

COSA News

Circles of Support and Accountability

**Center for Peacemaking and Conflict Studies
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Building safer communities by providing circles of support and accountability for released sex offenders

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First Circle Begins!

The first Circle of Support and Accountability began at the end of July. Four volunteers plus program director, Clare Ann Ruth-Heffelbower have been meeting every other week with the Core Member. Last week one of the volunteers asked the Core Member if the Circle was helpful for him. He assured the volunteers that it is. Volunteers are feeling very positive about their Circle involvement as well—in fact two have volunteered to be in another Circle!

More Circles . . .

We have received additional referrals from Parole. One individual has been accepted and is waiting for his Circle to be formed. We are in the process of meeting with another man to see if he is interested in having a Circle. Our goal is to have five Circles formed by the end of the year.

Volunteers Needed!

Now that we are receiving referrals, we need volunteers. For each parolee we accept as a participant (Core Member), we need 4-7 volunteers. That means that by the end of December we will need to have a minimum of 20 volunteers involved in a Circle. If you would like to volunteer, know someone who would like to volunteer, or would like more information, contact Clare Ann at 453-3448 or email her at clareann@fresno.edu.

Orientation and Volunteer Training

Orientation provides an introduction to the COSA program. Volunteer Training is for volunteers and for persons who might consider being volunteers. If you have attended an Orientation in the past, consider coming to our Volunteer Training.

Fall Orientation Dates

- Mon., Oct 15 7:00-9:00 p.m.
- Fri. Oct. 26 3:00-5:00 p.m.
- Tues., Nov. 6 7:00-9:00 p.m.
- Thurs., Nov. 8 3:00-5:00 p.m.

Volunteer Training

Friday, Oct. 19 6:30-9:00 p.m.
Saturday, Oct. 20 8:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m.
(lunch included)

Orientation and volunteer training sessions will be held at the Center for Peacemaking annex, next to 4882 E. Townsend. To reserve a space at an orientation or training, call 453-3448.

COSA Facts

A 2007 study of COSA in Canada shows that offenders who participated in COSA had an **83%** reduction in sexual offending than did the matched comparison offenders who did not participate in COSA!