

# Public Information

1. **Distribute flyers at earlier events:** This includes Super Saturdays, retreats, conventions, and meetings.
2. **Send plenty of flyers to intergroup to be distributed with newsletters:** This ensures that every group will know about your special event.
3. **Write a short article for the newsletter:** This is a great way to encourage people to attend. The address to send submissions to the newsletter is [stlouisoatoday@hotmail.com](mailto:stlouisoatoday@hotmail.com). Articles are usually due before the first day of the month that they are printed.
4. **Post flyers at public places:** Some great ideas for places to hang flyers include libraries, schools (any educational office or building), doctors' offices, hospitals, (any medical office or building), laundromats, gyms, post offices, grocery stores, bulletins boards, waiting rooms, public health departments, social service offices (any government office or building), and police stations where permitted. Be creative, can you think of other helping professions that have a good place to post a flyer? Pass a stack of flyers around during a meeting and invite members to take a few to distribute as they run their daily errands.
5. **Contact community groups:** Civic groups, service clubs, and ethnic neighborhood organizations are great ways to reach the public.
6. **Use old meeting sign-up and IG outreach list to phone/invite those who used to attend your meeting.**
  - Sometimes a long list can be overwhelming. A good way to get started is just to make one phone call a day/ week/ month. One phone call could help the compulsive eater who still sufferers.
  - Another helpful idea that was used at a group in St. Louis involves writing names and numbers on small pieces of paper of people to whom outreach is desired. Then, pass them around in a hat or basket during meetings and encourage members to do service by picking one name and calling and inviting that person to the Super Saturday. This can make a long list disappear in one or two meetings.
1. **Provide local hospitals and churches with printed information to include in a brief announcement in bulletins and newsletters.** Send churches and hospitals a flyer, encouraging them to share the information.
2. **Contact the local media.** Attached is a mini-manual giving step-by-step directions on writing a press release and sending it to your local papers.

## **Step 1: Write a press Release**

### **Suggestions for writing a Press Release**

As one member said when asked if she would be willing to send out a few press releases, “Sure, I can send them out and leave the results to God. That’s easy.”

1. 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.
2. Tell who, what, when, where, and why in the first few sentences or paragraphs. Use the inverted pyramid approach to writing, placing the most important information first and continuing in decreasing order of importance.
3. Keep sentences and paragraphs brief and to the point.
4. Use the enclosed sample press release to include detailed information about the OA program. Editors will decide how much of the information presented will be used.
5. Be brief: one page is ideal, but don’t use more than two.
6. End the release with “-30-“ or ”###” centered on the page; this indicates the end of the press release.
7. Proofread carefully for grammatical accuracy and typing errors.
8. Email, fax, or mail your release to all the editors on your list, even if two or more are from the same paper or station. This can lead to feature stories in the least likely places. Do not hand deliver your press releases.
9. A group might consider mailing a press kit along with a press release. A press kit tells the journalist what OA is and isn’t. In addition, it answers the five W’s (who-what-why-when-where) of OA. Sending a press release kit can lead to a feature story on your event! Press kits can be tailored to individual needs. You may wish to include other OA approved literature as applicable. Also, you may wish to put the press kit in a nice but inexpensive two-pocket folder (see enclosed packet). The sample press release kit that is enclosed for your use contains an Anonymity Assistance Request, History and Structure of OA, and the pamphlets *About OA*, *A Program of Recovery*, and *Questions and Answers*. The Public Information Committee is more than happy to give groups more press release kits. Please contact Lisa B. at (636) 586-6274 or via email: [labenglish4@aol.com](mailto:labenglish4@aol.com) for more information.
10. 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.
11. If your release is used, contact WSO to let them know what kind of public response you have received.

In addition, any of the information listed in this mini-manual can be obtained electronically. See above email and phone number.

Adapted from *Public Information Service Manual*