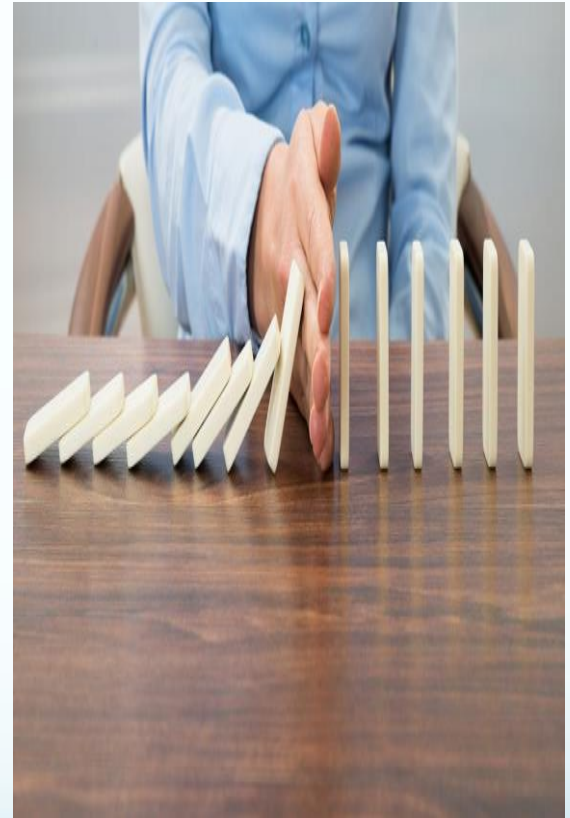# Sharing of Service
SCWS
Attracting and Welcoming Newcomers to Our Groups During the Pandemic

Claire R., Virginia
January 15, 2022

Pandemic's Impact on Our Fellowship

- First occurrence in Al-Anon's history

- Face-to-Face meetings adapt or else…

- Accuracy of meeting information disrupted

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Pandemic's Impact on Local Groups' Meeting Rooms

Facilities:

❖ Closed

❖ Reopened to the public; closed to support groups

❖ Open or reopened with new requirements for support groups
- ✓ Attendees wear masks
- ✓ Room set up with social distancing
- ✓ Sanitize tables and chairs after meetings

❖ Contemplate closing due to COVID variants

__Now__ There Are Three Basic Formats of Al-Anon Meetings

Face to Face

A/V Conferencing

Hybrid

- **Face to Face/Real Time**– Has a physical meeting location
- **Audio/Video Conferencing**–Visual teleconferencing, telephony, and online chat meetings, e.g., Zoom, Webex platforms
- **Hybrid**–Combines face to face (F2F) meeting and audio/video conferencing

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Our Third Year of Challenges For Local Groups

Some newcomers and members:

- Resistant to technology

- Uncomfortable attending meetings at home

- Varied or limited technological skills

- Have limited access to digital equipment or Wi-Fi

Our Third Year of Challenges for Local Groups

In real time and virtual/hybrid:

- Meeting attendance fluctuates
- Difficult to attract newcomers
- Some newcomers and members are not returning to face-to-face meetings
  - ❖ Convenience of virtual meetings
  - ❖ Health concerns, i.e., COVID

Unexpected Bonuses

Conference call and virtual/hybrid meetings:

- Able to attend meetings in any Area or country

- Wear casual and more comfortable attire

- Sit in more comfortable chairs

- Pets can attend

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Conference Call, /Hybrid Hybrid Meetings Hosted by Groups

- Can continue to meet when facilities are closed

- Offer visual and audio capabilities

- Are convenient to access

- Hybrid meetings offer a weekly choice to members, e.g., attend face to face or virtual

Safety and Anonymity in Virtual/Hybrid Meetings Maintained

- Access and pass codes offer a safer meeting environment

- Provides newcomers with as much anonymity as desired

Newcomers have choices for anonymity:

