



## What We Do..

Parents Anonymous of Texas, Inc. is committed to strengthening families and stopping child abuse and neglect through the development of volunteer-based services at the community level throughout the state of Texas.

## How You Can be a Part of the Solution

Parents Anonymous is a grass-roots, volunteer-driven organization. If you would like to help provide a nurturing and safe environment where families in our community can flourish, **become a volunteer!**

Volunteers work directly with parents, teens or children for 3-4 hours per week, or offer a listening ear on the HEARTline to callers facing family challenges. Monthly trainings are available.

Call 1-800-554-2323 or visit our website at [www.parentsanonymous.org](http://www.parentsanonymous.org) to learn more about volunteer opportunities.

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# Parents Anonymous

The Middle Way:  
Parenting with Balance

# Mutual Help Support Groups

For over thirty years, parents around the nation have participated in **Parents Anonymous mutual-help support groups**. In these one-and-a-half hour weekly meetings, parents are encouraged to talk about issues that affect their relationships with their children. The Parents Anonymous format allows all group members to have a voice and helps keep discussion focused on positive personal change. The group provides a non-judgmental, safe place where thoughts, feelings, and ideas can be shared openly, allowing parents to brainstorm together to find solutions that meet the needs of their families. All groups are free of charge to participants.

The **Teen Support Group** is similar in structure to the parent mutual-help group model and follows the same format for developing a safe place to share. Teens act as both peer support and peer leaders, exploring their personal strengths, passions, and triumphs in a safe environment. Teen group members express their fears, disappointments, excitements and ambivalence about what it means to be an adolescent today.

The **Children's Circle** meets concurrently but separately from the parent and teen support groups. Although children do not have the developmental capacity to participate in a mutual-help group the same way adults do, it is critical they have a safe place where they can develop life skills and learn new ways to interact with friends and family. Volunteers provide educational, social and emotional support for children ages 0 - 12 through the Children's Circle Activity Plans. Children engage in dramatic play, arts and crafts and games that focus on positive life skills. The Children's Circle also provides nurturing childcare, removing one potential barrier to parents' participation in a group.

## Family Education: The Middle Way



The *Middle Way Family Education Program* is comprised of six separate but integrally connected curricula: *The Middle Way Parent Program* and its Spanish-language counterpart, *Camino en Armonía*, *The Middle Way Teen Program*, and *The Middle Way Children's Program* for preschool, elementary and pre-teen developmental levels. These communication-based interactive programs support the development of healthy family relationships and teach compassionate assertiveness, empathetic/active listening, empowerment and other skills that strengthen family relationships. Participants engage in an introspective process that encourages personal growth and change. This program is free of charge to participants and is offered in a 15-week program that includes both structured learning (2.5 hour sessions) and support group participation.

## Texas HEARTline (1-800-554-2323)

The Texas HEARTline is a statewide crisis intervention and information referral telephone service offered free of charge to Texas families.

The HEARTline also serves as a referral source for many local and statewide agencies in Texas that support families. Calls are answered by trained Parents Anonymous of Texas volunteers and staff seven days a week from 8:30 am until 12 midnight.

When people in crisis or stress phone the HEARTline they receive a trained listener who is nonjudgmental and caring. Volunteers and staff support the caller's experience, strength and hope.



### Parents say....

*"The most important thing I learned was how to handle myself....my attitude, and how I feel."*

*"I learned how to build a relationship with my kids."*