

Parents and Teachers as Allies

In-Service Mental Health Education for School Professionals

NAMI is delighted to announce the expansion of our Parents and Teachers as Allies in-service mental health education program for school professionals. This two-hour in-service program focuses on helping school professionals and families within the school community better understand the early warning signs of mental illnesses in children and adolescents and how best to intervene so that youth with mental health treatment needs are linked with services. It also covers the lived experience of mental illnesses and how schools can best communicate with families about mental health related concerns.

This program responds to the recommendations included in Goal 4 of President Bush's New Freedom Commission report on mental health that calls for schools to play a larger role in the early identification of mental health treatment needs in children and in linking them to appropriate services. Our program is based on NAMI's highly successful Parents and Teachers as Allies (P&TA) publication.

The components of the in-service education program for school professionals include the following:

I. Welcome and Introductions – an education professional, who is also a family member, welcomes the school professionals and introduces the topics to be covered, often with a personal story.

II. Early Warning Signs of Mental Illnesses – a facilitator walks the school professionals through the early warning signs of mental illnesses, closely following the P&TA publication.

III. Family Response – a parent or caregiver of a child with mental illness covers the predictable stages of emotional reactions among family members dealing with the challenges of mental illness and the lived experience of raising a child with a mental illness.

IV. Living with Mental Illness – a mental health consumer that experienced the early onset of mental illness shares a view from the inside, including a discussion about the positive and negative impact that their school experience had on their life.

V. Group Discussion

VI. Closing Remarks and Evaluation

This program is designed for teachers, administrators, school health professionals, parents and others in the school community.

The program is designed to target schools in urban, suburban, rural, and culturally diverse communities.

If you are interested in scheduling Parents and Teachers as Allies in the North – Northwest Suburban area of Chicago, please contact Helen Rhodes, NAMI CCNS, (847) 716-2252.

Improving Lives

What is NAMI?

The National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) is the nation's largest grassroots mental health organization dedicated to improving the lives of individuals and families affected by mental illness. NAMI has over 1,100 affiliates in communities across the country who engage in advocacy, research, support, and education. Members of NAMI are families, friends, and people living with mental illnesses such as major depression, schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD), panic disorder, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), and borderline personality disorder.

Many NAMI affiliates offer an array of **support and education programs** for families and consumers. For information about what is available in your community, contact your local affiliate directly or visit www.nami.org.

“It really opens one’s eyes to see ‘first hand’ how mental illness affects a person and his or her family.”
— School Professional - Panama City Florida

How can I bring Parents and Teachers as Allies to my school?

Contact your local NAMI affiliate to learn about how you can bring this in-service program to your school.

For more information about NAMI, contact your local NAMI affiliate, visit www.nami.org, call the NAMI HelpLine at 1 (800) 950-NAMI (6264) or e-mail info@nami.org.

Local Information:



Parents and Teachers as Allies

An In-Service Program
for School Professionals



2107 Wilson Blvd., Suite 300
Arlington, VA 22201
(800) 950-NAMI (6264)
www.nami.org





Why bring Parents and Teachers as Allies to our School?

National leaders are calling for schools to play a larger role in the early identification of mental health treatment needs in students. *Parents and Teachers as Allies* targets this call to action by providing schools with the tools needed to fulfill this critical role in the lives of students.

Parents and Teachers as Allies helps schools meet their academic objectives and the needs of students with mental illness so they can improve their academic achievement. Mental health is essential to learning. Students with mental illness have the highest drop-out rates of any disability group. Schools are in a key position to help identify mental health concerns early and to link students with services.

In-Service Education Program

Parents and Teachers as Allies improves the quality of students' lives by linking schools, families, mental health agencies, and support organizations. Strengthening the alliance between families and schools helps to prevent the unnecessary daily struggles and challenges faced by students with mental illness.

Parents and Teachers as Allies helps school professionals effectively support students with mental illness and their families. School professionals admit feeling ill equipped to address the needs of students living with mental illness and how best to work with families.

How is the program structured?

Parents and Teachers as Allies is a two-hour, in-service program that helps school professionals and families better understand the early warning signs of mental illness in children and adolescents. It helps with understanding how best to intervene so that youth with mental health treatment needs are linked with services.

“Tremendous program. Some of the most valuable information I have ever received as an educator.”

————— Teacher - Boone, North Carolina

Each in-service program:

- Is delivered by a trained team, including a facilitator, a parent, an individual with mental illness, and an educational professional.
- Follows a structured format covering issues frequently faced by school professionals, parents, and caregivers.
- Has been well-tested and has produced positive results in diverse schools across the country.

The program concludes with a facilitated, interactive discussion that encourages audience participation.

Participants will leave the in-service program with an information and resource booklet as well as a better understanding of:

- The early warning signs of mental illness.
- The lived experience of parents raising a child with a mental illness.
- The individual experience of living with a mental illness from a personal, shared view.