



National Stuttering Association

Chapter Leaders Guide

**National Stuttering Association
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Welcoming Words for the Chapter Leader

Congratulations! You are about to embark on a terrific journey. By volunteering to be a chapter leader for the National Stuttering Association, you are now a part of a wonderful organization. Our local chapters are the backbone of this organization and you are a key player in helping this organization accomplish its goals. You are the link between the chapter member and the national office. You have many resources at your disposal to assist you in running your chapter. Some of those resources include this manual, your regional chapter coordinator and other chapter leaders. The NSA also has an email based communications network or listserv, NSACHAP, just for chapter leaders that can be used to exchange ideas and challenges. You should find running your chapter one of the best experiences in your life. If you have any questions, you should feel free to call your regional chapter coordinator or the national office.

Once again, Congratulations!

Overview of Running Meetings

This section only provides guidelines for how to run a typical meeting. Feel free to improvise as necessary.

There are fundamentally two different types of chapter meetings...

Large Meetings - requires more structure and formality.

Small Meetings - can be very unstructured and very informal.

A "large meeting" can be approximately 12 people or more. Some chapters have reported as many as 60 people at a single meeting! It's a nice problem to have, but meetings over 30 people can become VERY unwieldy!

A "small meeting" is less than about 12 people. Typically these meetings become informal "bull sessions" with a heavy emphasis on support. If one member is facing a crisis, this is the perfect place to get LOTS of support.

Large Meeting

Typically a "facilitator" is chosen ahead of time who prepares a brief discussion topic relating to stuttering. (See "101 Things To Do" later in this document for suggestions on topics.) The facilitator can be anyone, a member or the chapter leader - even an outside guest speaker.

Example of a typical "Large" NSA meeting agenda:

7:00 PM The NSA Welcoming Words are read.

7:05 PM The chapter leader makes short opening remarks and welcomes everyone.

7:10 PM People "go around the room" (gasp!) and introduce themselves. No one is REQUIRED to speak if they don't want to! It's nice to add some short additional information here such as how your last month went or something very positive like "what is the very best thing that happened to you last month?" You can really go around the room in sequence or do "popcorn" introductions where each person who speaks gets to call on the next person totally randomly. Keep this activity FUN! You need to watch your time here. A very large meeting will require very short introductions to keep this part of the meeting on schedule.

It is also very important to ask people why they are there. This bit of information can provide a wealth of information for the chapter leader.

8:00 PM The facilitator is introduced and he gives a short presentation on the topic of his choice.

8:10 PM The main group splits up into breakout groups for further discussions on the topic. A breakout group should contain between 4 and 7 people. These breakout groups give people more chances to talk, which is the primary goal of the entire meeting. People who stutter LOVE to talk! [smile] Remember if a person leaves a meeting without speaking, he will consider the meeting a failure and you'll never see him again.

8:45 PM The groups get back together and the facilitator polls each group for significant ideas and discussions topics.

8:55 PM Closing comments from the facilitator or chapter leader. A facilitator the next meeting is selected and any business items are briefly discussed.

9:00 PM The closing words are read and the meeting is adjourned.

Small Meeting

Using that fundamental structure you can easily mold it for small meetings. If there are less than 8 people at a meeting (a very common occurrence), breakout sessions are generally not necessary. Everyone stays together for the entire meeting. In a small meeting, it is common that a single person may have an important issue taking place in his life that needs to be discussed NOW. Don't ever be afraid to throw your entire prepared topic/outline out the window and concentrate on supporting that one individual. Some of the best meetings are exactly like this. Flexibility is the key to running one of these meetings.

The NSA doesn't favor one type of stuttering therapy over another. But one type of meeting you should AVOID is a "group therapy" meeting where an SLP (or anyone) attempts to give a pet stuttering therapy to the entire group. Therapy belongs in a therapy environment, not an NSA chapter meeting. The key word here is "reasonable."

Typically an NSA chapter meeting is open to anyone who stutters, a family member or friend, any SLP, or anyone who has a special interest in stuttering. While some chapters may want to exclude anyone but people who stutter from the meetings, I would advise against that practice. We need everyone pulling on the same rope in the same direction.

We especially welcome SLP's and student SLP's to our meetings because we are a vital part of their learning process. Everyone participates in the meeting equally; introductions, discussions, breakout sessions, everything. There are no passive observers at our meetings. Everyone participates.

The SLP's and students aren't there to help us, but because of what we can teach them, they will be better prepared to help our children and grandchildren. We need each other! That's what the NSA is all about!

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National Stuttering Association

The Chapter Section 1

1.0 Why Chapters?

What is a chapter?

A chapter is a group of individuals that have agreed to meet together under the auspices of the National Stuttering Association.

Why does the NSA have local chapters?

The NSA is a support organization and needs an effective way to provide support to those who stutter and their support community.

We all have different perspectives that give us different views. What is the greatest strength of the NSA is that even though we are all different, we all share a common bond which is stuttering. This is where the local chapter comes in. It is through this medium that the NSA is able to provide a tangible means of providing support to those who stutter.

Each NSA chapter is unique just like each person who stutters is unique. Each chapter will have local and regional variations that help their members the best. However, we are all under the umbrella of the National Stuttering Association. That means that we need to have a commonality of sorts that permits anyone to walk into any chapter and realize that they are at an NSA function. What this means is that we share certain beliefs about what a chapter is supposed to accomplish. The next section will give you an understanding of what the objective of an NSA chapter is.

1.1 Chapter Charter

All NSA chapters are required to be chartered. What this means is that a new chapter must have permission from the national office to be recognized as an official NSA chapter. This is done to ensure that all of our chapters are able to meet the same high standard that the NSA needs. The actual charter process is simple. Listed below are the steps required to become a chartered chapter of the NSA.

- Contact the national office with request for a new chapter
- A welcome letter is sent by the national office with instructions for becoming a chapter leader.
- National office contacts the Adult Programs Chairperson (APC) who in turn contacts the Regional Chapter Coordinator (RCC) who will follow-up with the

perspective chapter leader with an interview and determine what their motivations are for becoming a chapter leader. The RCC also determines if an area can support another chapter

- If an area can support additional chapter, the RCC will work with the perspective chapter leader to become chartered which involves completing the following steps:
 1. Chapter leader must be a member of the NSA
 2. Chapter leader must pass a background screening (page 24)
 3. Signed chapter leader's agreement form (page 10)
 4. Become a member of NSACHAP (this is a email listserv the NSA uses to easily contact all chapter leaders, it is also used to post chapter meeting recaps and discuss chapter related issues, page 25)

Why a charter is required?

The reason is two-fold. The first is to ensure that the NSA knows where it has chapters and who is running them and the second is to protect the organization from someone who may not have the NSA's best interest at heart.

Once all 4 of the above steps are completed and the new chapter leader as provided their contact & meeting information, the chapter is officially recognized by being listed on the NSA's official website: www.westutter.org.

1.2 Chapter Objectives

The objectives of our local chapters are as follows:

- Provide a safe, comfortable, supportive environment for a person who stutters (PWS)
- Help PWS establish connections with other people who stutter
- Provide a resource for information about stuttering
- Provide a comfortable place to practice speech techniques and therapies

Please note that the highest priority is to provide a safe, comfortable and supportive environment. When a person comes to your meeting, they must feel as though they are among friends. The new person should feel no pressure to speak. They should not feel as though they are constantly being confronted with their speech. Hopefully, by participating in the meeting, they will discover that

Chapter Leader's Agreement

As a chapter leader of a local chapter of the National Stuttering Association, I agree to abide by the following tenants:

Provide a safe, supportive environment for a person who stutters (PWS)

Help people who stutter establish connections with other people who stutter

Provide a safe place to gain information about stuttering

Provide a safe place to practice speech techniques and therapies

Follow the established policies and procedures of the National Stuttering Association as set forth by the Board of Directors and the chapter leaders manual.

