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News & Views - Jun, 1999 Issue #58

NATSAP ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING

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(February 20, 1999). We were amazed and delighted by the overwhelmingly positive response to our Organizational Meeting. Never before have so many professionals assembled from the world of therapeutic schools and programs to discuss their collective needs and wants. Representatives brought with them a spirit of cooperation and mutual respect that made the meeting enjoyable for everyone. As a result, it is now clear that the vast majority of therapeutic schools and programs in the United States want to find ways to work together. More than half of those invited to the meeting came. Given the short notice and the great distance many had to travel, we did not expect such a tremendous turnout.

The primary goal of the meeting was to hear directly from future member programs. Ultimately, NATSAP will provide dozens of services for its members, but for now, certain services must merit a higher priority in their order of development and implementation. To ensure that priorities would be established in accordance with the wishes of future members, we had to learn what programs needed and wanted most. To gather this information, we facilitated seven breakout groups. In those groups, representatives were asked to make a list of what they would like to see NATSAP accomplish both in its first year and in the coming decade. The compiled results are presented on the following page.

The information obtained at the Organizational Meeting has helped us immensely. We have used it to create an association that is responsive to the needs of its members. What we have learned has allowed us to prioritize our goals and services for the coming year, and the results now serve as the very backbone of the Objectives and Purposes section in our Bylaws.

POPULAR DEMAND

Below are the top ten requests for services most commonly embraced by meeting attendees. They are listed in order of general preference and are prioritized as such by the Board of Directors.

- 1) Standards for Ethical Practice
- 2) An Annual Conference
- 3) Employee Referral Services
- 4) Public Relations Support
- 5) Membership Directory
- 6) Outcome Studies
- 7) Training Workshops

- 8) Annual Statistics
- 9) Lobbying
- 10) Purchasing Consortium

OBJECTIVES AND PURPOSES

The National Association of Therapeutic Schools and Programs is committed:

To serve as a national resource for those private, educational, and therapeutic programs seeking to work with and assist children, adolescents, and young adults beleaguered by emotional and behavioral difficulties.

To provide leadership to member school officials, faculties, and related school professionals in the areas of training, professional development, and standards.

To inform and improve the abilities of schools and individuals to serve children, adolescents, and young adults in the areas of student, residential, and academic life through consultations, publications, presentations, and conferences.

To facilitate research activities designed to expand the knowledge and expertise available to member programs.

To seek positive public relations exposure and to provide public relations support for member programs.

To support the efforts of member programs to attract, recruit, and retain quality personnel for available executive, professional, and academic staff positions.

To build partnerships with and provide leadership to related organizations and individuals in the development of financial aid and 3rd party families seeking to enroll their children in member programs.

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