

ADULT CHAPTERS GUIDEBOOK



OVERVIEW

NSA Chapter Leaders have a tremendous responsibility to support and empower people who stutter in your community. Starting, sustaining and growing a local NSA Chapter requires time, courage and dedication. The National Stuttering Association values your indispensable contribution. Our organization wouldn't exist without your incredible efforts to ensure that people who stutter never feel alone.

The following Adult Chapters Guidebook was written to assist Chapters with practical guidance on how to increase awareness, attendance and member engagement. The topics included in this Guidebook were identified as an area of need from questions included in recent Trimester Reports.

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Using Social Media to Grow Your Chapter



SITUATION

One of the biggest responsibilities a Chapter Leader has is growing monthly meeting attendance. This responsibility involves engaging with existing members and attracting new members. Using social media, especially Facebook, is an incredibly effective way to grow your Chapter.

[According to research](#), 68% of adults have a Facebook account and 74% of them check Facebook at least once-a-day. From the First 2018 Trimester Report, we learned that 70% of NSA Chapters manage a Facebook Page or Facebook Group for their Chapter. Facebook is a cost-effective way to advertise your Chapter and to foster greater community with your Chapter members.

This guide will give you the knowledge on how best to use Facebook to increase the impact your Chapter can have with your area's adult stuttering community.

Facebook Group or a Facebook Page?

You have two options with Facebook, either create a **Facebook Page** or a **Facebook Group** for your Chapter. Each option has positives and negatives.

A **Facebook Page** is public for everyone to see and will show up in online search engines. It's great for sharing information such as upcoming meetings, interesting news/articles and pictures.

Facebook Pages are managed by an Admin and assigned Editors. Only the Admin and Editors can make posts on the Page. There are [numerous tools](#) that Admins and Editors can use to control how the Public can participate on the Page.

A Chapter Facebook Page serves as an easy alternative to creating a Chapter website.

A **Facebook Group** is a way for a Chapter to have informal back-n-forth conversations where members of the Group can make posts, upload photos, leave comments and create events.

Facebook Groups can either be Public, Closed, or Secret. (You'll learn more about this later.) NSA Chapters with a Facebook Group choose to be Closed with membership into the Group needing approval before a person is able to join. (This approval process helps to ensure only people connected to a NSA Chapter can join.)

A Chapter Facebook Group has the ability to be an online hub for all NSA Chapter members to communicate and share information with each other.

It's important to note that almost all NSA Chapters choose to maintain a Facebook Page rather than a Facebook Group. The main reason is a Facebook Page is visible to anyone, searchable online by everyone yet fully managed by an Admin/Editor.

Chapters using a "Closed" or "Secret" Facebook Group do it as a way only for people who attend meetings to participate. It's a communication hub meant only for Chapter members and not the general public.

NOTE: You must have an active Facebook account to create a Facebook Page or Group.

To create a Facebook account, do this:

1. Go to www.Facebook.com
2. Click "Create a New Account"
3. Enter your name, email address or mobile number, password, birthday and gender.
4. Click "Sign Up."
5. (You will be prompted to enter more information if you wish, but that is up to your discretion.)

Creating a Facebook Page

Creating a Chapter Facebook Page is easy. It just takes a few steps.

Step 1: Create Your Page

When you log into Facebook, you are at a screen where you can see posts of your friends. This screen is called your newsfeed. At the top right corner there is a downward facing triangle button, click on it. A drop down menu will appear, select "Create Page."

Step 2: Select Community

The next screen will prompt you for the type of page. Select “Community or Public Figure.”

Step 3: Page Name, Category and Photos

Enter the name of your Chapter Facebook Page. We recommend “NSA ___city name___” (ex. NSA Dallas, NSA Las Vegas, NSA Boston North.) You can also distinguish whether you are an Adult, Family, or TWST Chapter by adding that designation to your Page name.

Next, in the category box, type: “Community.”