Understand that names of NSA members cannot be sold, rented or distributed without prior written approval from the national office

I acknowledge this by signing below.

Name _____

Signature _____ Date _____

Chapter Name _____

Chapter Location _____

Leader Contact Email _____

Meeting Days/Time _____

Current Average Number of Attendees _____

they will want to speak. The new person should also find this an opportunity to share how they feel about their stuttering.

Helping people establish connections is another important function of the chapter. This connection can be one of the strongest that a person will ever experience. Think back to before you were introduced to the NSA. Do you recall how exciting and freeing it felt to find a group of individuals that shared many of the same experiences and feelings as you?

Obtaining information about stuttering can be useful in learning to deal with the feelings associated with it. Information is out there but some people may feel intimidated about asking for it. This is where the chapter comes in. The dissemination of information about stuttering, be it therapy techniques, research or whatever, serves an important function of the chapter.

Practicing whatever therapy works for us is an important part of our development as a PWS. Having a safe place to do that is not always possible. Many times people want to practice but do not feel that they have a place that they can do it without fear of ridicule or embarrassment. The chapter meetings are there to fill this void. Every member should feel free to speak however they desire. One note of caution though, although everyone is encouraged to practice whatever they want to, the chapter leader does need to monitor the meeting to ensure that one person's therapy does not discourage the others from participating. The chapter meeting is not a forum for advocating a particular type of therapy, although a discussion of different types of therapies might be beneficial.

1.3 Requirements for Chapters

Why do we need to have chapter requirements?

For an organization to function effectively, an established set of expectations, rules and procedures needs to be agreed upon. The goal of this section is not to saddle the leader with a large set of do's and don'ts but to ensure the leader understands what the NSA expects from a chapter. However, as with any organization, there are some rules that the NSA needs to protect the organization as a whole. Additionally, some guidelines are presented in this section to assist the chapter leader with the operation of their chapter.

1.3.1 Chapter Sign-in Sheets

A chapter sign-in sheet needs to be filled out at every meeting for every new chapter member (see page 13). After the meeting, the sign in sheet should be mailed or faxed to the national office as soon as possible. This needs to be done so that the national office can send a welcoming letter to all new attendees explaining all of the various programs, research and information the NSA has to offer people who stutter. This little sheet of paper is a vital link in the chapter to national office.

1.3.2 Chapter Leaders

Every chapter is required to have a chapter leader and one or more of the following:

- A co-chapter leader
- An assistant chapter leader
- A chapter leader trainee

The reason for having leaders is to establish responsibility. As we all know, if nobody has the responsibility to do something, nothing gets done. Additionally, having co chapter leaders, assistant chapter leaders and chapter leader trainees allows other chapter members to begin to participate more in the organization. It also helps when a chapter leader would like to step down or moves on to a different area. Once chapter members have been leaders for a while, they may choose to be an RCC or work on a national committee. Thus, establishing leaders is good for both the chapter and the organization.

1.3.2.1 Chapter Leader Descriptions

Chapter Leader – This person has overall responsibility for the chapter. It is their job to ensure that the chapter is functioning like an NSA chapter. Additionally, this person needs to ensure that outreach is being accomplished so that the chapter will grow and flourish. Thirdly, this person will ensure that the paperwork required by the NSA is accomplished in a timely manner.

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_____ Chapter Sign-in Sheet

Date: _____

Please check all boxes that apply

Name	Complete Address	Phone #	Email Address	NSA Member	First Meeting	SLP Or Student SLP
1. _____	_____	_____	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. _____	_____	_____	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. _____	_____	_____	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. _____	_____	_____	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. _____	_____	_____	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. _____	_____	_____	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. _____	_____	_____	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. _____	_____	_____	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. _____	_____	_____	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. _____	_____	_____	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. _____	_____	_____	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12. _____	_____	_____	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13. _____	_____	_____	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14. _____	_____	_____	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
15. _____	_____	_____	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
16. _____	_____	_____	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
17. _____	_____	_____	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Co-Chapter Leader – This person shares in the overall responsibility for the chapter and shares all of duties of the chapter leader listed above

Assistant Chapter Leader – This person stands in for the chapter leader when the chapter leader is unable to do so. The assistant chapter leader also assists in any chapter duties delegated to him/her by the chapter leader .

Chapter Leader Trainee – while not having the full responsibility of the chapter leader, this person is groomed by the chapter leader or co-chapter leaders and may take the lead in any task or leadership role delegated to him/her by a chapter leader or co-chapter leader.

In order to promote involvement and continuity in the local chapter by individuals that do not want to take on an overall leadership role, some other possible positions that could be established in a chapter as needed are:

- Treasurer
- Secretary
- Phone Leader
- Program Leader
- Social Coordinator
- Marketing/Public Relations Leader
- Newsletter Coordinator
- Web Page Coordinator

The **treasurer** is in charge of all of the chapter funds. The president still has responsibility for the chapter but the president uses the treasurer to keep track of the chapter's funds.

The **secretary** is used to record the chapter's activities. This person could also handle all of the correspondence with the national office or regional chapter coordinators.

The **phone leader** is in charge of ensuring that phone calls are made to all current and prospective members to remind them of the next meeting.

The **program leader** provides some of the chapter meeting content. For example, they might run the SSP or the Speaking Freely programs.

The **social coordinator** is in charge of a chapters social events which could include get togethers, movies, holiday parties, etc. outside or in place

of the normal meetings and/or coordination of social functions (i.e. snacks, break times) within the chapter meetings

The **marketing/public relations Leader**, with the chapter leader(s), are responsible for marketing and publicity for the chapter as well as any requests for local information on stuttering. It is advised that this person work closely with the National Office of the NSA.

The **newsletter coordinator** is responsible for producing a local chapter newsletter.

The **web page coordinator** is responsible for producing and maintaining a local chapter's website.

1.3.2.2 Selection of CL's & Length of Term

Once it is decided how many and what type of leaders there will be, the next decision is the length of service. Notice that there is no limit on how many consecutive terms an officer may serve. If the chapter members like the current leaders and the leaders are willing to keep serving, then they are allowed to continue their leadership.

Okay, we now know how many, what type and how long each leader should serve. How do we actually go about selecting officers? That answer is up to the individual chapters. The NSA has found that each chapter knows what works best for it. Thus, there is no mandate on how officers should be selected. Some suggestions though. It is very important for the chapter members to feel that they are involved in the process. Whether the chapter chooses to have elections, nominations or just has the previous leadership pick new leaders, the members need to have the ability to express their opinion of the selected leaders. If this does not occur, the members are likely to vote with their feet by leaving the chapter. Thus it behooves the current leadership to ensure that the membership not only is given a chance to approve the new leadership but also deny it.

