**Parent to Parent of PA**
**Starting/Running Support Groups**

**Checklist for Group Management**
These tasks are proven in the establishment of new support groups and should be accomplished or addressed at the different stages of the support group cycle.

**Preliminary Decisions**

- Picking the Staff -- Facilitator, Organizer, and Administrator.
- Choosing the Format -- Time-Limited or Ongoing.
- Determining the Frequency (Day or Night, Weekday or Weekend) & Location.
- Phone Numbers(s) and Contact Names(s).
- Educational needs and resources.
- Funding -- For printing, postage, envelopes, and information for meetings.

**Tasks before the first meeting**

- Compile list of organizations, people and media to be notified.
- Write and produce announcements and press releases.
- Print brochures, business and rolodex cards.
- Mail or hand deliver all announcements at least six weeks prior to the first meeting.
- Follow up information with phone calls to most important referral sources.
- Develop a Member Profile Card or information sheet to record caller data.
- Compile a speaker list

**Checklist for first meeting**

- Refreshments, name tags, paper, pens, boombox/radio for music.
- Printed information about subject and other community resources.
- Lending Library and sign-out notebook.
- Written ground rules and agenda for all meetings, if time-limited.
• Speakers for at least the next two meetings, if ongoing.
• Have reviewed all Member Profile cards.
• Have plenty of seating, preferably tables
• Arrange chairs in circular setup to facilitate interactions.
• Decorate the room with streamers, flowers, candy, paper products, balloons etc. to make people feel welcome and comfortable.

Checklist prior to each meeting

• Picked topic and/or confirmed speakers.
• Received biography or resume from speaker.
• Determined and accommodated the speaker's needs (VCR, Overhead Projector, etc.)
• Have speaker or topic set for the following meeting
• List of announcements including staff introduction, speaker, new books, new information, special events, staff changes, events of interest to members, etc.
• Have reviewed all data cards.
• Have arranged for refreshments (food, beverages, candy etc.)
• Arrange seating to facilitate interactions.
• Decorate room.
• Have enough printed materials, name tags, markers, paper and pens or pencils.

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