You will then be prompted to add a profile picture. Click “Upload a Profile Picture” if you wish. Otherwise, click skip. (You can always use the NSA logo [[image link](#)] as your profile picture.)

Then, you will be prompted to add a cover photo as well. The same instructions above apply.

Step 4: Invite People to Like Your Chapter’s Facebook Page

On the far right column of your new Facebook Page, you can invite people to like your page by entering names or email addresses in the box that says “Search for friends to invite” under “Know friends who might like your Page?” (This is where you invite Chapter members to like your new Facebook Page.)

That’s it! Now you can share Chapter information with people who like your page or search for it on Facebook.

Creating a Facebook Group

Creating a Chapter Facebook Group is super easy.

Step 1: Create Your Group

When you log into Facebook, at the top right corner there is a downward facing triangle button, click on it. A drop down menu will appear, select “Create Group.”

Step 2: Fill in Group Information

The next screen will prompt you for the group name. Type in the name of your group. We recommend “NSA ___city name___” (ex. NSA Rochester, NSA Cleveland, NSA San Diego.) You can also distinguish whether you are an Adult, Family, or TWST Chapter by adding that designation to your Group name.

Step 3: Add People to Your Group

Enter the names or email addresses of Chapter members to join your group. Please invite your Regional Chapter Coordinator, NSA Executive Director (Tammy Flores) and NSA Special Projects Coordinator (Mandy Finstad) to join your Facebook Group.

Step 4: Select Privacy

There are three types of privacy levels for Facebook Groups. It is important you choose your Group's privacy level wisely.

- **PUBLIC:** *Anyone can find the group, see who's in it and what's posted.*
- **CLOSED:** *Anyone can find the group and see who manages it, but only members can see who's in it and what's been posted.*
- **SECRET:** *Only members can find the group, see who's in it and been posted.*

The NSA recommends you choose a CLOSED privacy level for your Group.

(A PUBLIC privacy setting will expose photos of Chapter members and Chapter specific information. Some people in the stuttering community prefer having anonymity for various professional and personal reasons. A SECRET privacy setting adds a layer of confidentiality with the major drawback being your Group will not reach new, potential Chapter members.)

[Click here for more information](#) on Facebook Group privacy levels.

Once you've selected your privacy level, that's it! Now you can start sharing Chapter information within your Facebook Group.

Posting Content to Your Chapter Facebook Page or Facebook Group

There are many things to post on your Chapter Facebook Page or Group. Here's what some Chapters choose to post:

Chapter Events

Chapters routinely create events for Monthly Meetings, Social Events ("Chat & Chew"), Holiday Gatherings, etc. [Click here for instructions](#) on creating an event.

Chapter Meeting Recaps

Share information about attendees, topics discussed and takeaways from monthly meetings.

Chapter Member Spotlights

Highlight Chapter members by profiling them. Sharing their “story” and how stuttering has impacted their life.

Inspirational Messages, Articles or Quotes

Chapter members love seeing something that can truly resonate with a person who stutters. If you found something interesting that relates to stuttering then others will find it interesting. POST IT!

Share Articles & Information from the NSA’s Facebook Page

If you read a worthwhile posting, click “Share” at the bottom of the post to share it for others to read on your Chapter’s Facebook Page or Group.

IMPORTANT: *Personal information about any NSA member should NOT be shared on your Facebook Page or Facebook Group without their permission.*

Boosting a Facebook Post

Boosting a post on Facebook is a great way to increase who sees your post or events on Facebook. It’s a simple and inexpensive way to advertise your Chapter to find new people in your area and to increase attendance at your meetings and events.

NOTE: *Only Chapters with Facebook Pages can boost a post about upcoming meetings, events or information about stuttering.*

It’s easy to boost a post from a Facebook Page. Here are the steps:

Step 1: Post Engaging Content

Create a new post or go to any post you’ve recently created on your Chapter’s Facebook Page. This can be a status update, an event, a photo or a video. (TIP: Posts that include photos and videos are more engaging than plain text.)