Some examples of types of officer selection processes are:

- Nominations and elections
- Current leadership selects new leadership and the membership does a confirmation vote of the new leadership

1.3.3 Chapter Meetings

The main requirement for an NSA chapter is to hold chapter meetings. A NSA meeting is what sets us apart from other stuttering organizations. Our meetings enable the person who stutters to feel as though they are in the majority as far as speech is concerned. This I am sure is a novel experience for a person who stutters. It is imperative that the meeting environment be one of support and encouragement.

1.3.3.1 Suggested format

The actual meeting content and format are up to you, the chapter leader. However, the following format seems to be very effective.

- Reading of the welcoming words
- Introductions
- Asking everyone why they are there
- Time set aside to allow all those who want to share an experience, accomplishment or a problem to be able to do so
- A break about midway through the meeting
- Discussion/presentation of some topic relevant to stuttering
- NSA and/or local chapter announcements (like National Convention)
- Reading of the closing words
- Asking everyone if they got what they wanted
- Meeting ending

1.3.3.2 Meeting Length

A typical meeting length is about 2 hours but you are free to use whatever length works for your chapter members.

1.3.3.3 Required Elements

The only required elements are the reading of the welcoming and closing words (page 17). The reason for this is to establish a connection with other chapters. The goal here is to ensure that anyone who walks in to the chapter will immediately recognize it as a NSA chapter.

Welcoming Words

Welcome to the _____ Chapter of the National Stuttering Association. The National Stuttering Association is a non-profit organization dedicated to bringing hope, dignity, support, education and empowerment to children and adults who stutter.

If you are a person who stutters or have a special interest in stuttering, you are welcome here. It is a place where we are accepted and supported, where we can relax speak freely, stutter openly without fear or embarrassment, and practice whatever fluency technique we may feel comfortable with.

Together, we will help each other help ourselves to accept and cope with our stuttering, to build our self-confidence, and to improve our fluency to the best of our abilities. We who stutter are not alone. Together we are strong.

Closing Words

*May the spirit we have shared tonight help our speech in the coming weeks,
until we meet again.*

May we go forth gladly into speaking situations, without force or struggle, accepting ourselves regardless of our fluency, and listening always to the music of our voices.

We are not alone. Together we are strong.

1.3.3.4 Meeting Frequency

Chapter meetings should be held, at a minimum, every month. It is encouraged that you hold more than one meeting a month. It has been noted that many of the stronger chapters tend to have more than one meeting a month. While it might be common to suspect that attendance at each meeting would decrease if the number of meetings were increased, it has been noted that the reverse is true. Some possible explanations for this are that as the frequency of meetings increases, the members tend to view the meetings as a type of regular therapy. Additional meetings also encourage new content to be developed, which further stimulates member attendance.



National Stuttering Association

The Chapter Leader Section 2

2.0 The Main Link

The chapter leader is the most important link between our members and the national organization. The chapter leader is more than just the person standing up front leading the meeting. They are a facilitator, marketing person, conflict resolution manager, cheerleader and most likely, a person who stutters. This job is not easy but definitely has its rewards. This section will explain some of the responsibilities and resources that chapter leaders have.

2.1 Chapter Leader Responsibilities

The responsibilities of a chapter leader or leaders can be summarized as follows:

- Facilitate meetings
- Recruit new members
- Retain current members
- Promote the NSA

It is strongly recommended that the chapter leader or leaders encourage other chapter members to share responsibility for these items, recognizing however that the ultimate responsibility lies with the chapter leader(s)

2.1.1 Facilitate Meetings

The first responsibility of the chapter leader is to ensure that the meetings are facilitated. The NSA has written an NSA Chapter Leaders Training Guide in order to provide additional information on facilitating and NSA chapter meeting. Copies of this guide can be obtained on the NSA Website or by contacting the National office or the regional or national chapter coordinators. This does not mean that the leader always is the facilitator. Having other members facilitating a meeting is a good way to develop new leaders.

2.1.2 Recruit New Members

The recruitment of new members is another responsibility of the chapter leader. If a chapter is to grow, it needs new members. All support groups will have members stop coming over time. People will feel that their needs

are met and they will stop coming. Others will move away for various reasons. Thus, new members are always needed. The addition of new members will also help keep the meetings more vibrant and exciting. In order to find new members flyers need to be reposted every three months, regular contact needs to be maintained with SLP's and ads to newspapers need to be sent monthly . See section 3.3 on Promoting the NSA.

2.1.3 Retain Current Members

Retaining current members is the third task of the chapter leader. This is done by having meaningful meeting content. The meetings need to be interesting and give the attendees a chance to grow. The discussion guide section contains many ideas that other chapter leaders have used with great success. Another source of meeting content is the special programs that have been developed by members of the NSA.

2.1.4 Promote the NSA

The last but maybe the most important responsibility of the chapter leader is to promote the NSA. As a chapter leader, you are the national organization's local cheerleader. You are in the unique position to be able to spread the message of the NSA most effectively. Every new chapter meeting attendee is a potential NSA member and you are their first contact. You are the NSA's frontline of communication and we applaud you for that. Reading of the welcoming and closing words at your chapter meetings help to promote that your chapter is part of a larger organization.

2.2 Chapter Leader Resources

This section will show you the incredible amount of resources that you have to communicate with other chapter leaders, regional chapter coordinators, national committees and the national office. Probably the quickest and most efficient mode of communication for the organization is email. This is due to the fact that the organization is spread out across the United States. What follows is a listing of the communication resources that are available and a brief description. These resources are here to assist the leader in finding answers to question or concerns they, or their members may have and to also help them increase their own knowledge about the organization and stuttering.

2.2.1 Regional Chapter Coordinators

Your Regional Chapter Coordinator (RCC) is your first link to the national organization. The US is divided into 7 regions, 1 RCC per region. Your RCC will be in contact with you at least once a quarter to receive your quarterly status report (see page 24). This report needs to be submitted to your RCC by the 15th of the month following each quarter (i.e., Q1 due April 15th, Q2 due July 15th, Q3 due Oct. 15th and Q4 due Jan. 15th). Your RCC should be your first resource for conflict resolution, new member recruitment ideas and anything else that you can think of. However, don't just think of them as problem solvers, they also want to hear all of your great ideas. Besides that, just contacting them to say "Hello" can help us all stay connected.

2.2.2 NSA Webpage

The NSA webpage is an excellent resource for information for both you the chapter leader and the general public. The wealth of information there is truly amazing. The address is <http://www.weStutter.org>. Once you are at the website, you will notice that you can find information on such topics as:

- Local chapter info
- NSA News
- Upcoming convention information
- Past convention highlights
- Chapter Programs
- Books, Publications and Workshops

This is just a small percentage of what is actually on the website. This is an excellent resource for any chapter leader, new or experienced.

2.2.3 Adult Programs Chairman

The Adult Programs Chairman (APC) is the person that the RCC's report to. This individual is responsible for the coordination of the local chapters on a national level. This is an NSA board position that rotates every 3 years.



NATIONAL STUTTERING ASSOCIATION Adult Chapter Status Report

1. Please check the quarter you are reporting on:

Q1 Jan.1-Mar. 31
Education

Q2 Apr. 1- Jun. 30
Fundraising

Q3 Jul. 1- Sept. 30
Family/Friends

Q4 Oct. 1- Dec. 31
Membership/C4TB

2. NSA chapter name:

3. Indicate your meeting place, day and time:

4. Current Chapter Leader(s) name, email address and phone number:

5. What is the current status of your chapter (circle your answer)?

Active

Inactive

New

Dissolved

6. How many meetings have you had this quarter? _____

7. What is your average number of attendance? _____

8. How many NEW people attended your chapter meetings this quarter?

9. List your chapter highlights for this quarter (i.e., theme related activities, workshops, gatherings, special events, etc.). Please include dates, outcomes and supporting documentation (i.e. programs, meeting reports). Use additional paper if needed.

