

Young People in OA

Dear Intergroups/Service Boards and Regions,

We, the WSBC Young People's Committee of Overeaters Anonymous, ask ourselves, "How can we be of service to the Fellowship and to Overeaters Anonymous as a whole?" As we are focused on members between the ages of eighteen and thirty, we realize we have a unique perspective as a necessary and growing part of the Fellowship.

It is vital that current, abstinent members between the ages of eighteen and thirty have opportunity and encouragement to serve in all areas of our Fellowship. As we young people serve, we attract others in our age group to do likewise. We bond as we go through similar struggles of growing into adulthood while abstinent.

We therefore offer the following suggestions and resources that we believe will create a cohesive foundation for young people. We appreciate what the Fellowship offers the young adult and what we can gain from each other's experiences as we move together toward recovery in Overeaters Anonymous.

SUGGESTIONS AND RESOURCES

- √ *First Things First*
Remember that some of us are in college/university. Reaching us where we are is most likely to yield results. College- and university-age students are best able to carry the message to other young members now and in the future.
- √ *Keep it Simple*
Consider one action your intergroup/service board can take to carry the message to young people, rather than trying five and having none stick. Ideally, we'd like to see all intergroups/service boards start one meeting at or near a college or university campus as a first step.
- √ *Easy Does It*
Be gentle with the process. It takes time to reach a younger demographic. Take action and put the rest in your Higher Power's hands.
- √ *Live and Let Live*
Encourage open-mindedness when young people share, whether they are abstaining or not. They are going through formative years filled with experimentation, growth, and core life questions.
- √ *It works if you work it.*
Carry the message as it was carried to you. Trust that the message crosses all barriers and does not need to be watered down for a younger newcomer.
- √ *Make literature geared to those between the ages of eighteen and thirty available at your meetings.*
The downloadable PDF of the pamphlet *To the Young Person* is available in the [OA](#)

[bookstore](#) and at [oa.org](#) in the [Document Library](#) under the category “Young People.” The pamphlets *A New Plan of Eating: A Physical, Emotional, and Spiritual Journey* and *OA Members Come in All Sizes: Welcome, Whatever Your Problem with Food*, both available at [bookstore.oa.org](#), may also be of interest.

√ *Share your experience.*

Did you join the Fellowship at a younger age? If so, consider that experience an asset when approaching people our age. When you see one of us at a meeting, include in your share that you joined OA when you were our age.

√ *Service is its own reward.*

If a young member meets pertinent abstinence requirements, consider nominating them for a position at different levels of service. The experience of a younger member offers a fresh perspective at workshops and retreats and on panels and service committees.

√ *Carrying the message*

Consider placing ads in the publications and on media sites for local colleges or universities. Service body public information resources can be used for this purpose. If your OA newsletter carries stories from members, feature an abstinent young person from time to time. Use the internet and smartphones, keeping websites up-to-date and user-friendly. If you maintain a speaker list, consider creating a code identifying those who came into program as young adults.

TRADITIONS AND YOUNG PEOPLE

In the spirit of the Traditions, remember that we are all equal members of the Fellowship. While one may be quick to see age as a lack of experience, keep in mind that we are a growing Fellowship—one that can benefit from the voice of a younger member’s experience in all aspects of service and recovery.

While one may be tempted to say, “Thank goodness you got it young,” remember that relief for a young newcomer starts with relating to a fellow member about their present pain and the one-day-at-a-time courage it takes to face one’s disease.

Recovery is not contingent on age, whether one is younger or older. Rather, longevity depends on our willingness to work the program honestly to the best of our ability from whatever point we begin. Therefore, as a Fellowship, it is important that we not water down the message to suit personalities, but rather, share our experience as it was carried to us.

If you have ideas to pass on, please share what is working for you by contacting us at the email address youngpeople@oa.org. Feel free to contact us via this email regarding any questions or resources you may need to help you carry the message of recovery.

In the spirit of service,

WSBC Young People’s Committee