

2022 ABC Ballot for ACA World Service Organization

Proposal 2022 – 5

Submitted by: WEB0580

Issue: Create an ad-hoc committee to explore changing the fellowships name, logo, acronym, and any other identifying marks to include dysfunctional families. This group would meet for a year and then report results during the 2023 ABC committee reports. If the work results in a recommendation, it will appear on the 2023 ABC agenda. (If not ready by the 2023 ABC, then the report and potential recommendation will appear on the 2024 ABC agenda)

Background: THE PROBLEM: Some Adult Children disqualify themselves from the program when they hear our name, Adult Children of Alcoholics, because they came from a dysfunctional but non-alcoholic family. These are the ones that never make it to a meeting or go to our website to see that we really do include all from dysfunctional families. Due to our backgrounds, and black and white thinking, it is all too easy for these potential newcomers to think this program is not meant for them.

THE SOLUTION: To make it easier for recovering adult children to include the phrase dysfunctional families when referring to the program. That way even if a potential newcomer hears it in passing, they can know the program is for anyone from a dysfunctional family.

The ad-hoc committee will explore how to best implement this solution.

At the 2021 ABC, when the issue regarding including dysfunctional families in the name came to discussion, the delegates were asked to make 1 of 3 choices:

1. I support this in the form that it is written
2. I could support this if it were reworked
3. I could not support this in any form.

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Out of the 100+ delegates there, not a single delegate voted for “I could not support this in any form.” Agreement on a name change was not reached in 2021, but the message was fairly clear. Delegates indicated that this was a genuine problem, but most wanted more study regarding the implementation.

Resources/Implementation:

Implementation: All members of the fellowship are welcome to join the ad-hoc committee.

The goal of the ad-hoc committee is to study how best to encourage members to include the phrase dysfunctional families when referring to the program. We are aware that changing the legal name of the fellowship would cause many financial and contractual issues, and is fortunately not necessary to achieve this goal. The legal name of the fellowship can remain untouched, while working to implement a “functional name,” that Adult Children can regularly use.

Consequently, the ad-hoc committee will examine the use of “functional names,” logos, acronyms, and other identifying marks. This will include studying the impact on the fellowship and WSO operations, as well as developing an implementation plan.

Resources: We have ACA members from our meeting and from WSO service committees who are willing to join the ad-hoc committee.

WSO Analysis: A similar motion was referred to the board by the 2021 ABC. The Board believes that a formal study, including solicitation of fellowship viewpoints, is appropriate before any proposal to change the organization’s name is submitted to a future ABC. Also, as discussed in the Measure 4 analysis, this motion could affect ACA’s identity and ACA World Service’s relationship to the fellowship. If the 2022 ABC supports the creation of a new process for evaluating measures that affect ACA’s core documents, identity, or ACA World Service’s relationship with the larger fellowship, any proposed name change should comply with that process.