❖ Use first name, nickname or a pseudonym
❖ Turn the device camera on or off
❖ Leave microphone on "mute"
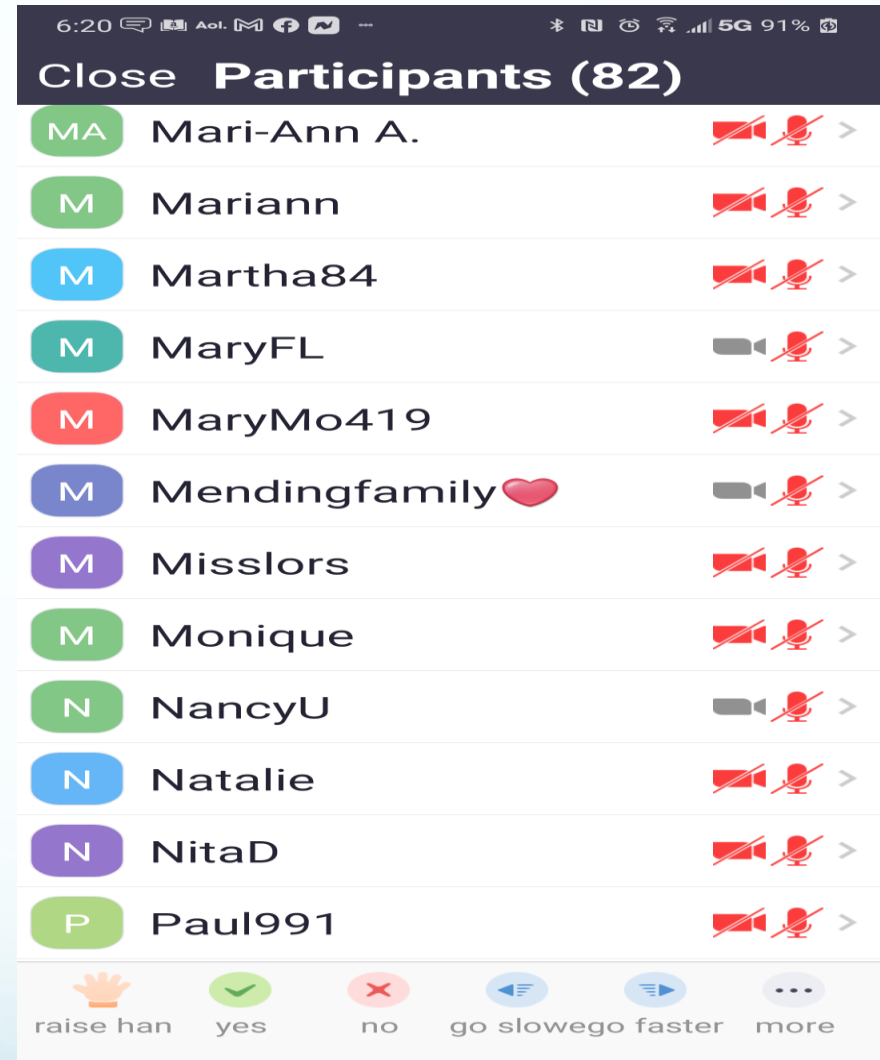
Virtual/Hybrid Meetings Also Have Barriers

Newcomers may experience:

- No or less personal contact with members, e.g., no phone list for phone calls in between meetings

- Unable to experience "fellowship" before or after meetings

- Difficulty finding a Sponsor

- Availability of CAL and information how to obtain it
  - ❖ Members' CAL home libraries have limited items
  - ❖ Reduced variety used at meetings

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First Things First—Make It Easy for Newcomers to Find Us

