

Attention Baton Rouge

New Support Group for Parents of Addicts



Tuesdays At O'Brien House

(Starting January 24, 2017)

446 North 12th Street

6:30 – 8:00 P.M.

PAL Meetings are Facilitated by Trained Volunteer Parents

HOPE

COURAGE

STRENGTH

There is Hope!

PAL meets every week at 17 locations across Arizona and 16 other states. PAL provides continuing education and support, at no charge, for parents trying to save a son or daughter from addiction to alcohol or drugs.

For Spouses Too

PAL can also help spouses who are forced to act like the parent to their addicted partner who is abusing alcohol or drugs. (All other family members and friends are also welcome to attend our meetings).

You are Not Alone

By attending our meetings, you will learn proven ways to help your loved one recover from addiction. You will also be able to give support to, and receive support from, others who are facing the same challenges you are. Everyone is welcome. No need to register, just show up at a meeting. **Participants must be 18 or older.**

For more
Information:
www.palgroup.org

Local contact person
Gwen Knox
225-266-5603

"All of our educational topics are theory. We believe in the smorgasbord concept: take what you want and leave the rest."

Weekly Group for Parents with a Son or Daughter Battling Addiction Offers Hope through Education and Support



A new support group is starting in our community **at O'Brien House- 446 N. 12th St., Baton Rouge, LA 70802 meeting on Tuesdays from 6:30 P.M. – 8:00 P.M.**

According to recent research cited by the National Institute for Drug Abuse (NIDA), opioid / heroin overdose deaths now exceed annual deaths from car crashes. Also, president Obama in February of 2016 requested 1.5 billion in spending to combat the issue of opioid/heroin abuse alone, noting it is an epidemic in our country. Also, as commonly reported, the vast majority of those in our prisons are there in connection with drug or drug related offenses.

After years, working as a substance abuse counselor, Mike Speakman, (PAL founder), was taught that overcoming addiction isn't just about treatment for the individual; it takes support from the family as well. "A good example is diabetes," Speakman said. "You didn't cause it, but if your son had it you might want to learn about it so you could better help."

In the beginning, Speakman offered education for families in single weekend sessions, but after years of experience, he realized that the change that needs to occur with drug and alcohol addiction is a long-term change for the entire family. The parents may learn a lot over a weekend, but repetition and consistency is what will cause permanent change, resulting in Mike adding weekly meetings. Interestingly, although PAL's focus is on helping the family members, it indirectly seems to help their loved one. Mike realized that "When the parents got help and started making changes in how they dealt with their sons and daughters, they began to see their addicted loved ones eventually seeking help." That's why Mike began the PAL-Group (Parents of Addicted Loved-ones). He is also the author of *The Four Seasons of Recovery, for Parents of Alcoholics and Addicts*.

The first meeting began in July of 2006 at the Calvary Addiction Recovery Center and has since spread all across the Phoenix, Arizona Valley and Tucson. PAL also expanded out of Arizona and currently has meetings in California, Kentucky, Indiana, Montana, Ohio, Oregon, and Washington. Each meeting, which is designed for parents or spouses of loved ones going through an addiction, begins with a prayer, followed by introductions.

The group is then presented with one of nine lessons; which include *Healthy Helping and the Four Stages of Growth in Recovery*. After some discussion of the lesson, the members of the group give an update about what's going on in their lives, which is followed by prayer, ending the meeting. The group is designed for each individual to learn at their own pace. The challenge is that much of the education goes against natural parenting instincts.

Jerry Law, a certified interventionist, says it's important for parents or spouses to find a support group like PAL so that they don't have to feel so alone. "It's critical," he said. "It's the only way to survive. You feel like, 'What did I do wrong?' You didn't do anything wrong. This is reality.

This is life. This is the hand you've been dealt. If you're going to live beating yourself up you're never going to be healthy."

PAL does not endorse any particular action. The group is just one way parents and spouses can educate themselves and prepare to make their own decisions. Stories abound for Parents whose sons and daughters are now in recovery, crediting PAL for the changes.

Churches are the most convenient meeting spaces, requiring only one room for about two hours once a week. PAL is now incorporated as a non-profit organization and is run by a volunteer board of parents. For more information on the organization or to find a meeting location, visit: www.palgroup.org or call PAL at 480.300.4712.

This group will be Facilitator by Gwen Knox, 225-266-5603.