

The BESS Outreach Handbook

The Team Leader is authorized to send notices to the BESS announcement list. The Team Leader also maintains the BESS Outreach Handbook and interfaces with the BESS board.

The Public Relations/Media Coordinator is the BESS contact for media and other vanilla-outreach purposes.

The E-Mail Spokesperson is the person to contact for general info on BESS.

The Webmaster and Assistant Webmaster are responsible for making BESS web page changes. All web page changes must go through the Outreach Team Leader initially.

The Print Advertising Coordinator will be placing BESS advertising and BESS notices in local newspapers as appropriate.

The Calendar Printing and Distribution Coordinator will be printing the BESS outreach flyer and bringing copies of it to BESS meetings.

General Outreach

BESS directors and team-members (staff) are authorized to speak about BESS to SM-friendly groups, such as munches and on-line forums. This includes the forwarding of BESS announcements as appropriate. Because BESS parties are “private”, it is *never* appropriate to forward BESS party announcements to any on-line forum.

BESS directors and team members are also authorized to print and distribute BESS flyers as appropriate.

Flyer for General Outreach

The Calendar Printing and Distribution Coordinator will keep an up-to date-flyer available for general outreach use. This will be in the form of a BESS events calendar. This is available for use by any BESS staffer.

Local Event Calendars

The Team Leader will assemble announcements of BESS educational events and post them to Local event calendars such as the Baltimore-bdsm list calendar.

Web Page

The Webmaster's job is to keep the BESS page up to date. By design, the only areas of the page that require regular updating are the Calendar and the Archives. The BESS page is located at www.bess-md.org.

The calendar page will be set up in such a way that it can be printed easily.

The web page should include an archival listing of past BESS education programs. This is important because, if we are ever accused of obscenity, the totality of the education program must be considered by the court.

1. E-Mail Spokesperson

The E-Mail Spokesperson answers general e-mail inquiries about BESS. The e-mail address is bess-info@bess-md.org and is set up for this purpose and can be included in BESS informational materials.

E-Mail Announcement List

The Team Leader will maintain a BESS E-Mail Announcement List for general announcements of BESS events. Because anyone can sign-up for the announcement list, announcements will be kept relatively tame and private parties will ***NOT*** be announced on this list. To send a general announcement that can be sent to contributors and non-contributors, the address is bessannounce@bess-md.org

The Team Leader will maintain or assign to a Team Member the This Week At BESS (TWAB) Newsletter. To add an event or send a message to contributors, the address is twab@bess-md.org

2. E-Mail Announcer

Only the E-Mail Announcer and the assistant announcer are authorized to send out announcements to the E-Mail Announcement List.

In general the Announcer/Team Leader makes up these announcements. However, anyone can suggest that an announcement be made. Proposed announcements should be sent to an address, such as bessannounce@bess-md.org where they will be seen by the announcer. While review of announcements by the team members is not required, it does help and is appreciated.

When announcements are sent to the E-Mail Announcement List, they can also be sent out, as appropriate, to selected e-mail lists and group contacts deemed appropriate by the BESS Board.

Online Public Forums

Because of the negative experiences of other BDSM groups, BESS originally elected *not* to host a general BESS public on-line discussion forum. This policy does not preclude the BESS Corporate Team from setting up e-mail lists for information-sharing among the BESS board of directors or BESS team-members. It also does not preclude BESS SIGs from having their own e-mail discussion lists. At any time BESS may elect to establish an on-line discussion forum as deemed appropriate by the Outreach Team Leader and BESS Board Members.

Print Advertising

The Print Advertising Coordinator will place BESS advertisements in newspapers so long as this advertising is both appropriate and free. Some forums allow a simple generic ad, some allow announcements of upcoming meetings. A common limit is 25 words. When placing announcements of upcoming meetings, care should be taken to avoid advertising a members-and-guests-only meeting. A good rule-of-thumb is to advertise only the first-Wednesday meeting each month.

The suggested generic ad is:

BDSM! BESS is an educational and social group in Baltimore for adults who enjoy loving BDSM relationships. For information, write bess-info@bess-md.org

The suggested meeting-announcement ad is:

BDSM Educational Meeting, Date , Time .
BESS is an educational and social group in Baltimore for adults who enjoy loving BDSM relationships. Write bess-info@bess-md.org for more information.

City Paper. Information for the calendar of events can be found online at:

www.citypaper.com/selfpublish/events.aspx

This site can also be accessed from the general City Paper website at www.citypaper.com
The link to add an event or general meeting can be found via the Events Calendar Page.

Events must contain full contact information and be received at least 3 weeks prior to the intended publication date if sent by snail mail, but early submission via the web page is also highly recommended by the editorial staff of the City Paper Events Calendar. The City Paper welcomes photographs but cannot return them. Due to space limitations, some listings may not

appear every week. Items are selected for Highlights and Critic's Choice at the discretion of the Baltimore Weekly editor.

The following info is required (if sending press release or snail mail):

Contact Information:

Name

Address

City

State

Daytime Phone Number

Email Address

the Recipient <Calendar>

Ticket Information

Age Range

There is also an online form (a good alternative to snail-mail):

www.citypaper.com/selfpublish/events.aspx

This is a self publish form designed and maintained by the City Paper and is subject to change at the discretion of their webmaster.

