

# **NEW JERSEY SELF-HELP GROUP CLEARINGHOUSE**

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375 E. McFarlan St., Dover NJ 07801 \* 1-800-367-6274 \* [www.selfhelpgroups.org](http://www.selfhelpgroups.org)

## ABOUT THE CLEARINGHOUSE

The Clearinghouse, located in Dover, New Jersey, is a department of Saint Clare's Health System, provides information, telephone support, guidelines and training services for persons interested in finding, forming, or learning about self-help groups throughout New Jersey. The first statewide and the first computerized operation of its type in the nation, the Clearinghouse maintains and continually updates a database of information on over 4500 group meetings within the state, over 800 national headquarters and demonstrational models and over 200 helplines and hotlines.

Easy access to this information is assured through out toll-free number, 1-800-367-6274, and yearly calls are approximately 12,000. Mutual aid self-help (MASH) groups are receiving increased national recognition as valuable sources of social support, practical education, volunteer services and coping skills—not alternatives to professionals services, but rather supplements to them.

An important component of our work is the development of new groups as needs arise. For example, if a caller inquires about a support group for single parents and the computer search yields nothing in the caller's county or area, we would invited the person to start a group, offering technical assistance, linkage with other existing groups and resource organizations, and a free listing in our computer. In that way, future callers could be referred to him/her as a contact person interested in starting such a group. Since January of 1981, over 1,050 callers have successfully started groups in the state, adding significantly to the available resources.

The Clearinghouse welcomes requests for information and referral, Monday-Friday, 8:30am – 5:00 pm. At all other times we utilize an answering machine to take calls and then return them on the next working day.