10. What are your chapter goals/objectives for the next quarter?

11. Do you have any current concerns that need to be addressed?

Please note: Adult chapter status reports are due to your respective RCC by the 15th of the month following the reporting quarter (i.e., Q1 due April 15th, Q2 due July 15th, Q3 due Oct. 15th and Q4 due Jan. 15th). You may email, fax or mail this report to your RCC.

2.2.4 National Office Information

The NSA national office is located in New York City. We have a full time Executive Director that handles all of the day to day operations along with planning and managing the yearly NSA conference. This conference rotates locations annually across the United States in order to provide people that live in that region the ability to easily attend. It is normally held the last week in June but we have had to move it a week or 2 later to obtain more favorable hotel rates. The NSA Executive Director is also involved with running Youth Days and CEU's across the country which helps to promote the NSA.

The national office is available Monday through Friday from 9am to 4pm EST to answer any of your questions. Due to the large number of phone calls that are received each day, it is preferred that one of the other resources in this section be used first. But, do not be afraid of calling the national office. The NSA National Office is there to assist you.

Contact information:

Tammy Flores, Executive Director
National Stuttering Association
119 W. 40th Street, 14th Floor
New York, NY 10018
800-(WeStutter) 937-8888 / Fax 212-944-8244
Direct line 212-944-4050
www.WeStutter.org

2.2.5 Background Screening

As a volunteer for the NSA you must complete a background screening. You will not be a sanctioned chapter of the NSA until you have passed the background screening. This is a confidential process that only involves the NSA Executive Director and yourself. This is a general background check including criminal history. Please see the Appendix Section 4.3 (page 54) for any additional questions and the required paperwork to be submitted.

2.2.6 NSACHAP Listserv

As a chapter leader, you are required to participate on the NSACHAP listserv. This listserv functions as a way for everyone who is on the list to quickly send emails to everyone else on the list. Talk about a great way to share an idea. All you need to do to participate is to be a current chapter leader and have an email address. Then you just need to send an email to your regional chapter coordinator and they will get you on the list. Then just sit back and watch the ideas come flying your way!!!

2.2.7 Board of Directors

The NSA board of directors consists of between 10 and 15 members; each member is elected to a 3 year term. The current list of NSA board members along with their contact information can be found on the NSA website at the following link:

<http://www.nsastutter.org/material/index.php?matid=193> . If you need to contact a board member for any reason, feel free to do so. The board is here to serve you. They may set national direction, but they also need to stay in touch with the local chapter leaders to ensure that they understand the local concerns.

2.2.8 National Committees

The national committees are where the board of directors' instructions are put into action. This is an excellent place for the chapter leader to begin to work on being more involved on a national level. Additionally, if you have an idea that you think would benefit all chapters, this is the place that it would go.

2.2.9 Other Chapter Leaders

There are currently more than 75 local adult chapters and 15 kids/teens chapters across the U.S. Each of the chapter leaders that run those chapters has a wealth of information. They have all had many successes and failures. Talking with other chapter leaders is a great way to broaden your knowledge about chapter leadership. The contact info for all of the chapter leaders can be found on the NSA website at: <http://www.nsastutter.org/material/index.php?matid=44> . An even better way to make contact is to come to a National Conference and meet some

of them in person. Every year prior to the start of the National Conference there is a Chapter Leaders meeting where you will have the opportunity to talk to NSA leaders and other chapter leaders about running your chapter and any issue that come up during the course of the year. It is an excellent opportunity for Chapter Leaders to share their experiences and feel connected!

2.2.10 NSA Chapter Leader Guidelines

- A. Emphasize use of welcoming words at all chapter meetings.
- B. As a standard opening practice for all of the NSA local chapters, after the welcoming words are said go around and ask everyone's expectations as to why they are there – so that everyone's expectations can be known up front. It could be phrased "what brings you here tonight". Also at the end of the meeting, ask the group whether the meeting met their expectations, in order to give chapter leaders immediate feedback for growth.
- C. In regard to age levels at chapter meetings: Local chapter meetings should be aimed at adults and *emotionally mature high school students*, though no one would be turned away for a specific meeting. Local chapters should make a strong effort to sponsor or cosponsor separate youth focused events or meetings throughout the year.
- D. Toward the discussion therapies at local chapter meetings: Local chapters should let all members speak their mind, with given time limits for everyone. Chapter leaders should then add that the NSA is 'vendor neutral' on therapy – we do not support any particular therapy nor do we not support any particular therapy AND the statement: what works for some may not work for all.
- E. Toward working with a disruptive person at the chapter meeting: 1. Remind the person privately of the welcoming words. If the problem persists, local chapter leader have the discretion to ask that person to leave the group.
- F. Set basic 'ground rules' for chapter meetings 1. No unkind words or body language directed at anyone 2. One person talking at a time 3. Equal opportunities to speak (recognizing that there may be a need for a particular person to talk more in order to work through a pressing issue). 4. The right not to be pressured and to be able to say no or disagree. 5. Respect for a persons ideas and beliefs
- G. Toward chapter members having different issues or agendas they want to push (i.e. practicing speech vs. emotional support): try to

- keep the meetings together and not split off into different groups – to run multiple topics for the whole group. Where the chapter members present are large enough (more than 12), only normal chapter meetings with all chapter members should still be held but the second half of the meeting could be split into ‘breakout sessions’ around two (or more) concurrent topics with the whole group reconvening and getting an update from each breakout group at the end of the meeting. Local chapters should be the discussion of relevant issues to the group, but that during the discussion, different speech techniques could be openly practiced.
- H. When chapter leaders and chapter members disagree on meeting focus: primary emphasis of the NSA local chapter meetings should be peer support of PWS and opportunities for PWS to practice speaking. What form peer support and practice takes should be based on the majority opinion of the group. Chapter leaders should be promoting these two main focus areas and work towards creating a neutral environment for any therapy, practice, device, etc, to be discussed.
 - I. Toward non-stuttering people attending a local chapter support meeting: As spelled out in the welcoming words, all who are interested in stuttering, are welcome to attend local chapter meetings. It is important to include non-stutterers as full participants in the meeting rather than observers. It is equally as important to emphasize to the non-stuttering community present that the meeting, of course, is primarily a support group for **those who stutter** - they are present to support, listen and provide input to those who stutter. They should not knowingly or unknowingly dominate the meeting. It is the responsibility of the chapter leader to try to provide balance and to give everyone an equal opportunity to speak.

2.3 Spreading the Word: Public Relations for Chapters

How did you first hear about the NSA? For many of us, it was a story in a local paper, a TV show, or even a card on a bulletin board. Spreading the word about the NSA through public relations is a way of reaching people who might not otherwise hear about us.

Your local chapter is the NSA’s “franchise” in your community. You represent not only your local members but also the NSA as a whole: the

world's largest support organization for people who stutter. Because of its local presence, your local chapter is in a good position to reach prospective members as well as educate the public about stuttering. We want to reach:

- Adults who stutter
- Parents of children and teens who stutter
- Speech-language pathologists and SLP students
- Counseling centers and social service agencies

2.3.1 Publicity

Getting publicity is a matter of notifying the news media about what's happening and letting the story sell itself. In a suburb or small town, calling the local newspaper or radio station and sending a news release may suffice.

