



## Some key strategies for recruitment of new members for your group

- Realize that few parents join in the first three months after diagnosis; give families time to respond to the initial shock, but try to reach out and help them through this period.
- Remember that parents are often overwhelmed by physical and emotional stress.
- Time and energy are at a minimum; give parents a reason to get involved and provide assistance in terms of transportation and childcare.
- Minimize travel time and distance from parents' homes to the group meeting place.
- Remember that some parents are afraid that group discussion will increase anxiety and anger.
- Remember that everyone has their own coping strategies (and ways of dealing with or denying stress); not every parent will (or should) choose to come to the group regularly, or at all.
- Keep the group open, reduce factions and cliquishness, and keep time spent on group "business" to a minimum (let those who love to do business do it at separate meetings).
- Perception of the group as all white, or all middle class, or all women, or all anything, will turn some people away.
- Have the medical staff talk in positive terms about the group to parents of newly diagnosed children.
- Make some group activities visible with posters and announcements in clinics and on hospital wards.
- Provide a wide range of activities, at different times, so that parents with different needs can all find assistance within the group.

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