Let's make sure people can find your meeting!
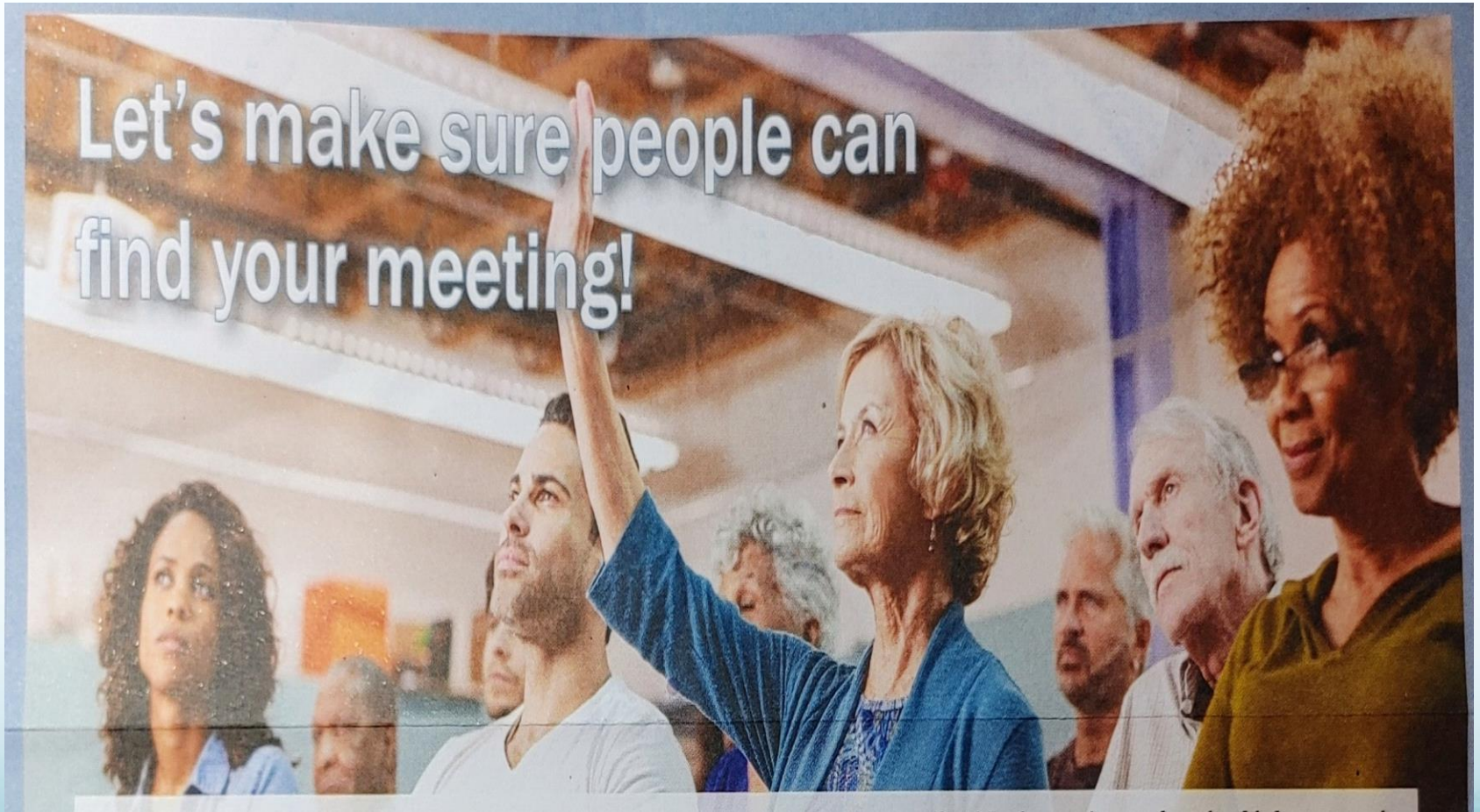
SCWS Resources for Accurate Group Records

- **Al-Anon Information Service (AIS)/Intergroup serving your group and district's geographic location**
  - ❖ Records changes for AIS/Intergroup website and local print meeting lists
  - ❖ Provides updates to Area Group Records Coordinator

- **Area Group Records Coordinator (Teresa F.)**
  - ❖ Maintains records for SCWS groups
  - ❖ Reports changes to the SCWS Website Coordinator, Secretary, and the WSO

At Your Service:
Teresa F.
SCWS Area Group Records Coordinator

grouprecords@scws-al-anon.org

Keeping Group Records Current is Essential for Newcomers and Members!

Examples of updates to report:

- Type of meeting and format
- Meeting location
- Language
- Special instructions, e.g., back or side door, parking, etc.
- Status, e.g., active, inactive, or discontinued

Keeping Group Records Current is Essential for Newcomers and Members!

Examples of changes to report:

- Group Contact **(not required)** name, phone number, and/or email address

- Current Mailing Address (CMA)

- Group Representative (GR) name and contact information

Virtual/Hybrid Welcome Ask "Who Is New?"