The task is more complex in larger cities because of overwhelming competition for publication space and broadcast time. In a metropolitan area, odds of getting publicity are best in neighborhood and suburban papers, and in local editions of daily papers.

WHAT'S NEWSWORTHY: We want publicity, but editors are looking for NEWS. Newsworthy events include:

- Organizing a new chapter (we have a sample news release)
- Workshop or special program
- New chapter leader
- Chapter member delivering a workshop at a NSA conference
- Human-interest story such as an unusual accomplishment by a member
- Special celebrations such as National Stuttering Awareness Week

MAKING MEDIA CONTACTS: When you have something newsworthy, the first step is to contact reporters and editors who may be interested. News media get stacks of news releases every day and 90% of them are disregarded. It's best to send material to a specific person. Here are the people to look for:

Daily newspapers:

- City or metropolitan editor
- Feature editor
- Education writer
- Medical writer

Broadcast media:

- TV assignment editor
- Public service or community affairs director
- Radio news director
- Hosts (or producers) of local magazine or talk shows

Community newspaper editors

Any local magazines or newsletters that target parents, teachers, etc.

You may be able to get contact names in the newspaper itself, on the newspaper/radio/TV station web site. Or, just call their switchboard and ask for the name of the editor, medical writers, etc.

Some community newspapers sponsor free or low-cost workshops to offer publicity tips to local non-profit groups. If this kind of program is available in your community, make it a point to attend!

PRESS MATERIAL must be short and to the point to capture the attention of busy editors and equip them to make an instant decision about your story.

It's usually a good idea to make a story pitch by phone or e-mail before sending a news release. Here's an example of an e-mail pitch:

We're starting a new chapter of the National Stuttering Association in this area and we'd like to get the word out to the 1% of your readers who stutter and their families. The NSA is the largest support organization for stuttering in the U.S. Local support groups like the one we're starting help people who stutter improve their communications skills and gain self-confidence.

I'd like to send you a news release with some details. I can also arrange interviews with several local members who can talk about how they cope with stuttering, and with professional experts in stuttering treatment. Background information on stuttering is available from our web site, www.nsastutter.org.

Phone pitches also need to be short and to the point. (One approach that sometimes breaks the ice is: "I'm calling from the National Stuttering

Association. Do you have two minutes to listen to a one-minute story pitch?”)

The news release (pattern release attached) should include all pertinent information in two double-spaced pages maximum. The first half-page should give the editor a quick idea of what the story is - otherwise the entire release won't be read. (Remember that editors receive news releases by the bushel.) The release should carry the name and phone number of one or more people whom reporters can call for further information, including an after-hours phone number as well as a daytime phone. Always include the toll-free number of the NSA office as well as your own phone number.

If you are seeking advance publicity for a workshop or other event, you should begin contacting reporters and editors at least several weeks in advance.

WHEN REPORTERS CALL: The most persuasive way to tell the NSA story is through the personal experience of members: local chapter members and parents of kids who stutter. Although reporters are looking primarily for local interview subjects, it's important to let the NSA office know immediately when you hear from a reporter. This way, we can add a national perspective, answer questions and put the reporter in touch with expert speech professionals. (Otherwise the reporter may contact local professionals who may not be expert in stuttering.)

INTERVIEWS: Reporters usually will help you feel at ease. Have several key points in mind beforehand and try to get them across whether or not the reporter asks the right questions. There are plenty of talking points in the media section of the NSA web site. Remember that nothing you say is "off the record" no matter what you've seen in the movies. Getting interviewed is the payoff for all the hard work you've done, so relax and enjoy it. And don't forget to stutter.

2.3.2 Other Media Opportunities

COMMUNITY CALENDARS: Many newspapers, radio and TV stations have special community calendar sections that list local events and meetings. There's usually a different person to contact (other than the reporters and editors), and you may need to submit listing information as early as two months in advance. Some newspapers publish meeting schedules of local support groups.

PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENTS: Radio and TV stations broadcast brief public service announcements free of charge. Most will use either tapes or scripts to be read by an announcer (samples attached). The person to contact usually is the public affairs, public service or community service director.

PHONE-IN TALK SHOWS: Some local talk shows invite people to call in and go on the air, and this may be an opportunity to promote a chapter event. It's important to be selective: Sports-talk shows and “shock-jock” programs are not appropriate for this, but community-oriented shows may be a good opportunity.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR: A letter to the editor is an opportunity to share your point of view or call attention to an issue. For example, you can write a letter to call attention to National Stuttering Awareness Week, or share your experience in the NSA. You also can write a letter to react to a recent article or broadcast that has inaccurate information about stuttering (but please contact the NSA office in this situation). Remember to keep your letter short.

CLASSIFIED ADS: Some community papers have classified-ad or personal-ad sections that are appropriate for self-help groups, and sometimes these are free. A local classified ad can be as simple as: “DO YOU STUTTER? Call us for help. xxx-xxxx.”

2.3.3 Beyond Publicity

There are other ways to get the word out in addition to working through the news media:

SPEECH-LANGUAGE PATHOLOGISTS: Contact local SLPs, invite them to your meetings and encourage them to refer clients who stutter to the chapter. The best place to start is with SLPs who already have an interest in stuttering. Board Recognized Specialists in Fluency Disorders are listed by state at <http://www.stutteringspecialists.org>. The Stuttering Foundation of America (<http://www.stutteringhelp.org>) lists SLPs who have attended its training workshops. Don't forget to include university speech clinics, hospital and school clinicians.

NSA EMAIL BLASTS: The NSA has the capability to send email directly to thousands people who are NSA members or who have registered on our

web site, broken down by category or geographic area. If you are starting a new chapter or planning a youth day or workshop, call the NSA office and explore the possibilities.

COUNSELORS AND FAMILY SERVICE AGENCIES: These community agencies occasional work with people who stutter, and should be aware that there's a local NSA chapter.

COMMUNITY DIRECTORIES: Some communities have directories (or web sites) that list self-help groups.

2.3.4 Sample News Releases:

NEW SUPPORT GROUP HELPS STUTTERERS COMMUNICATE

A new support group in ____ (city) ____ is helping people who stutter become effective communicators. The new group is one of 80 local chapters of the National Stuttering Association (NSA), world's largest association for adults and children who stutter.

Three million Americans stutter: not because they are nervous or have emotional problems but because they have a complex speech disorder. "Support meetings help us improve our communications skills," said ____ (chapter leader) _____, who heads the new chapter. "Our members gain confidence in handling situations that are often frustrating to stutterers such as introducing ourselves, using the telephone and even public speaking."

Nobody's sure what causes stuttering. Current research suggests a connection with neurological coordination of the speech mechanism. Speech therapy by specialized speech-language pathologists has helped many people who stutter. Chronic stuttering in adults rarely is cured but can be successfully controlled by long-term practice and stuttering management techniques.

"Participation in the NSA has helped many people get the maximum benefit from professional speech therapy," _____ said. "Chapter meetings are an ideal place to practice speaking techniques and learn about the latest developments in stuttering research and treatment. "

The NSA works closely with speech professionals and refers people who stutter to speech-language pathologists who have the specialized qualifications needed for effective treatment.

Working with children who stutter and their parents also is a priority for the NSA. Even though most children who stutter recover on their own as they develop, many do not grow out of it. It's important for parents to seek an evaluation of a stuttering child by a speech-language pathologist who specializes in stuttering, according to _____.

