are no longer required to air PSAs, many stations do so as a community service and to fill space between programs. Some tips:

✓ **Use the prerecorded OA radio PSA**—The transcript for the radio PSA is the same as that for our TV PSA. Each radio PSA tape comes with ten-, fifteen-, and thirty-second spots.

✓ **Use the prerecorded OA TV PSA**—TV stations are not likely to use PSAs unless they are profes-

sionally produced. We suggest you purchase the PSA from the OA catalog, and submit the script along with the tape (included with purchase). Each TV PSA tape comes with ten-, fifteen-, and thirty-second spots.

✓ **Use live copy**—Some stations prefer live copy which they will produce or announce on the air (see sample below).

Sample Live Copy PSA

30 seconds

Do you suspect food rules your life? Overeaters Anonymous may be the answer for you. It is not a diet club, but a Fellowship of people recovering from compulsive overeating. OA offers mutual support. The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop eating compulsively. There are no dues, fees or weigh-ins. For a meeting in your neighborhood call _____.

❖ **Ongoing meeting notices** Some papers have a special section for community meetings. The type of notice you send to the newspaper or community newsletter depends on the individual policies of each paper. Some require that you submit a notice each week. Others will run one submission indefinitely.

Tips for submitting meeting notices:

- ✓ Double-check the name of the special events section and the name/title to whom you are supposed to send the notices.
- ✓ Type your notice and send it with a cover letter. Some papers will accept postcards for notices that must be sent in weekly. Type across the top: “NOTICE FOR WEEK OF . . .”
- ✓ If your notice will be running indefinitely, check the listing periodically for errors.

Sample Newspaper Meeting Notice

Thursdays (Add date if submitted weekly.)

OVEREATERS ANONYMOUS. Middle Vale High School, 241 Highland Ave., Newtown. Second floor faculty lounge. 7 p.m. newcomer meeting, 8 p.m. regular meeting. No dues, fees or weigh-ins. Everyone welcome! (If desired, include a phone number).

➤ **Press releases** These are submitted when there's something newsworthy to tell the public. If your service body is planning a special event such as a PI/newcomers' night, presenting a copy of the newest OA book to the library, or starting a new meeting, inform the media and the public through a press release. Include the name of the sponsoring service body; exact time, date, and location of event; purpose; cost (if any); and a contact name and phone number. Additional information about OA may also be included (see samples below).

Tips for submitting press releases:

- ✓ Call your local newspapers to find out to whom your release should be sent and what the deadlines are for submissions. (E.g., a release about OA's participation in a health fair would go to the health editors, and they may need the release a couple of weeks, or more, in advance.)
- ✓ Type the name, address and phone number of your group's contact in the upper-right-hand corner. This information is for media use only; it won't appear in the final story.
- ✓ Type double-spaced with one-inch margins.

- ✓ Tell who, what, when, where and why in the first few sentences or paragraphs. Place the most important information first and continue in decreasing order of importance.
- ✓ Keep sentences and paragraphs brief and to the point. One page is ideal, but don't use more than two. Proofread carefully for grammatical accuracy and typing errors.
- ✓ End the release with "-30-" or "# # #" centered on the page; this indicates the end of the press release.
- ✓ Mail or fax your release to all editors on your list, even if two or more are from the same paper or station. This can lead to feature stories. Do not hand-deliver your press releases.
- ✓ If your release is not used, contact the editor(s) to ask why not. Use this information the next time you submit a press release.

➤ **Be prepared** for newcomers coming to your meetings by stocking up on OA literature. If possible, compile a list of abstaining members who can help callers to your local OA phone line with questions about OA.

Sample Press Release for a New Meeting

FROM: Overeaters Anonymous
Middletown Intergroup
1212 Recovery Lane
Middletown, OH 12345

CONTACT: Serenity Jones
(678) 555-1112

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Compulsive overeaters are invited to a new weekly meeting of Overeaters Anonymous beginning next Sunday, May 11, from 11:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at the Middletown Community Hospital, Conference Room A.

Overeaters Anonymous is not a diet club. There are no dues, fees or weigh-ins. The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop eating compulsively.

Founded in 1960 with three members, OA views compulsive overeating as a physical, emotional and spiritual disease that can be arrested but not cured. Members seek recovery on all three levels by following a twelve-step program patterned after that of Alcoholics Anonymous.

There are twelve meetings in the Middletown area. For information, contact the Middletown OA Intergroup, 1212 Recovery Lane, Middletown, Ohio 12345. Telephone: (678) 555-1112.

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Sample Press Release for a Public Information Night

FROM: Overeaters Anonymous
Middletown Intergroup
1212 Recovery Lane
Middletown, OH 12345

CONTACT: Serenity Jones
(678) 555-1112

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Overeaters Anonymous (OA) is a fellowship of people who share the common problem of compulsive overeating. A special Public Information Night will be held on (date, time and place). All are welcome, including those who think they may be compulsive overeaters and those who are concerned about a friend or relative.

*A film about OA will be shown, and the OA recovery program will be explained. Members will be present to share their own experiences and to answer questions.

Founded in 1960, OA has no dues or fees for membership; one becomes a member simply by having a desire to stop eating compulsively. OA is not affiliated with any public or private organization, political movement, ideology or religious doctrine.

There are (number) meetings in the (city) area.

For more information about this special meeting or other OA meetings in the area, call (phone number.)

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*Delete if film is not to be shown and begin with "The OA recovery..."

Order the **Public Information Service Manual** (item #762, \$12) from the WSO, 1-505-891-2664 or online at www.oa.org/literature_catalog.htm