

NARATEEN

A Report to the 6th Annual Midwest Assembly, by the Midwest Nar-Anon Ad Hoc Narateen Committee, to inform of policies and guidelines approved by the World Service Narateen Committee arrived at by consensus of the 14 member, October 24, 2015. by Janis Aldridge

Introduction

Narateen groups, which are part of the Nar-Anon Fellowship, are formed to provide support to teenage family members and friends of addicts. A Narateen group is a safe environment where teenagers can share. The principles that apply in the Nar-Anon fellowship, such as honesty, trust, confidence, safety, and anonymity, also apply to Narateen. (*Narateen – Safety Guidelines doc.*)

These Narateen guidelines were created to ensure the safety of Narateen members, facilitators, and Nar-Anon/Narateen as a whole. In addition, each Narateen group must adhere to the policies of their local Nar-Anon area and region, as well as any regulations in their state, province, or country concerning adults working with youths. (*Narateen – Safety Guidelines doc.*)

Narateen members will conduct their meetings in accordance with those of Nar-Anon. Each group has a Group Service Representative and an Alternate Delegate; groups currently meet in Eastern Pennsylvania, Florida, Illinois, New Jersey, and throughout the world. Narateen is not self-supporting; Start-up Packets are supplied by the Region, but the Home Group funds it.

Role of the Narateen Facilitator

It is recommended that Narateen facilitators be consistent in following the group's guidelines. The rationale is that many Narateen members may have been exposed to a lack of consistency in their home environment. They are likely to attend meetings with an atmosphere of safety and familiarity. Groups are also more successful when a facilitator is willing to serve for a period of one or two years. (*Narateen – Safety Guidelines doc.*)

I. Introduction to the Training of Narateen Facilitators

- A. First and foremost, a facilitator must be mindful that in any and all interaction with teenagers; one is required to abide by the federal, state and local laws with regard to minors and children; the age range of Narateen members: 12-18; check ID.
- B. Secondly, but equally important, a facilitator must be an active member, attending Nar-Anon meetings on a regular basis, be fluent in the language of the Twelve Steps, Twelve Traditions, and Twelve Concepts, and actively working a program.
- C. Thirdly, Nar-Anon is proactive in taking appropriate measures to protect children. Certification of Facilitators is contingent upon having attended a 1-2 hour A/V presentation on Physical, Sexual, Verbal Abuse, Neglect, Pedophilia and the Law.

II. Documentation Requirements:

- A. Fingerprinting

B. Criminal Background Check

III. The role of facilitator is different than that of a member of Narateen.

- A. Facilitators listen but are not encouraged to participate in discussion. Healing comes from members sharing their own teen experience; hence an adult must not interject, comment, suggest, interrupt or otherwise involve oneself in the meeting.
- B. Two Facilitators must be in the room together whenever and wherever teens are present: never allow adult facilitators to be left alone, one-on one, with a teenager, whether the teen be a long-time member or a newcomer.

IV. Additional duties of the Facilitator include:

- A. The facilitator has ownership of the room key; not to be handed to a teenager, nor allow a teenager to open the door for you, nor borrow the key from you.
- B. The facilitator maintains a library of books, pamphlets, newcomer packets, C/DVDs.
- C. The facilitator records purchases of materials, name lists, phone and email numbers, monies collected during meetings, as well as minor expenditures.
- D. The facilitator keeps abreast of news and events pertinent to Narateen, responsible for dissemination of information to teen members, as approved by Nar-Anon.
- E. Parent of a Narateen member may not facilitate at a meeting where their own child is present even if already certified as a Narateen Facilitator

Narateen Facilitator Certification

Each local Nar-Anon area or region shall develop a process to define and certify Narateen facilitators based on these World Service Narateen Safety Guidelines in accordance with the local area, state, region, province, or country's laws. Certification is a formal acknowledgement that a member has met the requirements for being of service to Narateen.

I. Narateen Process Person (NPP)

A. The **NPP** chosen by the area or region, is responsible for the confidential records, including the completed forms and background checks of facilitators. The **NPP** communicates with potential facilitators and local or state agencies.

B. It is suggested the **NPP** be certified in the same way as a Narateen facilitator. An alternate delegate or alternate chair is often utilized for this position. This allows for communication between the NPP and the regional service committee (RSC) to flow more effectively. An RSC member could become the NPP, depending on the workload of the RSC position.