"Speech pathologists today can do a lot to help children who stutter and their parents," said _____. "At pre-school age, there is every hope that a child will recover from stuttering with early intervention and guidance."

Some teachers, counselors and pediatricians still advise parents to defer speech therapy and ignore the child's stuttering in the expectation that it will go away. "At one time, this was thought to be good advice," _____ said. "We now know that this is very bad advice."

The NSA sponsors a national conference, regional workshops and publications for adults, children and parents. The _____ (city) NSA chapter meets (when and where). For further information contact _____ (chapter leader) _____ (phone) or the NSA's national office, 800/364-1677. The organization's Internet site is www.westutter.org.

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Sample: Public Service Announcement (PSA)

Cover Note:

National Stuttering Awareness Week, May 12 to 18, is dedicated to the three million people who stutter in the United States. Calling attention to this widespread disorder, and to the hope and help available to people who stutter, is the goal of the National Stuttering Association (NSA).

We're the world's largest self-help, support association for people who stutter -- a 501 (c)(3) not-for-profit organization with support groups in more than 80 cities, a monthly newsletter, regional workshops, youth programs and an annual national conference.

Because stuttering is widely misunderstood, many people who stutter are unaware that help is available. Please help us get the word out by running the attached public service announcement May 12 to 18.

Sincerely,

(chapter leader)
(phone number)

National Stuttering Association
Public Service Announcements
For use May 12-18, 2009

20 seconds

National Stuttering Awareness Week is May 12 to May 18.

If you stutter, you're not alone. People who stutter are changing their lives in local support groups of the National Stuttering Association.

Call 1-800-364-1677 or visit www.westutter.org .

###

30 seconds

National Stuttering Awareness Week, May 12 to May 18, is dedicated to the three million Americans who stutter.

The National Stuttering Association offers help and hope for children and adults who stutter. Local support groups are helping people change their lives and become successful communicators.

If you stutter, you're not alone. Call 1-800-364-1677 or visit www.westutter.org .

###

60 seconds

Imagine having trouble saying your own name. For the three million Americans who stutter, sometimes saying even the simplest things can be a problem. National Stuttering Awareness Week, May 12 to May 18, is dedicated to children and adults who stutter.

Today, people who stutter have more help and hope available than ever before. The National Stuttering Association has helped thousands of people meet the daily challenge of stuttering and take charge of their lives. It's the world's largest organization for people who stutter with local support groups in 80 cities and special programs for children and parents.

If you stutter, or know someone who does, call the National Stuttering Association at 1-800-364-1677 or visit www.westutter.org . If you stutter, you're not alone.

###



National Stuttering Association

**Meeting Ideas,
Family Programs &
Volunteering
Section 3**

3.0 Introduction

This section has ideas for you to use to help have good meeting. All of these ideas are from chapter leaders such as yourself. This section also contains a brief description of the two programs currently available, “Speaking Freely”, and the “Situational Speaking Program”.

What are the NSA Family Programs? This section will familiarize you with the programs the NSA offers to kids, teens and their parents.

This section will give you all of the information you will need to become an NSA certified volunteer.

3.1 “101” Things to do at an NSA Meeting

This extensive list of ideas is always being updated. To view this list and discover some different things to do at your chapter meeting go to this link on the NSA website:

<http://www.nsastutter.org/subcat/index.php?subid=233>

3.2 Speaking Freely Overview

To master any skill—whether it’s learning how to paint, hit a tennis ball, or speak to groups—you need a supportive environment where you can practice, experiment, totally let go, and trust your inner self without fear of penalty. I learned that back in the early 1960s, when I briefly took up the study of judo. In one of the early classes, we were instructed on the proper way to roll. The teacher divided the mat into individual lanes and had everyone practice at the same time. But the lanes he set up were so narrow that I was afraid of rolling at an angle and bashing into the guy next to me with my feet. Consequently, it was very difficult for me to relax enough to learn how to execute the move. The situation was not remedied until the number of people on the mat was reduced. Only then did I feel free enough to practice without holding back. The same kind of remedy applies to the fear of speaking before people. Most of us are in a pressure situation when as youngsters we have our first experiences of talking to groups. When the teacher calls on us, the burden of having to look good can be overwhelming. We put so much pressure on ourselves to perform and to

please the teacher and other students that we never really get around to figuring out how we want to do it to please ourselves. The problem is further compounded if we're also dealing with a stuttering problem. Over time, holding back whenever we talk to groups becomes our default. As I learned in the study of judo, to be able to let go and allow your intuitive self to take over, you need a place where you feel free enough to simply try things without worrying about how they turn out. This is the secret behind the effectiveness of Speaking Freely, an informal public speaking program for becoming more confident and comfortable when talking before people.

3.3 Situational Speaking Program (SSP) Overview

The SSP uses a series of speech exercises to increase the speaker's confidence and proficiency in speaking to a group. As the speaker progresses through the exercises more advanced topics and presentations are encountered. The time allotted for each speech also increases. It is expected, that by the completion of this series, the speaker will feel more comfortable and competent presenting to any audience. The following objectives will be accomplished by the 12 speeches in this program.

- Become more comfortable in front of an audience
- Gain experience speaking in front of a group
- Work on enhancing posture and presentation techniques
- Practice adjusting to random influences and visual aids
- Begin working with audience interaction
- Practice and put together all of the above objectives

Note: The NSA National Office has more information on the Situational Speaking Program

3.4 Working with Kids and Families

3.4.1 NSA Resources for Kids and Families

<p>What the NSA has available to reach out to children and teens who stutter and their families:</p>

- Family Voices: Our quarterly newsletter for children who stutter ages 7-12, teens who stutter ages 13-19 and parents of children who stutter.
- Local/Regional Family/Youth Days: Mini “conferences” for children, parents, teens, SLP’s (and ever-expanding to include adult workshops) held throughout the year and throughout the country. This phenomenon is ever growing and in many cases, becomes an ANNUAL event that everyone looks forward to! These events are spear-headed by local chapters and interested SLP’s. The NSA has an excellent manual for hosting a Youth Day that is available to anyone running an NSA Youth Day. Just contact the national office.
- Enhanced sections on the NSA website at: www.WeStutter.org
- Annual Conference: 2 ½ days of programming exclusively for families. Activities designed for children, teens, parents, and even siblings!
- Parent Liaisons: Parents from around the country who take phone calls from the national office that need “walking in my shoes” types of discussions.
- 3 List serves: Parents, Kids and Teens’ List serves: Yahoo Groups formed for each demographic group to bring them together to share their experiences.
- NSAKids and TWST Groups: Children and teen support groups for children, teens and their families. These groups function much like our adult chapters who meet with the same mission of the NSA.
- Numerous publications available, including:
 - Preschool booklet for parents (and SLP’s)
 - Preschool coloring book
 - Children’s literature book “Ben Has Something” to Say
 - NEW Teasing and Bullying booklet for parents, kids, educators and SLP’s
 - Flyers: Preschool, School Age and Adolescent “Top 10 Lists”
 - Pamphlet: 18 Ways the NSA Can Help You Help Your Child
 - Pamphlet: Notes to Listeners
 - Stutter Buddies poster

- “Acceptance” poster for classrooms
- “Stuttering Is: poster designed by 10 year old, Meredith R.
- Notes to Listeners
- Stuttering: What Educators Need to Know

3.4.2 Talking to Parents of Children Who Stutter

Should a parent of a child who stutters (or a speech-language pathologist SLP) call and ask for information about the NSA, have questions about stuttering, or look for advice about what to do, the following ideas are offered as suggestions to share with the parent.

