

## Alateen Training Module IV

### Dealing with Challenges in Alateen Part A:

#### Safety/Legal matters

#### Behavior problems in the group

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## Safety/legal issues

**Matters of physical safety are not negotiable,  
and not up to the group.**



Alateen Group Sponsors have the responsibility to insure that the meeting is a safe place. *“Engaging in roughhousing, fighting, overt and covert sexual behavior or any other inappropriate activities before, during, and after an Alateen meeting or event can put you or your group in a dangerous position...”* (from *Alateen Safety Guidelines*, G-34)

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## Safety/legal issues



Be familiar with your **Area Alateen Safety and Behavioral Requirements Policy**, Area Alateen Process (in guidelines and other documents), and local laws.

Research local resources and hotline phone numbers that could help a child with a dangerous or abusive situation.

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## Safety/legal issues

REVISED 2021

### Mandatory reporting

#### Regarding Abuse or Neglect:

“In Florida mandatory disclosure NO LONGER APPLIES ONLY TO individuals performing in a professional capacity, and not as volunteers.

AMIAS have no choice but to comply with the law.”  
(*Alateen Safety Guidelines*, G-34)

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## Safety/legal issues

### Mandatory reporting

**In Florida, since reporting of abuse / neglect is mandatory, how do we prepare the Alateens?**

The Alateens must be made aware of the requirement that AMIAS must report abuse. It is suggested that this be part of the opening or mentioned at every meeting, before sharing begins, so that they have a choice in the subjects they share. If it becomes necessary to report something, do it as an interested and concerned adult, not as a representative of Al-Anon or Alateen.

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## Safety/legal issues

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### When thinking of reporting

#### **If you have reason to suspect child abuse or neglect:**

Your first step is to discuss the matter with the Area Alateen Coordinator or your District Representative.

Before reporting, discuss your intentions with the Alateen member.

Follow advice of legal counsel regarding keeping identities anonymous.

Any reporting is done as an individual, not as an Alateen Group Sponsor or AMIAS.

(Taken from the *Alateen Safety Guidelines*, G-34\*)

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## Safety/legal issues

### Mandatory reporting

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Al-Anon and Alateen are not above the law.

FL law now requires reporting by any person when child abuse or neglect is suspected. See module II for definitions and processes.

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## Safety/legal Issues - Finding the balance among Concept Three and Traditions Two and Four

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**Concept Three: The right of decision makes effective leadership possible.**

This tells us the right of decision makes effective Alateen Group Sponsorship possible: within the framework of their job description, it should be traditional for Alateen Group Sponsors to decide which matters they can handle on their own, and which they will report, consult others, or ask specific direction.

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## Safety/legal Issues - Finding the balance among Concept Three and Traditions Two and Four

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**Tradition Two:** For our group purpose there is but one authority—a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants—they do not govern.

The Al-Anon solution to group problems is found in **Tradition Two**, which refers to “trusted servants.” Alateen Group Sponsors are trusted servants to the Alateen group and to the Al-Anon fellowship. **There is accountability.**

Alateen Group Sponsors do not govern or own their Alateen groups.

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## Safety/legal issues - Finding the balance among Concept Three and Traditions Two and Four

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**Tradition Four: Each group should be autonomous, except in matters affecting other Alateen and Al-Anon Family Groups or A.A. as a whole.**

Know what the Tradition means.

- What types of matters fall under group autonomy?
- What matters might affect other Alateen groups as a whole?
- Al-Anon Groups as a whole?
- A.A. as a whole?
- How can we determine the difference?

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## Safety/legal Issues

### Keep the focus on safety

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**What are some common sense ways to keep the focus on safety?**

Transport Alateens in a group and with another adult  
Do not transport Alateens without parental permission  
Obtain permission/medical care forms when required  
Be gender & number conscious

It is suggested that Alateen groups create **behavior guidelines** so that everyone knows what is expected before, during and after the meeting. Suggest that group guidelines include what to do when an Alateen is disruptive.

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## Behavior problems

### Setting boundaries with Alateen members

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Treat Alateens with respect.