Baltimore Gay Life. Information for Calendar of Events can be mailed to:

Editor, c/o Gay Life

ATTN: Events Calendar

P.O. Box 22575

Phone (410)837-7748

Fax (410) 837-8889

www.baltimoregaylife.com

1.1. Baltimore, MD 21203

These event announcements can also be e-mailed to
Editor@baltimoregaylife.org (ATTN Calendar) or faxed to 410-837-8889

For a large scale event - Requirements are 1) a Press Release stating what, when, where, who, why 2) a notice on the frequency of the meetings (every Wednesday, etc.) and 3) a week's notice prior to the newspapers release, which is bi-weekly.

For the Baltimore Gay Paper, the standard meeting-announcement ad is:

BESS BDSM Educational Meeting, Date, Time. BESS is an educational and social group in Baltimore for adults who enjoy loving BDSM relationships. Meetings take place on the first and third Wednesdays each month in downtown Baltimore.

Write bess-info@bess-md.org for more information.

Public Relations Contact

In the unusual event that BESS must work with the media or do outreach outside of the SM-leather-fetish community, the Public Relations Contact on the Outreach Team should be enlisted to help. The Public Relations Contact will maintain BESS outreach materials for this purpose. At this time, these include only the Hotel Briefing Book and the BESS Media Outreach Packet (see “BESS Outreach Documents” below).

It is BESS policy to discourage media coverage of BESS “play socials” at all times.

It is BESS policy to encourage coverage of BESS educational events by media that operate *entirely within* the SM-leather-fetish community. This includes BDSM group newsletters and such publications as The Leather Journal.

It is BESS policy to avoid attention from the “vanilla” media. However, in the event that such coverage cannot be avoided, the Public Relations Contact will work with the media to avoid sensationalist coverage and to protect the confidentiality of BESS contributors and guests.

BESS Reciprocity Program

The BESS Group Liaison will work with other BDSM groups on reciprocity issues as needed.

The purpose of the BESS reciprocity program is to encourage BESS Contributors to participate in similar education and social groups.

Because BESS "screens" new Contributors through an orientation meeting, the BESS reciprocity program is limited to groups that perform similar screening of new members.

Members of reciprocal groups who wish to attend BESS events are encouraged to do the following:

- for BESS Education meetings, simply show up and enjoy
- for BESS Socials, make a reservation by writing to: socialrsvp@bess-md.org
- for BESS SIGs, contact the SIG coordinator (inclusion of non-BESS Contributors or reciprocal group members is up to the SIG coordinator and varies from SIG to SIG)
The SIG Coordinator can be reached via email at sigs@bess-md.org

BESS Contributors are similarly encouraged to contact and visit reciprocal groups.

A list of BESS Reciprocal Groups shall be provided on the BESS web page.

BESS Reciprocity Guidelines

At its discretion, the BESS Board of Directors may grant reciprocity to clubs or organizations that exist for the purpose of fostering a supportive environment for alternative lifestyle individuals. Preferred (but not required) criteria for reciprocity includes:

1. Have shown themselves to foster an environment that facilitates alternative lifestyle education and/or socialization of like-minded individuals.
2. Have at least one regularly scheduled meeting per month.
3. Collect dues in some form.
4. Issue affiliation cards or provide some manner that BESS may verify membership
5. Have existed for at least 6 months.
6. Have officers or boards that are elected by the group members.
7. Extend reciprocity to BESS (see below).

By "Extend reciprocity to BESS", we mean that card-carrying BESS Contributors will be admitted to regularly-scheduled educational events and parties put on by a reciprocal organization, without additional and onerous reservation procedures. Further, BESS Contributors will be admitted for the same fee that a reciprocal organization charges its own members and Reciprocal Group Members may bring up to four guests.

Reciprocity is not expected to extend to special meetings, such as an annual business meeting, or subgroups (special-interest groups, etc.) of a reciprocal organization.

Also, Reciprocity is not expected to take precedent over any organization's minimum-age, gender, or sexual-orientation requirements.

Requesting Reciprocity with BESS

Groups who wish to request reciprocity with BESS should e-mail bess-info@bess-md.org with the following information:

- Primary Group Contact and Contact Information
- Web Site Address
- Snail Mail Address
- Phone Number
- Mission Statement

- Group Inception Date
- Geographical Area Served (if appropriate)
- A statements explaining specifically how your group meets each of the above guidelines

Outreach Documents

The following is a list of documents used by the outreach team for various functions.

Hotel briefing book (Hotel Briefing Book.doc). This is used when speaking to a representative of a hotel or other such facility about renting space to BESS for educational meetings. The material in the book should be reviewed with the hotel contact-person. At the time of the briefing, a copy of this document should be given to the contact. These briefings should be conducted by the BESS Public Relations Contact.

BESS Media Outreach Packet (BESS Media 1.doc and BESS Media 2.doc). This is in two parts. Part 1 includes BESS-specific information plus selected general SM-community info. Part 2 is the NCSF outreach document "What is SM?" When printed and distributed, the two parts should be stapled together to make up a single BESS Media Outreach Packet.

Announcement Procedures. These procedures include once a week regular BESS announcements, courtesy announcements and special announcements. These procedures were developed to limit the large volume of individual posts from BESS to the scene community.

Revised March 25, 2007