



**ConnectGroups**  
helping support groups & individuals

## INFORMATION SHEET

# How to be an Effective Support Group

Support groups are formed for a variety of reasons and no two groups are exactly the same. Effective groups have many similarities. Some common areas will involve their organisational structure and the group processes.

### Organisational Structure

The group

- agrees on a common mission, goal and purpose
- maintains a good balance between informality and structure
- provides mutual support and other related helpful and fun activities
- has access to resources e.g. a meeting space, mailing address, phone,
- maintains positive relationships with the appropriate professional services
- ensures decisions are made using an approach that develops mutual agreement

### Group Processes

The group processes ensures

- the even distribution of opportunities to help within the group (including leadership opportunities)
- members are encouraged to help each other
- to achieve individual goals,
- by providing positive feedback,
- by sharing personal feelings, concerns, successes and failures
- by being non judgmental
- members are supported in their attempts to apply new strategies
- that a variety of principles and techniques in dealing with problems within the group are used
- that members **maintain confidentiality** within the group
- more than one or two leaders, core members or "energy" persons are developed
- social aspects are included at meetings
- that meetings are held in settings that are positive and encouraging
- that meetings provide positive learning experiences

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#### ConnectGroups Contact Details:

**Telephone:** (08) 9228 4488 **Rural Freecall:** 1800 195 575

**Email:** [info@connectgroups.org.au](mailto:info@connectgroups.org.au)

**Web Site:** [www.connectgroups.org.au](http://www.connectgroups.org.au)

**Postal Address:** PO Box 8140 Perth Business Centre WA 6849

**Actual Address:** 335-337 Pier Street EAST PERTH WA 6004

#### ConnectGroups Services:

New and Existing Support Group Development, Telephone Information Line, Information Forums, Facilities and Equipment Hire  
On-line Directory of Support Groups and Community Organisations, E-News