Demonstrate Al-Anon principles with what you say and do.

Do not accept unacceptable behavior.

**How can we accomplish this?**

- Use “I” messages, sharing our own feelings about the situation.
- Don’t be afraid to ask a disruptive Alateen to leave the meeting. But you must ensure the safety of that teen. **(Advise parent or Turn them over to parent by calling parent to pick them up. If parent is in adjacent meeting, take them to parent in the meeting.)**
- Ask for help from other AMIAS. **Have open discussion about this.**

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### Behavior problems

Identify physical safety issues vs. group behavior problems

**The group can set the rules before there is a problem!**

Group problems might be:

- Dominating the discussion in meetings
- Rudeness
- Getting off topic
- Lack of self-discipline
- Age differences



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### Behavior problems Siblings



**Are asked to:**

- Be peers in the meetings
- Keep family rivalry or problems out of the group
- Keep each other's confidences



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### Behavior problems

Addressing a problem in the Alateen group

**When there is disruptive behavior in the group, both group members and Alateen Group Sponsors can ask members to stop.**

If attempts to resolve a behavior issue directly with the individuals have not worked, the behavior may need to be discussed by the group.

For example, the group might discuss, "how will we handle use of cell phones and texting during our meetings?"



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### Behavior problems

Addressing a problem in the Alateen group

say the Serenity Prayer. Then either the Alateen Group Sponsor or an Alateen member may share the problem in a general way with the group, inviting discussion.

Encourage the Alateens and Alateen Group Sponsors to apply the Traditions to the situation and to stick to Al-Anon/ Alateen principles.

The group may decide to update their behavior guidelines, including actions to take with violators.

The group may decide a group inventory would be helpful.



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### Behavior problems

Alateen resources in our literature and service tools

*Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual* (P-24/27)

*Alateen: Hope for Children of Alcoholics* (B-3)

*Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions for Alateen* (P-18)

Al-Anon/Alateen guidelines, Alateen Service e-Manual, the *Service Manual* and guidelines are available at: [al-anon.org/members](http://al-anon.org/members)



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### Behavior problems

A group inventory may help

Taking group inventory can help to prevent problems, as well as to identify them and find solutions.

Giving the Alateens responsibility for their meeting or event can deepen their commitment to upholding behavior requirements.

Resource: *Taking a Group*

Inventory guideline (G-8a/b)

**"Participation is the key to harmony." (Concept Four)**

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Behavior problems  
Group conscience vote



The next step is to discuss “taking an informed “group conscience” with the group.

After the matter is discussed and voted on, the group honors the opinion of the majority.

**When the Alateen group determines its own behavioral guidelines and the process for dealing with violations, the group members will monitor their own behavior.**

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Reporting Allegation of Non-Compliance or Abuse by an AMIAS

If you observe or become aware of an AMIAS not following the Area Requirements or being abusive with an Alateen, what should you do?

The Area has a detailed process for the reporting and resolution (including appeal) of any circumstance where an AMIAS allegedly does not follow the Area Requirements.

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Reporting Allegation of Non-Compliance or Abuse by an AMIAS

There is a separate process for how the Area handles any allegation of abuse of an Alateen by an AMIAS.

See next slide.....

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Reporting Allegation of Non-Compliance or Abuse by an AMIAS

**Study the documents (flow charts) titled:**

- PROCESS TO CONFIDENTIALLY REPORT A NON-ABUSE COMPLAINT OR ALLEGATION REGARDING AN AMIAS and
- PROCESS TO CONFIDENTIALLY REPORT AN ABUSE COMPLAINT REGARDING AN AMIAS.

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Reporting Allegation of Non-Compliance or Abuse by an AMIAS

**The first step when there is any kind of allegation is:**

Whoever has first knowledge of the complaint or allegation (initial reporter) notifies the **District Representative, or in their absence the Alternate DR or the Area Alateen Coordinator** who gathers initial basic information.

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Alateen Training Module IV

Dealing with Challenges in Alateen



END PART A:  
CONTINUE WITH PART B

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