Step 2: Click Boost Post

On the bottom right-hand corner of the post, click on the “Boost Post” button. A drop-down will appear to get you started.

Step 3: Choose Your Audience

It's important to reach the right audience with your post. In the drop-down, you can select "People who like your Page and their friends" or you can choose your own target audience by selecting "People you choose through targeting." When you select "People you choose through targeting," you can target people by location, age, gender and interests.

Step 4: Choose Your Budget

You can boost your posts for as little as \$7 but your post will reach more people by increasing your budget slightly. Type in your dollar value, and Facebook will show you the number of people your post will reach. The NSA recommends not exceeding \$20 to boost a post. For most instances, spending \$10 to boost a post should reach more than enough people.

Step 5: Payment Method

If it's your first time boosting a post, or if you want to change your payment method, use the Ads Manager function.

- Go to the Ads Manager "Billing" tab
- Select "Payment Methods" on the left-hand side of the navigation
- Click the "Add New Payment Method" button on the top right

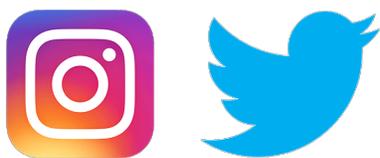
Step 6: Boost Post

Choose how you want to pay and then click the Boost Post button. Done!

Step 7: Measure Results

To see how your post is performing, check in on it anytime from the Boost Post button on the post itself. Review your Page Insights to see which types of posts resonate best with your audience.

Instagram and Twitter



Instagram and Twitter are two other popular social media platforms.

Instagram is owned by Facebook and is primarily used for sharing interesting photos and short videos.

Twitter is used to share updates, articles, quotes, videos and links. When sharing content on Twitter, you are limited to using a maximum of 280 characters, about 55 words.

Posts created on both Instagram and Twitter can be linked and shared to your Chapter Facebook Page. You can setup posts from Instagram and Twitter to automatically appear on Facebook or you can choose to share posts manually.

NOTE: Very few Chapters actively use Instagram or Twitter.

Some Chapters may find these two social media platforms to be fun ways to spread the word about your Chapter. Because we are limited with our time, most Chapters focus their social media efforts on using Facebook.

Don't Forget Tried and True Marketing Methods

Although social media is great, don't forget about traditional advertising methods such as flyers.

Making and printing out NSA flyers for your Chapter meeting and placing them around your community can be a good way to advertise your next meeting. [Click here to download](#) a customizable Word flyer template.

Consider posting flyers at these locations:

- Coffee shops
- Libraries
- Churches, Synagogues, etc.
- Community Centers
- Pubs & Restaurants
- Fitness Centers
- Colleges
- Speech Therapy Clinics

Contacting the Speech Disorders Department at nearby colleges by phone or email is a smart way to inform influential people about your Chapter. Private and public speech therapy clinics are also valuable resources for finding people who stutter in your local area who might be interested in attending a meeting.

Finally, it's important to be proactive! Wherever you go, spread the word about stuttering, the NSA and your Chapter. We are a small community of 1% of the world's population. It's nice to take pride in that!

Getting Local Media Coverage



OPPORTUNITY

Getting local media coverage of your Chapter has proven to be a surefire way to raise awareness of your Chapter and to attract new meeting attendees. Attracting the attention of a local television station and newspaper isn't easy. It will take a good story angle and diligent follow-up to get local media coverage of your Chapter.

NEWSWORTHINESS

The key to attracting the attention of local media is to have a story that is "newsworthy." A newsworthy story has at least one of the following elements:

- Interesting/Surprising/New/Different**
- Timely/Relevant**
- Emotional**
- Local Impact**

Interesting/Surprising/New/Different

Something typical and mundane will not get media attention. The media is more likely to cover stories that are out-of-the ordinary. Starting a brand new NSA Chapter fits into this category, as does a story on a 'Don't Tell me to Slow Down' 5k Race organized by a local Chapter. The [Tucson NSA Chapter](#) and the [Duluth NSA Chapter](#) were both profiled in the media in 2018.

