

The BESS Education Handbook

The BESS Education Team:

education@bess-md.org

The Education Team is responsible for all BESS educational programs.

The Education Team Leader

The Team Leader will develop the curriculum for all BESS education. In addition, the Team Leader will facilitate and delegate to his/her team members the scheduling of presenters and meeting facilitators. The Team Leader will maintain the BESS Education Handbook and interface with the BESS Board. The Team Leader will also work with the Outreach Team and/or the TWAB Coordinator to ensure that all website and email education announcements are accurate and updated in a timely fashion.

The Team Leader is also responsible for putting together a proposed budget prior to the Annual Business Meeting, and reporting on the actual budget for the year. Also included in the Annual report is a brief synopsis of education events during the year.

Meeting Check-In and Verification

The Contributor Team is responsible for contributor access to BESS educational meetings. This includes collecting fees, checking contributor cards and IDs, ensuring the proper signing of guest waivers and ensuring that no unauthorized people enter the meeting. The Contributor Team will also work with the BESS treasurer to ensure the accountability of fees from the educational meetings.

The Wednesday Education Program

BESS will conduct two one and half hour meetings each month. These meetings will start with a short introduction by each attendee, followed by an educational presentation. The meeting will end with a socialization period at a nearby restaurant. The educational presentation during the first monthly meeting will feature a lecture or panel discussion. The educational presentation during the second monthly meeting will feature a demonstration or workshop. (This is subject to change based on the availability of presenters and topics.) All Wednesday meetings will be open to contributors and other individuals interested in learning about BDSM. Attendees at all BESS meetings must be 19 years of age or older.

Periodic “Hands on Workshops”

Periodic weekend educational Hands on Workshops will be scheduled to accommodate individuals who are interested in more specific detailed BDSM topics. The number of attendees for hands on workshops will be limited as

determined by the presenter and the BESS education team members. Advanced reservations will be required. Typically, Hands on Workshops could involve nudity. Any BESS educational program that involves nudity will be open only to contributors and their guests and members of reciprocal groups. Further, these events will be held in a private location.

Safe Space

To ensure the safety and comfort of BESS contributors and guests, any individual who threatens the safe space of BESS meetings will be asked to leave at the discretion of any BESS staff member. Threatening the safe space of BESS meetings include but are not limited to, behaving in a manner disruptive to the meeting or threatening a specific individual. Threats to a specific individual include persistent unwelcome advances. In addition, please refer to the Contributor Team Handbook in reference to filing a formal complaint for repeat offenders of the BESS safe space policy.

Demonstration Volunteers

If a scheduled presenter requests the need for a volunteer, the Education Team will attempt to find volunteers to participate during the presentation. However, all Education Team members should encourage BESS presenters to provide their own demonstration subjects.

Money

The fee to attend a BESS education meeting is \$5 for Contributors and \$ 10 for Non-Contributors. The Contributor Team, in conjunction with the BESS Treasurer, Vice-Treasurer or other designated individual will collect the fees before each meeting. Refer to “meeting check-in and verification” as described above.

Education Outreach

All Education Team members are authorized to respond to written inquiries regarding the BESS Educational program. This can be done both individually or through the Education Team email address. The Education Team is the point of contact for all BESS meeting presenters.

BESS Meeting Facilitators

The Education Team Leader will coordinate and schedule a BESS staff member to act in the role as “meeting facilitator” for every BESS educational meeting. The role of a meeting facilitator will be as follows:

- ❖ Open the meeting with a standard welcome and greeting
- ❖ Ask if any other BDSM group or person has an announcement
- ❖ Begin and lead the group introductions
- ❖ Introduce the evening’s presenter
- ❖ Reconvene the meeting after the break

❖ Thank the presenter and close the meeting

1. Education Team Procedures

Step 1

Identify Presenter & Topic and prepare two emails. The first email would be one to the Education Team list basically letting the Team know you thought of an idea and wanted to let them know. They will be free to post back to the list if they agree or disagree with the Presenter and/or Topic. The second email would go to the Team Leader with specific information noted below:

Presenter: _____
Topic: _____
Type of Event: _____ (Weds. or Workshop)
Tentative Date: _____

Step 2

Team Leader reviews request taking into consideration Team's input on list.

Step 3

Once Team Leader approves (via email) then contact Presenter and secure date.

Step 4

Obtain brief description on topic & presenters bio

Step 5

Send the information to the Team Leader or Co-Team Leader for addition to Upcoming Events Flyers, Web Calendar, and TWAB announcements.

Step 6

30 Days before scheduled event, the Team Member that is designated will email the presenter and remind them of their presentation and ascertain if they need anything from us to secure a great presentation. They will also add the location and directions to the meeting place. They will also carbon copy to education@bess-md.org informing team members of the confirmation.

Step 7

7 Days before scheduled event, the same designated team member will send a shorter reminder simply stating that we look forward to seeing them present on such and such date and asking them if there is any last minute needs. This designated team member will again cc the education@bess-md.org.

Step 8

Within 3 days after the scheduled event, the same designated team member will send a sincere thank you to the presenter for their presentation and the

contribution they make to our community. This designated team member will again cc the facilitator and Team Leader.

Sample Thank you letter:

Dear *Presenter*,

Thank you for your presentation on *Class Title*, at the recent BESS Educational meeting. Your presentation was insightful. Our community has many new members and information such as this shared by a veteran in this lifestyle is valuable for all of us. Your contribution to the BDSM community and to the growth of BESS is greatly appreciated. We look forward to seeing you at other BESS educational and social events in the future.

Sincerely,

Your Name

BESS EDUCATION TEAM

Outline for Hosting a BESS Education Meeting

I. Pre-meeting

Make sure that the presenter understands the format (7:30-9:00 pm with introductions at the beginning and a break in the middle).

II. Welcome

Introduce yourself. Welcome everyone to BESS. Remind newcomers that we want them to feel welcome. Make the following points:

A. Our staff is here to assist you. Please approach any of us and ask questions.

B. Mention briefly BESS' other currently running SIGs.

III. Introductions

Ask folks in the audience to introduce themselves, say a little about themselves, and make announcements if they'd like. Remind them that it is OK to use only a first name. If needed, remind folks to keep their introductions brief.

IV. Announcements

Begin by reminding the crowd that anyone with an SM group or event can come to BESS and make announcements.

Include the following "standard announcements":

A. BESS needs volunteers. Volunteering is a great way to get involved and meet people. Please come out the next BESS board meeting and learn where you can fit in. [Note to facilitator: we have observed that, if we can get someone to attend a board meeting, that person is likely to volunteer].

B. Announce After-Meeting Bash at Ledo's and all are welcome.

2. V. Introduce Speaker and Topic

3. VI. Announce break at 8:15ish for 10 minutes

It is the responsibility of the host to signal the speaker that it is time for the break.

VII. End the Meeting at 9:00 p.m.

Thank the speaker and everyone for coming. Make sure the speaker is “squared away” and direct him or her to the after-meeting Bash if needed.

Education Meeting Money Form

Date: _____ Total Attendance: _____

Presenter / Class: _____

Number of New Contributors: _____ x \$25 = _____

Number of Current Contributors: _____ x \$5 = _____

Number of Guests: _____ x \$10 = _____

Total Money Collected: _____

Signature One _____ Signature Two _____

Additional Comments:

Note any other fees associated with the evening.