- Welcome newcomers before or as the meeting begins using the Zoom participant list for unfamiliar names
  - ❖ Chairperson
  - ❖ New service roles:
    - ✓ Zoom Room Host
    - ✓ Virtual "Greeter"

- Ask newcomers introduce themselves by first name. May need to:
  - ❖ Unmute to speak
  - ❖ Raise virtual hand

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Virtual Outreach to Newcomers Idea

Create an online phone list at meetings:

- Use "Participants" tab to ask members willing to receive calls to insert their:
  - ❖ First names
  - ❖ Phone number

- Encourage newcomers to take members' phone numbers

se Participants (18)

Search

Claire R 757 619 5... (me)

Deedee A 757-5... (Host)

Ava 757-284-... (Co-host)

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Electronic/Digital CAL for Newcomers

Group Literature Chairperson Can Provide Virtual Services

- Reactivate this group service role

- Offer literature to newcomers

- Find out newcomer's preference:
  - ❖ Electronic/digital Newcomer Welcome booklet (eK-10 or eSK-10)
  - ❖ Printed pamphlets for a postal mailing

- Ask newcomers to provide their email or mailing address
  - ❖ Ask Use the "Chat" feature **OR**
 - ❖ Stay after the meeting to provide the information

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Virtual Group Meetings Can Return to "Old School" Mailings

Literature Chairperson or any member can:

- Obtain the newcomer's mailing address in private "Chat" feature or after the meeting.

- Have a supply of #10 business letter envelopes and postage stamps
  - ❖ Return address can be a member's or an AIS/LDC

- Select one or more 20 question leaflet(s) and lighter weight pamphlets
  - ❖ With information
  - ❖ Weighing up to 1 oz for first class postage

Digital Al-Anon Literature

- **Download free apps** for your Apple/Mac or Android products stores

- **Types of devices:**
  - ❖ Computer/lap top
    - ✓ Windows
    - ✓ Mac OS
    - ✓ Chrome OS
  - ❖ Tablet and mobile phone
    - ✓ Apple iOS
    - ✓ Android
    - ✓ ChromeOS

electronic literature
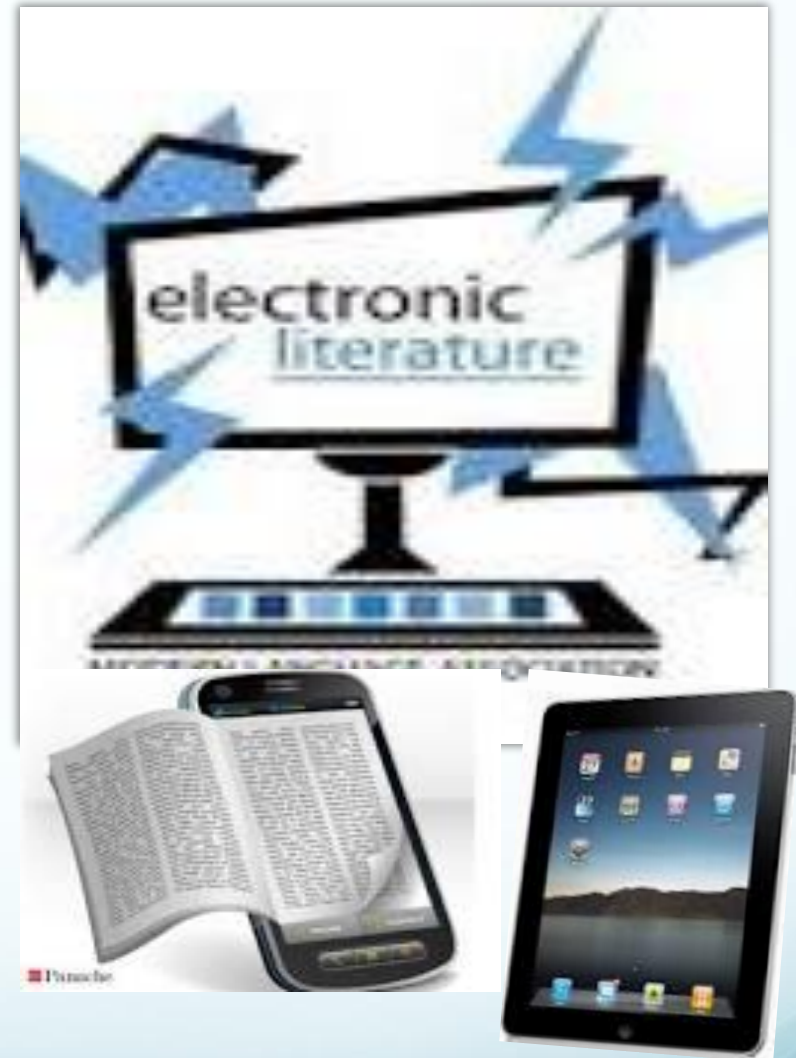
Virtual CAL Outreach to Newcomers Idea

