
WHAT DOES NAMI STAND FOR

The acronym NAMI stands for:

- **N**ational
- **A**lliance on
- **M**ental
- **I**llness

THE MISSION OF NAMI

Provide education, advocacy, and support for people with serious and persistent mental illnesses (often called “consumers”), their families, friends and caregivers.

More specifically:

- To combat the stigma of mental illness through community outreach and education.
- To promote better quality of care, rights and interests of citizens with mental illness, particularly of those who cannot speak for themselves.
- To advocate for policies at the local, state and national level (which includes adequate health insurance, treatment, housing, rehabilitation and jobs) to achieve the objectives listed above.

WHAT WE DO AT NAMI MC

NAMI Montgomery County (NAMI MC) is a non-profit grassroots organization for families, caregivers and consumers, dedicated to improving the lives of children and adults living with mental illnesses in Montgomery County, Maryland.

- We support people on the phone with the helpline with referrals in English and Spanish.
- We offer psycho education courses for family members and consumers in English and Spanish.
- We help people through support meetings throughout the month.
- We educate members about recent improvements in medication, treatment, housing and rehabilitation.
- We hold monthly educational meetings for the public.
- We distribute a monthly newsletter and have a resource library for members.
- We educate the general public about mental illness and try to eliminate the stigma it carries.
- We advocate for nondiscriminatory local, state and federal policies.
- Members serve on county and state policy-making and advisory commissions.
- We are Montgomery County’s voice on mental illness.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

- **Family-to-Family Program:** A free 12-week education program to help family members and caregivers of adult consumers better understand mental illness and support their ill relatives.
- **Parents and Teachers as Allies:** A free education program for parents and school personnel (teachers, counselors, psychologists) on identifying mental illness in children, challenges faced by families, and how schools can help.
- **Peer-to-Peer Program:** A free 10-week peer run education course for people with serious mental illness who are interested in establishing and maintaining their wellness and recovery.
- **“In Our Own Voice” Program:** A free 60-minute interactive presentation given to the public (including corporations, government agencies, churches and synagogues) by trained consumer presenters who discuss their personal experience of being in recovery from a mental illness.

- **Latino Outreach Programs:** Free Family-to-Family Education Program in Spanish as well as a Spanish Helpline staffed by a Spanish speaking staff member for information and referrals.

NAMI MC EVENTS

- **Heroes Dinner and Silent Auction:** The Heroes Dinner is an annual event occurring in October or November where NAMI MC honors those individuals who have made a difference to the organization, community, and those who make a difference in the field of mental illness through research, advocacy or educating others to reduce the stigma associated with mental illness.
- **NAMI Walks:** NAMI Walks is an annual event held by NAMI Maryland which promotes awareness of mental illness and helps raise funds for NAMI Maryland and its affiliates. Anyone in the community can form a team or join an existing team. "Walking to support mental illness awareness and education is more than just raising money; it is also about presence. The more people who support mental illness awareness and education, the more mainstream this acceptance becomes."