Timely/Relevant

Local media likes to report on stories that add context to either a national or local event. For example, when The King's Speech was in movie theaters, television reporters and newspaper journalists looked for local stories that tied into stuttering. Many NSA Chapters were featured in the news, including this [story about the Dallas Chapter](#) from a community newspaper. Adam Trent, magician, Netflix star and person who stutters, recently visited with the Illinois State NSA Chapter and a [local paper covered the story](#).

Emotional

Human interest stories are newsworthy. Every media outlet loves to share stories about a person or a group of people in an emotional way. Typically these stories highlight how a person/group accomplished something remarkable by overcoming a challenge. Shaun Ghulam is a person who stutters from Canada and [his human interest story](#) of achieving business success was recently covered by a local newspaper.

Local Impact

The media enjoys sharing stories how a person or a group of people are having an impact in the community. Emily Anderson is the Anchorage, AK Family Chapter Leader and [her story was shown on a television morning show](#). Emily talked about the NSA, her Family Chapter and about International Stuttering Awareness Day.

ATTRACTING MEDIA ATTENTION

The first step to getting local media coverage is to ensure you have a story that is newsworthy. Once that has been done, it's time to attract the attention of local media. There are many ways to do this. Here's a list of steps to consider when targeting local media to cover your story:

Find a Reporter

This can be as simple as asking your Chapter member and your friends. Someone within your close circle of friends may know a local media reporter and they can introduce you to him/her.

Use an online search engine to find a local reporter who has previously covered stories on stuttering and or disabilities. It's best to include the specific media outlet and a relevant search term (stuttering, disability, etc.) For example: "Boston Courier and Stuttering." Or, "KEYE-TV and Disability." If you find a story, look who the reporter is. Contact info (email address) for that reporter might be listed in the story. If not, search online for the reporter's email address.

Find Your Story Hook

Using the above "newsworthiness" elements as a guide, write a one or two sentence explanation as to why your story idea is newsworthy. That's your hook to get the attention of reporter.

Make Your Pitch

The easiest way to make your pitch is to email the reporter. Lead with your story hook and close with how the reporter can contact you for more information. If information about the person/group/event in your story hook can be found

online, include that link. (TIP: Keep your email short. Very few people read lengthy emails, especially reporters.)

Follow-up Communication

If you do not hear back from the reporter after a few days, email them again. Make your follow-up email short but try to add a new twist to your story hook. Your new twist could be sharing how a recent story the reporter did connected with you. If you fail to hear back from this reporter, find another reporter to pitch. Be diligent when trying to pitch reporters because they get approached often with lots of story ideas.

Use Facebook in a Sneaky but Savvy Way

One way to also approach a reporter is to find a recent story they've done and share that story on Facebook (or Twitter, Instagram). In your post, explain why that story connected with you and tag the reporter by name as well as the newspaper and or television station. Reporters like seeing their stories get attention online and they might connect the dots back to you sending them a story idea.

MEDIA OUTLETS

There are lots of local media outlets to target. Concentrate your efforts on the following:

- Major newspaper
- Community newspapers
- Local online newspapers/magazines/etc.
- Local TV stations
- Local Public Radio station

CALENDAR LISTINGS

Many media outlets have Community Calendar listings for groups to list their upcoming events. Most of these calendar listings are free and all that is required is submitting an event through the media's website. Search the media outlet's website for their Community Calendar listings and you should find how to submit a calendar listing on the website.

Some NSA Chapters have their monthly meetings listed on these Community Calendars which can either be solely online or also printed in the paper.