Group Literature Chairman can announce or use the "Chat" feature to offer:

- Postal mailing of CAL pamphlets

- AIS/Intergroup/LDC postal CAL mailing

- An electronic Newcomer Welcome booklet (eK-10 or e-SK-10)

- WSO Online Store "Newcomer" page www.al-anon.org

TOPICS

Al-Anon Essentials

Beginners/Newcomers

Alateen Essentials

Adult Children

Parents/Grandparents

Relationships

History

Outreach to the Public

Digital Al-Anon Literature
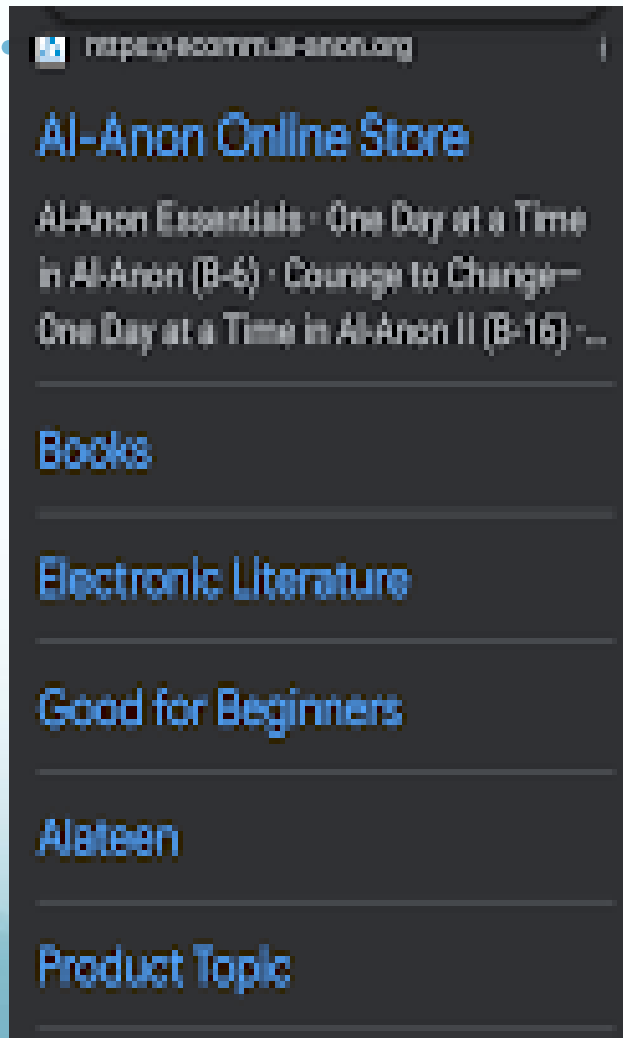
- **Obtain from WSO Online Store**

  https://ecomm.al-anon.org

- **Personal digital literature vendor, e.g., Amazon, Apple Books, Barnes & Noble**

Electronic Newcomer Kit Booklet, Revised

- **Available digital book format @ $1.40**
  - ❖ WSO online store
  - ❖ Amazon/Kindle
  - ❖ Apple Books
  - ❖ Google Play
  - ❖ Barnes & Noble

- **Tip: Obtain newcomer's email address to send as a "gift."**

- Ask newcomer to download <u>free</u> apps for Android or Apple products

Welcome Newcomer! (eK-10)

Introduces first-timers to basic introductory information about the Al-Anon program in an eBooklet format.

Electronic Spanish Newcomer Booklet is the Revised SK-10 Kit

¡Bienvenido, recién llegado! (eSK-10)

Presenta a los recién llegados la información básica introductaria sobre el programa de Al-Anon en formato de libro electrónico (eBooklet).

