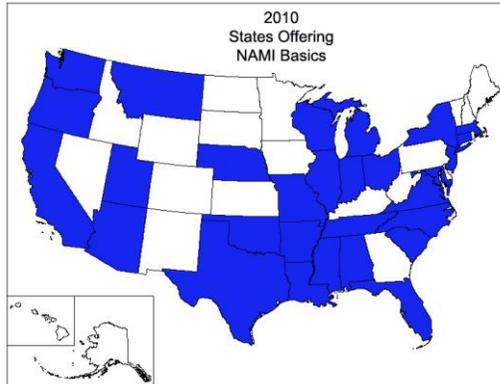




NAMI

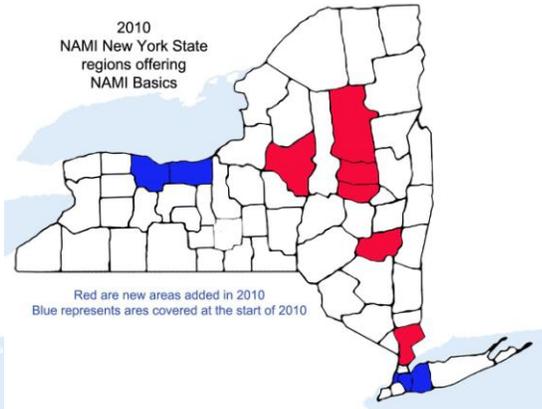
The Nation's Voice on Mental Illness

Basics



Start of 2010

End of 2010



Cumulative Program Data as of June 2010

NAMI Basics: Launched in 2007

- States now in the program: 29
- Trained teachers at the state level: 579
- Foreign countries now in program: none
- National Trainers: 1

NAMI New York State has 4 State Trainers:

- Deneice David
- Mary Lee Gupta
- Mary Ann Ceron
- Ceceile Green

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NAMI PEER PROGRAMS: BASIC PRINCIPLES

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NAMI Family-to-Family Education Program
NAMI Provider Education Program
NAMI Family Support Group Facilitator Skill Training Program
NAMI Peer-to-Peer Recovery Education Course
NAMI Connection Recovery Support Group
NAMI In Our Own Voice
NAMI Basics

- ◆ Serious and persistent mental illness is a traumatic event for families and consumers alike, and must be understood in terms of this fundamental clinical perspective.
- ◆ Families and consumers adjust to this traumatic experience over time in a predictable process of coming to terms with profound dislocation in their lives.
- ◆ In each stage of adaptation, their emotional responses reflect a natural reaction to this process of adjustment, but their needs will differ in each stage.
- ◆ Family/consumer strength, persistence and heroism in the face of this overwhelming human challenge must be recognized and validated.
- ◆ Recovery and the reconstruction of personal priorities must be the goal of treatment
- ◆ Because of their lived experience, family members and consumers make ideal teachers, and peer-directed education courses provide a dimension of emotional healing not available in any other setting.
- ◆ Peer-directed educational and support programs must be included as an integral part of mental health services and be paid for by mental health systems.

Evidence from our Spanish classes indicates that because these basic principles underlie the curriculum, the beneficial impact of Family-to-Family is transcultural.



National Alliance on Mental Illness

The fundamentals of caring for you, your family and your child with mental illness

NAMI Basics is the new signature education program for parents and other caregivers of children and adolescents living with mental illnesses. Development of this program was based on the success of other NAMI signature education programs for consumers and families available across the country. NAMI drew on course elements which have been extensively tested and found to be highly effective in the field. These elements include:

- recognition of mental illness as a continuing traumatic event for the child and the family;
- sensitivity to the subjective emotional issues faced by family caregivers and well children in the family;
- recognition of the need to help ameliorate the day-to-day objective burdens of care and management;
- gaining confidence and stamina for what can be a life-long role of family understanding and support; and
- empowerment of family caregivers as effective advocates for their children.

The process of emotional learning and practical insight for families occurs most readily, and dependably, on the guided group process which takes place when individual family members are in a class together. This program will also take advantage of advancing technology which allows programs to virtually connect families and provides broader access to vitally important information.

The NAMI Basics Education Program includes the following components:

- 6-2.5 hour classes of instructional material, discussions and interactive exercises which may be delivered as a series of consecutive weekly classes, or on consecutive Saturdays to accommodate the time constraints faced by families of children and adolescents.
- A section of the NAMI web site will be dedicated to disseminating information, including informational videos that can be viewed online, and resources for this program and to connecting family program participants.
- In addition to the core course of 6 classes, additional topic modules will be developed for independent presentations for families interested in specific topics, such as transition issues, and advocacy.

The program includes a rigorous evaluation process to both build an evidence base on the effectiveness of the program and also to help ensure that the program continually delivers best practices to meet the unique needs of families.

NAMI Basics Education Program Curriculum

Class 1: Introduction: It's not your fault; Mental illnesses are brain disorders

Special features of the course; learning about the normative stages of our emotional reactions to the trauma of mental illness; our belief system and principles; recognizing that mental illnesses are biological brain disorders.