1. Be Prepared.

**Get to know the ASHA (American Speech-Language and Hearing Association) recognized SLP's in your area who work with children who stutter. There is a list available at www.stutteringspecialists.org. The NSA National Office also has lists and resources for SLP's in areas throughout the country.

**Familiarize yourself with the services that the NSA offers for parents and children who stutter. Currently we offer CARE – a newsletter for parents, Stutter Buddies – a newsletter for children, a listserv for teenagers and a portion of Letting Go (Our Voice) dedicated to young people (teens) who stutter. We also have CARE and TWST groups in a few places in the country. For parents of preschool children, we offer a parent booklet for this age group. In addition, we offer a wide variety of other written material, books, pamphlets and guides for children of various ages, parents, and teachers. Familiarize yourself with these materials. Read the pamphlet "Notes to Listeners" and think about how it fits with your own experience as an adult and as a child.

2. Introduce yourself.

Share that you are a person who stutters. Tell them you volunteer as the NSA Chapter leader for the _____ Chapter group. It is important that the person knows you are not an SLP (if you are not an SLP) and knows that you are involved in the NSA because you think it is important.

3. Let them know they are doing the RIGHT THING looking for information and educating themselves about stuttering and people who stutter. Let them know that the NSA is the largest self - help group in the world for people who stutter with a special interest in helping children who stutter and their families.

4. ABSOLUTELY let the parent know that there are new and effective treatment approaches out there for children who stutter. Let them know they are doing the RIGHT THING seeking out where to look and go for help and that the NSA is the best place to start.

*** (At this time, Share the toll free number of the NSA office. Encourage the parent to call and talk with Tammy. (800-364-1677) The NSA office will have the opportunity at this time to share the idea of joining the NSA, receiving CARE, providing opportunities for child support groups and personal parental support, and the opportunity to deepen the parents knowledge of stuttering and how to help their child.)

5. Share your thoughts about stuttering (not as fact, but as experiences). Parents will often want to "pick your brain" about stuttering. If you are a parent, share your understanding of parenthood too. Be *positive* about your experiences and your accomplishments and that people who stutter lead productive and fulfilling lives. Let them know what the NSA has done for you. Encourage the parents to be involved in their child's speech therapy.

6. Encourage the parent to give you a call should they have any questions and invite them to attend your next chapter meeting.

7. End with a positive comment and encouragement for the parent to contact the National Office for further support and information.
(1-800-364-1677)

3.5 Volunteer Opportunities

- Have you ever wished that there was an NSA when you were young?
- Have you ever wondered what knowing others who stuttered would have done for you in your teen years?
- Have you ever marveled at the courage of the children and teens at our annual conference or their stories in our newsletters?
- Have you ever asked yourself "What can I do to give back and to help a young person deal with stuttering in a positive way?"

CALLING ALL VOLUNTEERS----CALLING ALL VOLUNTEERS

The NSA reaches out to empower adults, parents and children in many ways. We **ALWAYS** have new ideas, tasks and projects that we would love to implement. Most of these outreach concepts cost nothing or almost nothing. They are, however, in need of volunteers who will take charge to see them come to fruition!

If you have ever wanted to give back to others in a meaningful way then, the NSA needs your **HELP!** You can volunteer in any way that makes you comfortable. You can lead a project, be a “soldier” on a committee, or you can just say “Hey, I’m here to help. Let me know what I can do!”

Contact the NSA office and they will send your contact information to the NSA Volunteer Coordinator who will help you put your skills to work!

3.5.1 Volunteer Screening Process

Again, thanks for volunteering to help the NSA. To be a volunteer for the NSA you need to complete the following forms and turn them into the NSA Executive Director. Any questions you might have should be answered in the “Frequently Asked Questions” section. If not, then please contact the NSA executive Director who will be glad to help you with any of your concerns.



GUIDELINES FOR VOLUNTEERS

The NSA is very excited you are volunteering your services. Below are a few guidelines to assist you in supporting this organization. **It is important that you read and follow these guidelines in accordance with the NSA Safe Environment Policy.**

The information contained in the following pages are guidelines and administrative processes. This information is not, and should not be construed in any way, as a contract of any kind. Volunteers are not employees and are not obligated to perform services for NSA.

General Guidelines

Before volunteering for any NSA activity, all volunteers in a leadership capacity must complete and sign all of the forms contained in the Volunteer Screening Packet and return them to the National Office.

Volunteers for NSA are absolutely prohibited from engaging in any conduct which violates any state or federal law, including, but not limited to, discrimination against any person on the basis of race, creed, color, national origin, marital status, gender, sexual orientation, or disability. An attendance sheet must be signed to identify all persons in attendance at any NSA activity. This attendance sheet must be faxed or mailed to the NSA National Office **within 3 days** of the completion of the activity.

The NSA national Office must be notified and approve any new local or regional programs or activities prior to implementation.

Guidelines for Youth Activities (or activities where minors may be present):

- **Generally, no child under the age of 18 will be permitted to be alone with only one NSA designated and cleared adult during an NSA sponsored activity.**
- In order to help ensure the safety of children, teens, and vulnerable adults participating in NSA events, the NSA suggests that at least two **CLEARED** and non-related adults be present at all times for any children or youth activity.
- If there are not at least two cleared and non-related adults present, the NSA suggest that the entire group must remain in one group and shall not break into smaller groups.
- A parent/guardian (or parent/guardian-designated adult) of a minor child must always be in attendance at the NSA event.
- No activities will be scheduled during times that violate local curfew laws.
- All meeting facilities must include windows on doors with visual views at all time outside of the room. If this is not available, doors should be left open.
- Minor children generally may not reside, travel, or stay overnight with an adult volunteer.
- NO alcohol, tobacco, or drugs will be provided to a minor who is engaged in a NSA youth event.



119 W. 40th Street ☀️ 14th Floor ☀️ New York, NY 10018
(212)944-4050 x471 (800)937-8888 (WeStutter) fax (212)944-8244 www.WeStutter.org

Screening Procedure for Volunteers Information and Forms Packet

WELCOME! We are excited that you are interested in volunteering for the National Stuttering Association (“NSA”)!

In this Information and Forms Packet, you will find everything you need to get started on the wonderful journey of helping people who stutter and their families.

To become involved, please take some time to review all of the following volunteer screening materials and complete the necessary information. Feel free to contact the NSA Office at: **(800-WeStutter** or info@westutter.org) if you have any questions regarding the procedure. After you have finished completing all information in the Forms Packet, please mail the required forms directly to the NSA Office to the attention of the NSA Executive Director.

THE 7 STEPS TO BECOMING “CLEARED” TO VOLUNTEER!

Because the NSA works with children, teens, and/or vulnerable adults, we must take steps to help ensure their safety and the safety of you, the volunteer. As a result, the following 6 steps are necessary to be cleared to volunteer.