Let Newcomers Know about the WSO App

- Downloadable for Android and Apple products:
  - ❖ Mobile phones
  - ❖ Tablets
  - ❖ Lap tops and PCs
- Al-Anon Beginner's Groups (English), 5 pm PT daily
- Other Al-Anon group meetings available daily at a variety of times

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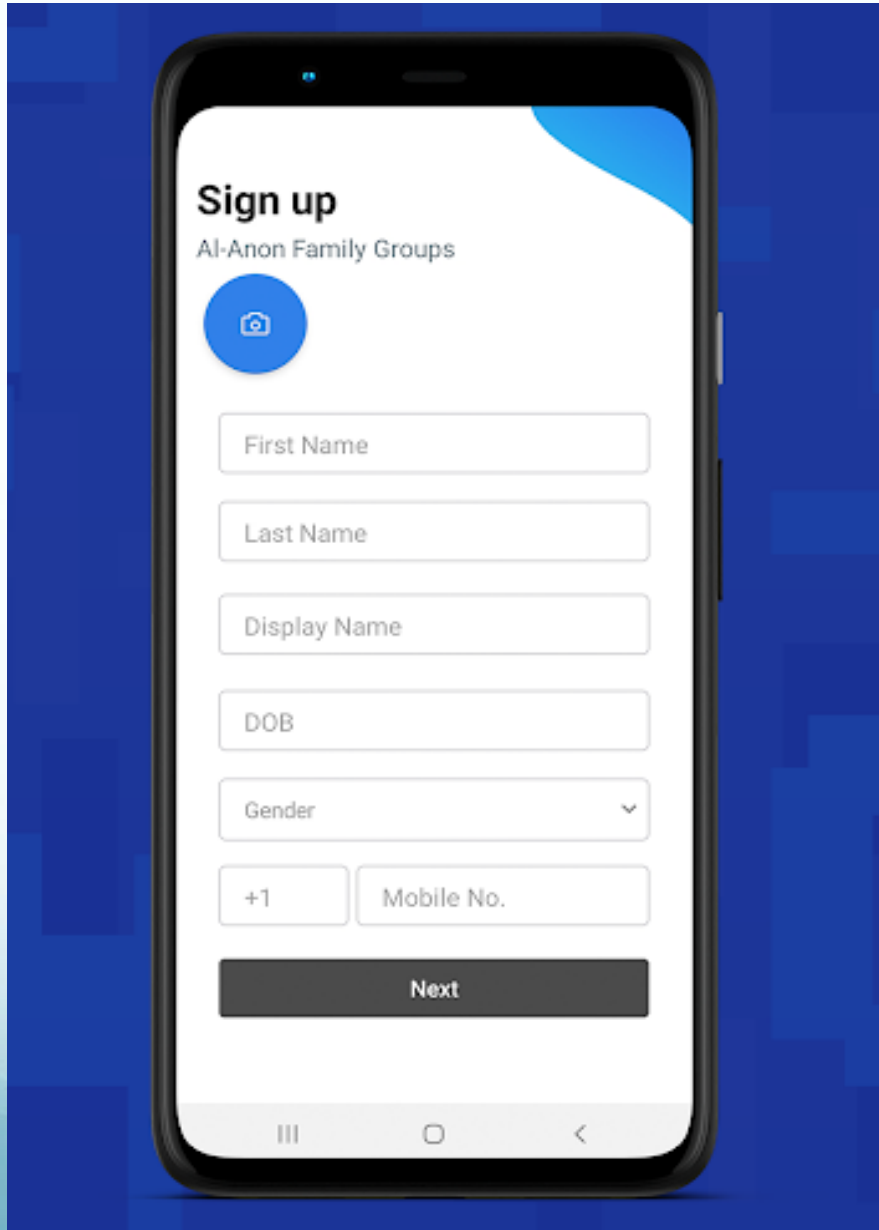
Let Newcomers Know about the Sign Up Process

- Sign up is necessary
- Login is required
- Anonymity is <u>protected</u> and <u>secured</u> by the WSO
  - ❖ Confidential registration
  - ❖ Members create a personal display name, e.g., Claire R., SF619
  - ❖ Full names and email addresses are **<u>NOT</u>**
    - ✓ Disclosed
    - ✓ Posted on the app
    - ✓ Provided to outside entities

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Options: Refer Spanish-speaking and Bilingual Newcomers to the Al-Anon Family Groups App

Obtain Meeting Information

- **Two sources**
  - ❖ Al-Anon Family Groups app
  - ❖ WSO website:
    - ✓ al-anon.org/es
    - ✓ Search "Cambios de Reuniones Electrónica"