Class 2: The biology of Mental Illness; getting an accurate diagnosis

An overview of human development; specifics of brain development; current research on brain mechanisms involved in mental illness in children and adolescents; overview of the diagnostic process; and overview of the types and subtypes of major mental illnesses that can develop in childhood and adolescence (ADHD, ODD, CD, Major Depression, Bipolar Disorder, Anxiety Disorders, Schizophrenia, OCD and Substance Use Disorders).

Class 3: Treatment Works

Telling your stories; overview of treatment options available; explanation of evidence base practice designations; review of various types of mental health professionals in the field; overview of medication as a treatment option for children and adolescents, including the current debate within the field on the subject of treating children and adolescents with medications, including black box warnings.

Class 4: Objective and subjective family burden

Acknowledge the strains of family burden and the impact of mental illness on each family member; learning various skills that can be used to improve day to day communications within the family as well as during episodes of crisis; communication skills, problem solving skills, tips for handling challenging behavior, crisis preparation and response, developing a relapse plan.

Class 5: The systems involved with your child and the importance of record keeping

Learning how to keep records on your child; reviewing a sample record keeping system; overview of the systems your child may be involved with including the mental health system, the school system and the juvenile justice system; introduction to issues that will arise as your child reaches adulthood.

Class 6: Advocacy, Review, Sharing and Evaluation

Building an advocacy team for your child; meet people who are resources for you in advocating for your child; invitation to join NAMI in the fight to end discrimination and ensure access to appropriate treatment services; reminders about self-care; evaluations and certificates.

Comments from Parents/Caregivers who have been Trained to Teach The NAMI Basics Education Program

- “I really, really, liked the emphasis on the practical aspects of parenting a child with special needs.”
- “I wish this course was available when my child was first experiencing difficulty.”
- “This class was unexpected wonderful! I did not expect to learn so very, very much! This program is well written with excellent segues between topics. It covers so much more than BASICS that the title doesn’t do it justice.”
- “This program rescues parents and children and may improve the school system, mental health (public and private) system and the juvenile justice system as parents are empowered with information and confidence.”
- “Not only have I learned a lot of mental health and issues related to understanding my child, I have also learned much about NAMI and the concern they have and benefits of being a part of this organization.”
- “This is such a great step by step program that walks parents every step of the way. It is as if you are holding their hand through it all.”
- “I am so excited that this level of help is available – it’s exactly the kind of thing that I personally have been looking for over the past 3 years. Knowing it’s now available to other parents is really exciting for me.”
- “This will become my go to book for everything and I am so ready to get started and spread the knowledge to other family members.”
- “I, as a parent, have gotten a lot from the text and realize many more parents need this information. The resources section is beyond words.”
- “This program does cover the *basics* for any person who has to deal with a family member with a mental illness as well as pointing them in the next direction they need to go.”
- “The course is inclusive of almost all aspects of family and child and resources. I could have spent a lifetime getting all this information on my own. I feel supported, strong and ready to go forward.”
- “Extremely informative and rewarding experience. It was much more thorough than I had anticipated and I particularly like the way the information is worded. It is sensitive to parents and at the same time honest and “real”. It was presented with humor and in a down to earth manner, which are very important to learners.”
- “I find it truly remarkable and unbelievable that this training is free to those who are interested.”

NAMI Basics Education Program Operating Policies 2009

It is understood that NAMI State and Affiliate organizations, and their Education Committees, may not set policies at variance with the NAMI Basics program policies stated below. These guidelines are also to be followed by Basics teachers and trainers.

1. All NAMI material is copyrighted. Permission to use the material in a setting other than the NAMI Basics Education Program must be sought from and given by NAMI.
2. Permission to reproduce Class Handouts or Additional Resource Handouts must be secured through NAMI. In every case where permission is granted, NAMI must be referenced as the source of the material.
3. No portions of the NAMI Basics Education Program can be used in offering another family education course or any other kind of course.
4. No group or individual can rewrite any of the NAMI Basics material, nor can the format or presentation of the NAMI Basics Program be changed or revised in anyway when offering it in the community.
5. The NAMI Basics Course may be conducted in the following formats:
 - over a period of 6 consecutive weeks, 1 class per week
 - over a period of 3 consecutive weeks, 2 classes per week
 - across consecutive Saturdays, with no more than 2 classes taught on any one Saturday

These time frames must not be altered, or shortened, in any way. Under no circumstances should the entire course be taught in a single weekend.

6. No more than a one-week hiatus is taken for holidays which may occur during the course term (Thanksgiving, Easter, etc.). When the course begins in the fall, it should always end by the 1st week in December, as the Christmas - New Year's holiday weeks create too long a break in continuity.
7. Prospective teachers must be parents or other primary caregivers of an individual who developed a mental illness as a child or adolescent. People who have not had a parental type relationship with a child or adolescent with a mental illness are not permitted to teach, as much of the teaching task is based on the parent/ caregiver's lived experience from those early years. Examples of people who would not be eligible to teach the course include; teachers, mental health professionals, day care workers, or adults living with mental illness who do not also have the primary responsibility of caring for a child in their home.
8. Prospective teachers for NAMI Basics may include individuals who have not taken the course, as well as course graduates who elect to do so.
9. All teachers and trainers in the Basics program must be NAMI members.
10. Due to the investment of time and money to train volunteers, prospective teachers must agree to teach a minimum of two course cycles. It is understood, of course, that unexpected life situations may occur that will necessitate compassion and flexibility in this policy.

