

October 2025

Minors in CNMI Support Group Meetings – Liability Statement

CNMI welcomes all who share our compulsion, including minors under 18. However, due to the autonomous nature of meetings (Tradition 4) and the absence of directive leadership (Tradition 9), CNMI cannot assume liability for any harm to minors attending meetings.

A 2024 policy update from OA World Service states that OA does **not endorse** minors attending meetings. While local groups may decide independently, the OA Board of Trustees **strongly recommends obtaining legal advice** before allowing minors to attend or creating related policies.

OA has removed prior resources supporting minor participation from OA.org and WSO. This change is intended to protect both minors and OA from potential harm and liability.

The following are CNMI recommendations for minors in OA meetings:

OA CNMI welcomes all persons who have a concern about troubling food issues. We offer hope, resources and support. For minors under the age of 18, we recommend:

1. Attending any open OA meeting with a parent or guardian present if possible.
2. For virtual meetings, minors may wish to keep their camera off and not provide contact information to the overall group in the chat for their safety. Please take any additional steps to protect your safety online.

For the adult group members, we recommend any or all of the following to guard against potential liability:

1. If meeting with a minor to provide fellowship or support, two or more adults should be present.
2. If an adult group member is considering sponsoring a Minor, they may wish to
 - a) obtain consent from parents or guardians and/or
 - b) meet with the minor in a public place
3. Any CNMI meeting hosting minors may wish to consult with a lawyer to avoid liability.

Finally, although resources for minors are currently unavailable through the OA World Service Office, there are resources at OA.org under “Young Adults” (<https://oa.org/young-adults/>) 18-30 which may also be of service to minors including literature, pamphlets (“To the Young Person” and “To the Family of the Compulsive Overeater”) meetings and podcasts.