C. Once certification process in place at the area/region level, a list of certified Narateen facilitators is kept by the **NPP**. This list must be sent to WSO annually and if changes occur. In Elmhurst, IL, the Ad Hoc Narateen Committee Chair will serve as NPP, conducting training and background checks, the fees will be covered by the individual volunteer being screened.

II. The Screening Toolbox: Using a Variety of Resources

Using a variety of resources will help achieve the goal of a secure and thorough background-screening process. Look at each component as an additional layer, building a solid and comprehensive screening program.

Aware that Nar-Anon as an organization is especially mindful of concerns regarding child-sexual abuse within youth-serving in the Narateen organization, and proactive in taking appropriate measures to protect children, making the applicant aware of NaAnon's thorough screening process will serve as a deterrent to individuals with questionable motives.

Based on the Nar-Anon criteria, those extremely important behaviors, actions, or statements that would give you pause, or be seen as red flags in an environment with minors may have already been noted in the Nar-Anon meetings.

"However, it is imperative to remember that people who are trying to gain access to children to victimize them may not have a criminal history. Examples of red flags could be an excessive or unnatural interest in children's activities, interest in particular age groups or gender of children, and possibly an unwillingness or reluctance to submit to a background check. Keep in mind that there are some characteristics that are similar in individuals who pose a possible *threat* to a child, and in individuals who have healthy relationships with children"

[Reference: This project was supported by a Cooperative Agreement 2009-CK-WX-K001 awarded by the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services, U.S. Department of Justice. ISBN: 978-1-935676-60-7 June 2013].

A. Here are six layers of screening to consider:

1. **Nationwide and state criminal-history checks** A list of the State Identification Bureaus is available on the FBI Criminal Justice Information Service's website at www.fbi.gov/about-us/cjis/background-checks/state-identification-bureau-listing.

2. State and national public sex-offender websites

If you have questions about the NSOPW, contact the U.S. Department of Justice's Office of Sex Offender Sentencing, Monitoring, Apprehending, Registering, and Tracking at www.ojp.usdoj.gov/smart/.

3. State child-abuse registries

The type of information in each registry varies as well. Some states limit the information to only substantiated reports of abuse, while others include all reports made and investigated, even if they were determined to be unsubstantiated. There is currently no national registry, so individuals must be checked on a state-by-state basis.

[**These state repositories** are maintained in a database called the Integrated Automated Fingerprint Identification System. IAFIS is a national fingerprint and criminal-history system that responds to requests 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. IAFIS searches include arrest records, convictions, juvenile records (if provided by the state), dismissed charges or not-guilty verdicts, warrants, Sex Offender Registry information, physical characteristics (i.e., height, weight, hair, tattoos, and eye color), and aliases. All arrest data included in an Identification Record is obtained from fingerprint submissions, disposition reports, and other information submitted by agencies with criminal justice responsibilities. Additional details may be obtained from the court. Adult court records are public information unless sealed by court order. Links to all state,

territorial, and tribal sex-offender websites can be found by visiting the “Registry Sites” web page, accessible from www.NSOPW.gov.]

4.-6. Narateen Facilitators are drawn from a limited pool of Nar-Anon or NA. Since In-Person interviews are recommended for all organizations where youth are involved, as are references, and observation of the applicant, how is this accomplished for Narateen?

II B. What Criteria Will Be Used?

1. Facilitator is a well-known, 2 year member of the specific Nar-Anon group starting up a new Narateen group
2. Fluent in the “language” of Nar-Anon and NA; 12 Steps, Concepts and Traditions
3. Is actively working the 12 Steps of NA or Nar-Anon Program.

C. Who will evaluate the criteria? **NPP** the Narateen Process Person receives the reports and has the authority to approve Facilitators, (**See: page 2: NPP**)

D. What disqualifies a Facilitator?

1. Failure to complete the screening process
2. Past history of sexual victimization of children (regardless of whether the individual completed therapy)
3. Conviction for any crime in which children were involved (regardless of successful completion of probation or incarceration)
4. History of violence or any sexually exploitative behavior including acts against adults
5. Termination from a paid or volunteer position for misconduct with a child
6. Lying about criminal history

E. What if You Notice or witness child abuse either verbal or physical by a Faciliator/Parent/Legal Guardian?

It is everyone’s responsibility to make sure any harm against a child is reported. If you observe inappropriate behavior or if you have reason to believe something inappropriate has occurred, do not assume someone else will report it. It is up to you to act.