11. Untrained family members are not permitted to serve as NAMI Basics Teachers. In cases where a teacher is unable to continue teaching the course, an untrained substitute may be appointed to help with lecturing. The substitute will not be allowed to teach the course again until they participate in a regular weekend Teacher Training Workshop.
12. The weekend Teacher Training Workshop format may not be altered, or condensed, in any way.
13. Participants will not be charged a fee of any kind for enrolling in and participating in the NAMI Basics Education Program.



NAMI Basics Education Program Pilot Evaluation Final Report Summary June 2008

The NAMI Basics Education Program was developed in 2007. It is a six-class psycho-educational program designed specifically for parents and other caregivers of children and adolescents who have either been diagnosed with a mental illness/serious emotional disturbance or who are experiencing symptoms but have not yet been given a formal diagnosis. The program is taught by two trained parent teachers using a detailed curriculum. The goals of the NAMI Basics Education Program are:

- To give parents/caregivers the fundamental information they need to be effective as a caregiver
- To help parents/caregivers cope with the traumatic impact that mental illness has on the child living with the illness and the entire family.
- To provide tools for parents/caregivers to use even after completing the program that will assist them in making the best decisions possible for the care of their child.
- To help the parent/caregiver take the best care possible of the entire family – especially themselves.

A pilot evaluation was conducted by Missouri State University on the NAMI Basics classes provided in three states, Illinois, Utah and South Carolina between January and May, 2008. A Pre-Post Test design was used to measure each participants' changes in knowledge about mental illness in children and adolescents, as well as changes in their own perceptions of (1) the impact of the illness on their family and (2) their personal ability to influence treatment interventions and advocacy related to their child's illness.

The following describes the participants in the pilot classes:

- Average age of participants was 45 (range of ages 23 to 82 years)
- 81% of participants were female
- 66% were married
- 83% were Caucasian
- 78% reported some college level education
- 63% reported that the child they were concerned about had two or more diagnoses

The most commonly endorsed diagnoses were:

- ADHD - 52%
- Mood Disorder - 54%
- Anxiety Disorder - 26%
- Oppositional Defiant Disorder - 15%

- Average age for the child first being diagnosed was 8 years
- 72% indicated the child was 10 years or younger at the time of the first diagnosis
- Average length of time in treatment was 5 years, with a range of 2 months to 10 years.

RESULTS & CONCLUSIONS

The study found that parents/caregivers who participated in the NAMI Basics Education Program demonstrated an increase in their own knowledge about mental illness in children and adolescents, as well as the assessment, treatment and advocacy regarding the illnesses. The study also found that the perception that parents/caregivers had of themselves and their own reactions to the illnesses of their children were improved after taking the course.

The researcher concluded that participation in NAMI Basics appears to be associated with increases in knowledge about childhood and adolescent mental illness, assessment and treatment, and advocacy. NAMI will pursue further evaluation of the program to provide more empirical support for the utility of this program and contribute toward eventual designation as an Evidence Based Practice.

NAMI Basics Education Program Research Project 2008-2009

NAMI Basics is a peer-led educational program for parents and other caregivers of children and adolescents with a mental illness. Development of this program was based on the success of other NAMI signature education programs for consumers and families available across the country. NAMI drew on course elements which have been extensively tested and found to be highly effective in the field. These elements include:

- Recognition of mental illness as a continuing traumatic event for the child and the family;
- Sensitivity to the subjective emotional issues faced by family caregivers and well children in the family;
- Recognition of the need to help ameliorate the day-to-day objective burdens of care and management;
- Gaining confidence and stamina for what can be a life-long role of family understanding and support; and
- Empowerment of family caregivers as effective advocates for their children.

The NAMI Basics Program is a six week course (15 total hours) taught by trained teachers who are also the parents or other caregivers of individuals who developed symptoms of mental illness prior to the age of 13. A research study is currently underway to evaluate the impact of the NAMI Basics course focusing on the following outcomes:

- Parental stress in dealing with their child's illness, insurance, and providers
- Parental empowerment in getting information to better help their child, advocating for services, and dealing with their child's difficulties
- Parental self-care, meaning taking care of their emotional, physical, and psychological needs
- Family problem solving and communication skills

The study is being led by Dr. Barbara Burns, Duke University and Dr. Kimberly Hoagwood, Columbia University. All caregivers who participated in the NAMI Basics Education Program in Tennessee and Mississippi between October 2008 and December 2009 were asked to participate in the study, which consists of a pre-test, a post test, and a three month follow-up.

The final report of the findings of the study, including conclusions and recommendations from Dr. Burns and Dr. Hoagwood, is expected in the fall 2010.

For more information about the study or the NAMI Basics Education Program, contact:

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