- 1) **Hold current membership in the NSA**
- 2) **Review the Volunteer Screening Process FAQs**
- 3) **Complete the Volunteer Screening form**
- 4) **Read and Sign Acknowledgment of Volunteer Status**
- 5) **Read and Sign the Consumer Report Disclosure**
- 6) **Read and Sign Authorization for Background Check**
- 7) **Mail all completed forms to the NSA National Office**

We look forward to having you contribute to our organization. We appreciate ALL of our volunteers, as they are the vehicle with which we fulfill the NSA Mission Statement:

“The National Stuttering Association is a nonprofit organization dedicated to bringing hope, dignity, support, education, and empowerment to children and adults who stutter and their families, and the professionals who serve them.”

**Note: Keep pages 43, 44 & 45 for your information.
Submit pages 46 through 51.**



119 W. 40th Street 14th Floor New York, NY 10018
(212)944-4050 x471 (800)937-8888 (WeStutter) fax (212)944-8244 www.WeStutter.org

NSA VOLUNTEER SCREENING PROCESS FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. Why does the National Stuttering Association (“NSA”) require a screening process for volunteers?

The NSA realizes it is important to institute certain safeguards because many activities occur away from the NSA National Office (local youth, teen and adult chapters, Youth Days, regional meetings, etc) and involve children, teens, and vulnerable adults. Therefore, it has implemented the screening process to help ensure the protection of the children, teenagers and/or vulnerable adults participating in events sponsored by the NSA.

2. What type of background check is required?

The NSA requires a general background check, including criminal history, for all individuals who want to volunteer. This background check may be repeated at periodic intervals at the discretion of the NSA.

3. What is a CRA?

CRA stands for “Consumer Reporting Agency.” CRA is the name of any agency that provides information regarding the criminal background of individuals. *Do not let the name of the agency confuse you; the NSA will not be requesting information regarding the financial or credit status of its volunteers.* Individuals are considered “consumers.” Therefore, a background check report is considered a “consumer report.”

4. Who in the NSA is responsible to process the background check information?

The NSA will utilize an independent screening company to collect, perform and archive background check information. This will allow for increased confidentiality for all volunteers, and any individual who wishes to volunteer.

5. Who in the NSA will be notified of background check results?

Only limited individuals, and generally, the Executive Director/Director of Operations of the NSA will be notified of background check results. The Chairperson of the Board will discuss the results with leadership of the NSA on a need-to-know basis to finalize a decision on a case-by-case basis.

6. What if an individual has previously had a background check?

The NSA will still undertake its own screening process, including a background check, for all individuals who wish to volunteer for the NSA.

7. What if a criminal history reports that offenses are pending?

The individual will not be permitted to volunteer pending the outcome of the charges.

8. When will I be notified whether I am cleared to volunteer for the NSA?

The NSA office will notify you; normally within 10 days of your status.

Please contact the National Office if you need additional information prior to completing your screening forms: 1-800-WeStutter

CONFIDENTIAL

Name: _____

List other volunteer activities in which you have been involved (NSA or otherwise) during the last five years:

Organization	Address	Involvement	From	To
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

Have you ever been refused participation in any youth programs? _____ Yes _____ No

If yes, please explain:

Have you ever been refused an opportunity to volunteer for an organization? _____ Yes _____ No

If yes, please explain:

List any skills, talents, hobbies, education, special training (CPR, Medical, etc.) or experiences, including professional licenses or certifications, that you have

Briefly explain why you would like to volunteer for NSA:

Background Check Information

Because the NSA cares for the children, teenagers, and vulnerable adults who participate in various programs, please answer the following questions. We understand these questions are personal and we will take all reasonable precautions to protect your privacy. Answering yes to any of the questions will not automatically exclude you from volunteering for a program, but please explain fully --- attach a separate page as necessary.

Are you presently abusing alcohol or using any illegal drugs? _____ Yes _____ No

If yes, please explain:

Have you ever been convicted of, pled guilty or no contest to, placed on probation for, given community supervision for, or given deferred adjudication for, any crime involving minors or violence? _____ Yes _____ No

If yes, please explain:

Do you currently have pending charges for any criminal offense involving minors or violence? _____ Yes _____ No

If yes, please explain:

The information contained in this screening form is correct to the fullest extent of my knowledge. If I have made any false statements or material misrepresentations, written or verbal, I will be disqualified from participation in any programs with the NSA.

Print Full Name of Volunteer Candidate _____

Signature of Volunteer Candidate _____

Date: _____

Print Guardian Name (if minor)

Signature of Guardian (if minor)

The National Stuttering Association will not discriminate against any person on the basis of race, creed, color, national origin, marital status, gender, sexual orientation or disability.

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119 W. 40th Street ☀️ 14th Floor ☀️ New York, NY 10018
(212)944-4050 x471 (800)937-8888 (WeStutter) fax (212)944-8244 www.WeStutter.org

Acknowledgement of Volunteer Status and Release of Claims

I acknowledge that by submitting this form, I am requesting to be considered as a volunteer only. If I am accepted as a volunteer, I understand that I am not an employee of the NSA and do not expect to be treated as an employee for any purpose, including but not limited to, compensation and/or fringe benefits. To that end, I release NSA from any liability from any claims, including claims alleging an employment relationship. I also agree to save, hold harmless and indemnify NSA from any liability resulting from such claims.

Print Full Name of Volunteer Candidate

Signature of Volunteer Candidate

Print Guardian Name (if minor)

Signature of Guardian (if minor)

Date



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DISCLOSURE: OBTAINING A CONSUMER REPORT

As part of its screening process for volunteers, NSA may obtain a consumer report on you as part of a background investigation. The consumer report may include information on your conviction records and/or motor vehicle records.

The report may be prepared by a consumer reporting agency - a business that assembles such reports for other businesses. To the extent that NSA obtains a consumer report from a consumer reporting agency, the Fair Credit Reporting Act requires that you must be notified in writing that such a report will be obtained on you and that your written consent will be required prior to such a report being obtained.

Print Full Name of Volunteer Candidate

Signature of Volunteer Candidate

Print Guardian Name (if minor)

Signature of Guardian (if minor)

Date



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Authorization for Background Check and Release of Claims

I understand the National Stuttering Association (“NSA”) requires a general background check, including criminal history, for its leadership volunteers. I authorize, without reservation, the NSA to obtain, and any party or agency contacted by a consumer reporting agency (“CRA”) to furnish, any and all information and records relating to my background which may reflect upon my potential to volunteer for the NSA. This information may include, but is not limited to, criminal history records, information on any committed or alleged criminal acts or offenses, and/or arrests, including any act of child abuse, and sex offender registry information. I knowingly release the NSA from any and all liability arising from or relating to obtaining or using this information.

The CRA is authorized to disclose all information obtained to the NSA for any lawful purpose. This authorization shall remain on file and serve as ongoing authorization for the procurement of consumer reports.

I also understand and authorize any references, whether or not identified by me, to give information (including opinions) regarding my character and fitness. I knowingly release any reference contact, whether or not identified by me, from any and all liability on account of compliance with this authorization. I further knowingly release the NSA from any and all liability arising from or relating to obtaining or using this information.

I am aware that background checks may be updated periodically at the sole discretion of the NSA.

By signing below, I certify that I have carefully read and fully understand this legally binding release, that prior to signing, I was given an opportunity to consult with an attorney (if desired), and to ask questions, and to have those questions answered to my satisfaction, and that I executed this release voluntarily. A facsimile or photocopy of this authorization shall be as valid as the original.

Social Security Number

Date

Do you have a valid driver’s license: Yes

No

Driver License Number

State Issued

Print Full Name

Signature

Print Guardian Name (if minor)

Signature of Guardian (if minor)