1. If you have observed or have reason to believe there has been an incident of sexual contact, sexual abuse, or physical abuse, **report this information directly to law enforcement..**
2. If you have observed or become aware of behavior you feel is suspicious or concerning, **report this information directly to the organization’s leadership.** This should not be a substitute for contacting law enforcement.

3. If any questionable behavior on the part of a Facilitator is reported, he/she must step down.

Ideally, background screening should be nationwide, timely, and at minimal cost; yet there is no comprehensive national screening resource currently available meeting these criteria. It can be difficult for non-law enforcement entities to conduct and analyze criminal history checks, and access to child-abuse registries is limited. A comprehensive screening program includes training, reporting procedures, criminal history checks, in-person interviews, and reference checks. Whatever combination of sources used, the most thorough and comprehensive of background

checks will not eliminate the risk of harm to children and should not be viewed as the universal remedy to child protection. Organizational policies must prohibit inappropriate practices such as allowing an adult to work alone with a child or give personal gifts to a child.

III. Volunteer Rights to Screening

A. First of all, keep in mind that times have changed. Gone are the days when you simply showed up at an organization's door, offering your free time for a cause close to your heart. Like it or not, background screening seems here to stay.

B. Enter: the Volunteers for Children's Act.

C. Still, privacy and security of your personal information are legitimate concerns. Identity theft is a real threat. Personal information collected just to start the screening process may be all an identity thief needs. Not only that, background screening reports can include personal details about your life that you would not normally share with others.

D. The following are some things you can do for peace of mind:

1. Review Nar-Anon policies, both on background screening and privacy. If policies are not clear, ask questions.
2. Visit the Nar-Anon website.
3. If a commercial screening vendor is used, get the name and contact for the vendor. Under the FCRA you may be entitled to an annual report of information the organization has collected.
4. Object to signing open-ended notice and consent forms.
5. Papers containing personal information are securely stored with the NPP.
6. Ensure that personal information required for Internet background checks is encrypted.
7. Take the opportunity to gather information on yourself. Check your own criminal records through the FBI, or the your state's criminal history repository, which can be accessed online.
8. For more on "specialty" reports: www.privacyrights.org/fs/fs6b-SpecReports.htm.

E. FBI Checks vs. Commercial Companies

1. **FBI:** fingerprinting adds a layer; e.g: aliases will be revealed
2. The FBI's Triple I data file relies on input from state repositories, which in turn, rely on input from county courts and law enforcement agencies.
<http://www.fbi.gov/about-us/cjis/identity-history-summary-checks>.
3. **Commercial** background screeners have data quality and completeness lacking in FBI files. Inconsistencies and lack of uniformity in state criminal records repositories mean FBI files may not give a clear, complete picture of a criminal history.

IV. A Program of Attraction: Increasing Number of Narateen Facilitators

One of the best ways to increase volunteers to work with Narateen is to communicate between facilitators in the group, area and/or the region. Hold a Narateen facilitator workshop at a meeting and at area or region conventions. Inviting interested Nar-Anon members to attend can help expand your facilitator base.

For additional information please read about Narateen on the nar-anon.org website.

V. It is the request of the current members of this Ad Hoc Narateen Committee that it be sanctioned by the 6th Midwest Region Assembly to continue its work for an additional year.

Process for Starting a Narateen Group in the Midwest Region

Step I. Elect a Narateen Process Person

- A. Candidates selected from among Nar-Anon Members' Home Group.
- B. Candidates from RSC, may include Alternate Delegate

Step II. Background/Criminal Check potential Facilitators

- A. Commercial/FBI
- B. Fingerprint

Step III. Train Facilitators

- A. 1-2 hr A/V w/ Q/A
- B. Certification in person only

Step IV. Communicate with WSO

- A. Inform WSO: Establishment of new Narateen Meeting.
- B. Submit Records, Certifications and pertinent files/info to WSO.