Two Meetings on AFG App

- **Thursday, 4:30 pm PT** Bilingual Hearts: Hope in Two Languages
- **Friday, 4 pm PT** Spanish Senderos de Amor (Paths of Love)

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Virtual Alateen Group Meetings

- **WSO website:**
  al-anon.org/newcomers/teen-corner-alateen

Al-Anon Family Groups
Help and hope for families and friends of alcoholics

Newcomers » Teen Corner (Alateen)

Try an Alateen Electronic Meeting

in the Al-Anon Family Groups Mobile App

WSO App
Alateen Group Zoom Meetings

- Five Area sponsored Alateen group meetings

- Presently only English-speaking meetings available

- Alateens must register on the Alateen page

  al-anon.org/newcomers/teen-corner-alateen

- For teens who are ages 13 to 18 from any Area or country

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WSO app includes Alateen Zoom groups:

- Formerly the "Alateen Chat" group meetings sponsored by Areas on a WSO platform
- Alateen members from any Area can attend any Alateen group meeting on the WSO's app
- Al-Anon members who are Certified Alateen Group Sponsors by their Area are Sponsors of the Alateen Groups

Currently, there are five registered English-speaking Alateen groups meeting three days each week on the WSO App.

- **Monday**
  - ❖ 3:00 pm PT, Celebrate Alateen
  - ❖ 7:00 pm PT, Washington Area Alateen Room

- **Wednesday**
  - ❖ 4:00 pm PT, Together We Can Make It
  - ❖ 6:30 pm PT, Montana Alateen Chat

- **Thursday**
  4:30 pm PT, Alateen Chatters

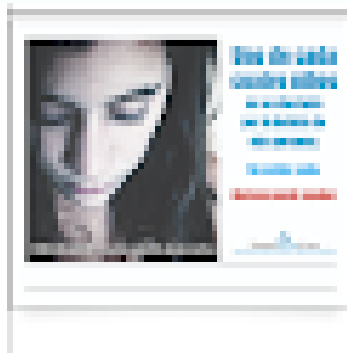# Attracting Newcomers within Our Communities

- Pandemic necessitates changes in our local and Area outreach methods

- Paper Al-Anon/Alateen outreach tools may no longer be acceptable at facilities, e.g., bookmarks, leaflets, Al-Anon Faces Alcoholism magazines

- Transition to and increase our virtual and electronic outreach activities, e.g., virtual beginner's meetings

- New ideas in a new time

Localize WSO Poster Templates to Replace Leaving Literature in Facilities
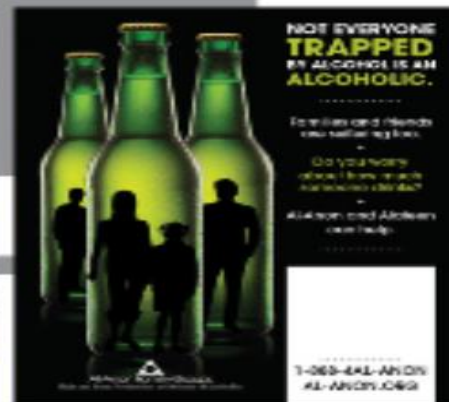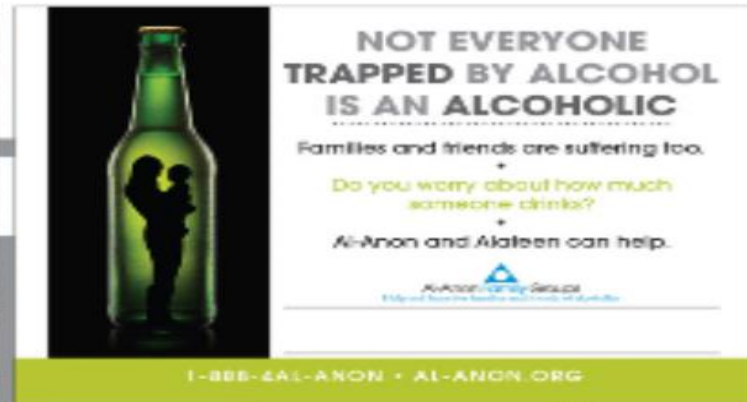
Download and insert your group, AIS, or Area contact information
Create and insert Al-Anon QR Scan Code.

Poster Templates Available from Spanish WSO website

What Are Your Ideas and Experiences?