Hosting Chapter Social Events



Chat 'N Chew



Holiday Party



Summer Picnic

OPPORTUNITY

It's fun for Local Chapters to do special events outside of their monthly meetings. Changing location and doing something different can add energy to a Chapter. It can also entice new people to attend that might have been hesitant to go to a meeting held in a private setting. The strongest Chapters develop deep friendships with members and those friendships are made deeper by doing fun stuff outside of a meeting.

SOCIAL EVENTS

There are countless events a Chapter can do and members probably have a lot of great ideas. Consider assigning a member or a small group of members to serve as the Social Events Coordinator/Team. They would be responsible for arranging activities for a Chapter to do.

Here's a list of social events that Chapters routinely do:

Chat 'N Chew

A Chat 'N Chew is simply a gathering at a local restaurant where you and your current members enjoy dinner and conversation. Choose a restaurant that can accommodate a group of your size and if you are able to make reservations, do so. It's also recommended that you let the restaurant know that your group is made up of people who stutter. That way the waitstaff will not be caught off guard if they hear someone deal with a verbal block when they order.

You can also setup the NSA Chapter sign that the NSA office has provided each Chapter on your table. This is how people will know where to find your group in the restaurant. It also makes for a colorful addition to any group photo taken.

Holiday Party

It's common for NSA Chapters to host a Holiday Party as their December meeting. Family, friends and loved ones are invited and it's usually the most attended gathering of the year for a Chapter. (TIP: It's smart for a Chapter Leader to assign holiday party planning responsibilities to a few members.)

If you have a smaller Chapter, consider getting together with nearby Chapters to hold a bigger holiday party. Every year, the Lansing, MI Chapter gets together with the Grand Rapids and Kalamazoo Chapters to celebrate the holidays with a big group. Each year, a different Chapter has the responsibility to arrange the Holiday Party.

Chapters usually have their Holiday Party at a restaurant or at a member's house. If you have your Holiday Party at a restaurant, be sure to make reservations in advance to ensure there will be space for your group. When Chapters have their Holiday Party at someone's house, it's usually a potluck dinner where attendees bring appetizers, entrée dishes and desserts for everyone to enjoy.

Summer Picnics

NSA Chapters routinely hold Summer Picnics at a local public park or community picnic area. Some of these venues can be popular so it's best to plan well in advance and to be flexible with your event date.

You could have a theme for the picnic and ask people to bring a dish that plays off the theme. This is also a great opportunity to play some outdoor games together to amp up the fun times.

Other Fun Group Events

- Bowling
- Putt-Putt
- Go Kart Racing
- Karaoke
- Group Volunteer Activity
- Group Cooking Class
- Team Trivia Night at a Pub
- Group Scavenger Hunt
- Hiking/Trail Walking
- Do an "Escape Game"
- Ice Skating
- Attend a Sporting Event
- Run/Walk a 5k as a Team
- Axe Throwing (Google it)
- Group Painting Class
- Museum Tour
- Attend Music/Art Festival
- And many more ideas...

PROMOTING YOUR EVENT

After you've decided upon a special event and picked a time/date, it's time to spread the word. Here are a few ways to promote your event:

Discuss at an Upcoming Monthly Meeting

(Duh! That's no-brainer.) Of course you'll talk about your special event at your Chapter's monthly meeting. Put it on the agenda to talk about. Create handouts to pass around. Get RSVPs on the spot.

Send an Email

(Another no-brainer.) Use your Chapter Member email list to alert everyone on the list about the upcoming event. Regular attendees will also hear about the event at a meeting but for those people who rarely attend a meeting, email might be the best way to reach them. In the email you should also consider asking people to RSVP for the event so you'll know how many people to plan on attending.

If you are inviting people outside of your group, encourage members to forward the email to their friends and family.

Create a Facebook Event

Create an event on your Facebook Page or Facebook Group to promote your special event. If your group is closed or secret, only members of the group will see the event. If your group is public, then anyone can see the event.

