

Public Outreach Toolkit

Project Name:

Health Fairs/Conferences

Project Brief: Local health fairs and professional conferences provide an opportunity to connect directly with those who may be affected by someone else's drinking or those who are in a position to refer others to our program.

Target Audience: General Public and Professionals

Size of Project: Group(s), AIS/Intergroup, District, Area

Project Cost: \$100.00

Project Length: 1-4 months

Description:

State, county, and nonprofit agencies, businesses and associations, and schools and colleges often offer health fairs or wellness events to the community. Professional organizations also host conferences and workshops. Displaying and distributing Al-Anon/Alateen information at these types of events and programs is another way to help raise public and professional awareness about the benefits of the Al-Anon program.

When gathering information about a health fair, inquire about the length of the event, the hours of operation, any fees that are required, and the number of attendees. If the organization charges for booth space, it is okay to ask about a special rate for non-profit, community-based organizations.

Know the audience:

- What type of event is it?
- Local community event with a variety of activities
- Regional event such as a state fair
- Health fair
- Wellness event for employees of a corporation
- A themed event

Focus on a specific objective:

- You'll make a stronger impression and have more impact if you stick with a specific topic.
- The objective should be directly related to the audience. For example:
 - o Teenagers and students >> Alateen
 - o Baby Boomers >> Parents & Grandparents
 - o Recovery industry >> Professional resources
 - o Non-English speakers >> Spanish or French literature if appropriate

Health Fairs/Conferences (continued)

Know the logistics:

- Confirm the date(s) and hours for the event, including setup and time to pack up at end of event.
- Confirm the event location, where to go the day of event, and where to park.
- Inquire about the setup and what is provided. Be sure to know how much space you have and specific location onsite. Also, verify the equipment that is supplied or needed for rental, i.e., table, chairs, etc.

Plan your display:

- Keep It Simple — Make your display colorful and easy-to-read to attract people as they walk by. Use a banner or poster to identify the space and arrange an assortment of Al-Anon/Alateen resources.
- Suggested items to bring — pens & paper, tape or Velcro to hang a banner on the table, small giveaways (pens, fresh fruit, stress ball, key chain, etc...), colorful decorative items for your table, business cards, tablecloth, if not provided, water and snacks (for you).
- Bring an assortment of literature that visitors can take along. Some suggestions, include but are not limited to:
 - o *Al-Anon Faces Alcoholism* magazine [contact your AIS or LDC to see if they have copies]
 - o Fact Sheet for Professionals [English/Spanish (S-37ES) English/French (S-37EF)]
 - o Troubled by Someone's Drinking? (20 Questions) (S-17)
 - o Did You Grow Up with a Problem Drinker? (S-25)
 - o Has Your Life Been Affected by Someone Else's Drinking? [Alateen] (S-20)
 - o Outreach Bookmark (M-76)
 - o Al-Anon Welcomes Native Americans/Aboriginals (S-67)
 - o Al-Anon Welcomes All People of Color (S-68)
 - o Al-Anon Welcomes Adult Children of Alcoholics (S-69)
 - o Alcoholics, Their Families, and the Judicial System [English/Spanish (S-65ES) English/French (S-65EF)]
 - o What Happens After Treatment? [English/Spanish (S-81ES) English/French (S-81EF)]
 - o Al-Anon and Alateen's Role in Family Recovery (AV-31DVD)

Determine staffing needs:

- A warm, welcoming smile is important to drawing visitors to your booth space. A table full of literature and nothing else will not attract people to your display.
- Even if it's only a 4-hour event with an 8' table, have at least 2 people at your table so that no one must wait to talk to you.
- Be sure member volunteers know what is expected of them. Make a schedule. Plan for breaks and rotation. Share contact information with each other and event coordinator.

Tips for communicating with and engaging visitors

- Smile, be friendly and inviting. Some visitors may already be familiar with our program and come right over. Sometimes visitors are shy about approaching or Al-Anon/Alateen may not be relevant to them.
- Keep the conversation simple and short.
- Give them literature to take away so they can learn more later if they're interested.
- Thank them for their time.