

# Information for Professionals

Al-Anon Family Groups

Edition 2

## *What is Al-Anon?*

**Al-Anon** is a mutual support group of adults who share their experience in applying the Al-Anon principles to problems related to the effects of an alcoholic in their lives. It is not group therapy and is not led by a counselor or therapist; this support network complements and supports professional

treatment. **Alateen** is a peer support group for teens who are struggling with the effects of someone else's problem drinking. Many Alateen groups meet at the same time and location as an Al-Anon group. Alateen meetings are open only for teenagers.

*No advance notification or written referral is necessary to attend an Al-Anon or Alateen meeting. Anyone affected by someone else's drinking is welcome to attend.*

## *Question and Answer*

### **Why is it important for the family members to receive help?**

The family needs to become healthier whether or not the alcoholic is receiving treatment or maintaining sobriety. When family members receive help and information, they are able to access a support system and help build a safety net at home for themselves and their children. Every family member needs to feel they have support. If the alcoholic is or has been in treatment, the family needs to understand that treatment arrests the addiction but does not cure it. Recovery is an ongoing, daily process for alcoholics and their family members.

## *Membership Survey 2015*



94% of participants said that listening to other members sharing their experience, strength and hope was helpful.

38% of participants stated that their relationship with the drinker was not very healthy before attending Al-Anon. After attending meetings only 8% felt the same way.

83% of participants valued the opportunity to speak openly and anonymously about their experiences.

15% of participants came to meetings because a person in their lives had another drug addiction – 97% of those members continued to go to Al-Anon meetings as they discovered that there was drinking that affected them in a negative way.

## **Do you recommend that counselors and therapists refer family members to Al-Anon?**

Yes. The first step for the family is that they understand that they do not have power over the drinker's alcoholism. They need to learn what issues to get involved with and actions they can and cannot take.

## **How do family members benefit from attending Al-Anon?**

When the family or anyone close to the drinker goes to Al-Anon, they first need to focus on themselves. Then, they can begin to learn some of the skills and better ways of approaching the alcoholic family member. The family becomes healthier and they get the support they need from attending Al-Anon.

## **RESOURCES FOR PROFESSIONALS:**

Al-Anon at a glance

Al-Anon Family Groups is a worldwide fellowship. In Australia there are 400 meetings which welcome anyone concerned about someone else's drinking.

[www.al-anon.org.au](http://www.al-anon.org.au)

search [Meetings](#)

Families Facing Alcoholism: members share their stories

[download booklet:](#)

## ***Al-Anon Family Groups – support for families and friends of alcoholics***

Al-Anon Family Groups  
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GPO Box 1002, Melbourne, Vic., 3001  
Telephone 03 9620 2166  
Email: [agso@alphalink.com.au](mailto:agso@alphalink.com.au)  
Web: [www.al-anon.org.au](http://www.al-anon.org.au)

National Helpline 1300 252 666