By creating a Facebook Event, you will be able to track RSVPs and in some cases, people will be able to share the event with their friends and with groups outside of their NSA Chapter Facebook Page.

For guidance on how to create a Facebook event, [click here](#).

Other Ways to Promote Your Event

- Submit a "Community Event" calendar listing to your local newspaper and local community websites
- Alert local media about the event. (For help on doing this, refer to the "Getting Local Media Coverage" guide.)
- Create and post flyers at coffee shops, libraries and other public venues.
- Submit your special event details to Mandy at the NSA Office for listing on WeStutter.org (mandy@westutter.org).

AFTER YOUR EVENT

All your planning and promoting paid off. People came, friendships were strengthened, conversation flowed and people left smiling. Here are a few ideas to follow-up AFTER the event.

- Send a “Thank You” email to everyone who attended and include a few photos
- Post a group photo* with a fun description to your Facebook Page/Group
- Share the post on your personal Facebook page
- Encourage Chapter members to share the post on Facebook
- Share the post on the NSA Chapter Leaders Facebook Group
- Send a photo and description to the NSA National Office via Facebook

* Personal information about any NSA member should NOT be shared on your Facebook Page or Facebook Group without their permission.

Finding and Inviting Special Guest Presenters



SITUATION

Chapter Leaders have expressed a need to have special guest presenters at Chapter Meetings. Having someone else deliver a message and potentially lead the conversation can help to add new life to a meeting and lessen the burden of the Chapter Leader.

IDEAS

1. Ask an Attendee to Lead the Next Meeting.

Finding and inviting a special guest could start within your Chapter. At the close of a meeting, ask for a volunteer to lead and design the next meeting. You may be surprised at who steps up to volunteer to become a Meeting Facilitator.

Assist the Meeting Facilitator by sharing with them the [Meeting Topics Guide](#). They may choose to use one of those topics. Or, they may have a different topic in mind.

An empowered Chapter attendee can bring a different energy to your meeting. Plus, it gives someone an opportunity to practice his or her leadership skills.

2. Invite an SLP to Present Research Findings from a Study.

Speech professionals routinely stay informed by reading research studies on stuttering. They have a wealth of scientific knowledge to share.

If you have SLPs that attend your meetings, then start by asking if one of them would like to share a study or lead a topic that digs into the science of stuttering. If you do not have an SLP that attends, then try contacting a “Communication Disorders” professor at a local college and ask them to be a guest presenter.

NOTE: Chapter Leaders will need to reinforce that any topic chosen by the SLP cannot address fluency/therapy techniques.

3. Invite a “Disability Advocate” to Lead Conversation.

There are many community organizations that serve to make their city a better place to live for people with special needs and disabilities. These organizations are driven to assist people to reduce barriers to employment, support efforts to bridge gaps in the transition from school to adulthood, and much more.

People who stutter can identify in many ways with people who have special needs and disabilities.

Go online and search “Disability Advocate {insert city}” or search “Disability Organization {insert city}” to find a community group in your city that serves people with special needs. Contact the group and learn if they would be interested in speaking to a group of people who stutter.

4. Have a Virtual Meeting with an Out-of-Town NSAer.

Think back to a recent NSA Conference and one of the workshop presenters you met that greatly impacted your life. Perhaps it was the Adult Programs Chair, a Regional Chapter Coordinator, or someone else you met at a Conference whose story inspired you. Wouldn't they make for an awesome guest presenter?

Most likely that person lives in a different city and wouldn't be able to physically attend your meeting. But, they can “attend” virtually through Skype, Google Hangouts, Skype, etc.

It will take pre-work and technical know-how to have someone present virtually. You'll need a strong Internet connection (your phone can be a hotspot), laptop/computer/tablet (your phone screen is probably too small), speakers (for better sound) and someone knowledgeable to help make the virtually connection go as smooth as possible.