MENTAL HEALTH MONTH

May is Mental Health Month! There are many ways to get involved to support those experiencing mental health conditions as well as their families and friends. Be a leader this month by raising awareness in your community and fighting stigma with NAMI Seattle.

THINGS YOU CAN DO IN MAY (OR RIGHT NOW!)

- Like NAMI Seattle on Facebook and share mental health articles on social media tagged with #MentalHealthMonth #MentalHealthMatters and #NAMISeattle
- Contact your local representatives or state legislators to share your story about why adequate mental health funding is important to you. See page 4 for inspiration.
- Screen a movie from our list of films that did mental health right on page 6. Host a discussion with friends or family after the film.
- Attend one of our special Speaker Series sessions (see page 6 for details), and don’t forget to wear your lime green!
- Invite people to the NAMIWalk, the largest awareness raising event of the year, on June 4. Make your own team to support NAMI Seattle at namiwalks.org/Washington – it’s free to sign up.
- Become a member of NAMI Seattle if you aren’t already (or renew your membership if you’re already part of the family).
- Make a donation on Give Big day, May 3rd. Your gift helps promote understanding and build connections in our community.
- Contact NAMI Seattle about bringing an Ending the Silence or In Our Own Voice presentation to your workplace or school to break down stigma.

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Our Mission. To address the unmet mental health needs within our community through support, referral, education, and outreach.

Our Vision. A world where all those impacted by mental illness know they are not alone, and are empowered to live a fulfilling life.

Our Staff
Executive Director
Ashley Fontaine, MSW
Development Coordinator
Marisa Way-Rogainis, MSW
Program Coordinator
Katie Mahoney, MSSW
This past Martin Luther King Day, nearly two hundred of us from the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) in Washington State descended upon the Capitol in Olympia to make our voices heard. We both advocated for better mental health services and demanded repairs to the broken mental healthcare system in our State.

One of our banners read, “Everyone Knows Someone.” For me, this message really strikes at the heart of our struggle: mental illness is common, it affects communities and families immensely, and we need to treat those with mental illness with dignity and care, recognizing their humanity.

This was not only my first time attending NAMI Day but also my first experience lobbying. There was no better way to honor Martin Luther King Jr., I felt, than advocating for issues of social justice, just as he had so heroically and so fiercely. I approached the day with both awe and anxiety, but by the end I felt I had participated in something both deeply meaningful and of incredible importance.

One in five Americans experiences mental illness. Severe mental illnesses can result in homelessness, imprisonment, self-medication, and even suicide. Though common and debilitating, mental illness is still a taboo topic for many. Who speaks up for those diagnosed with mental health issues and their families?

I had the opportunity to meet my State representative, which although short, I felt made a deep impression. We had little time to communicate our concerns, and luckily the representative was already in full support of many bills and causes we were backing. She was very well versed in the issues at hand, and at the same time both caring and compassionate. I’m confident that our lobbying was a success.

I sincerely hope that more and more people will advocate for better mental healthcare. It affects all of us, not just those with a diagnosis. Everyone knows someone.

Sam
NAMI Seattle MSW Intern
There are many topics we know matter to members like you: first episode psychosis programs, mental health services in schools and earlier intervention for teens, and the need to get people to treatment instead of jail when they are unwell. Here is some general information and talking points on those topics to help you frame your story as you reach out to legislators and policy makers about what matters to you in mental health.

**FIRST EPISODE PSYCHOSIS PROGRAMS**

Early, or a first episode psychosis, are the first signs that a person is experiencing a loss of contact from reality. This moment is often frightening, confusing and distressing to a person and his or her family. Psychosis is a symptom, not an illness. Episodes of psychosis can be related to schizophrenia, bipolar disorder or posttraumatic stress disorder, substance use, or trauma. **Approximately 3 in 100 people will experience an episode of psychosis during their lives.** Young adults are placed at an increased risk because of hormonal changes in the brain that occur during puberty, but a psychotic episode can occur at any age.

Multiple research studies from around the world show that the longer psychosis goes untreated, the more serious it becomes. Other states, including our neighbor Oregon, have implemented FEP programs with great success. NIMH funded a major randomized control study in 34 community sites nationwide. This study, Recovery after an Initial Schizophrenia Episode (RAISE), demonstrated many positive outcomes for the youth, young adults, and families involved: improved quality of life; return to school or work; improved symptoms; and improved treatment engagement. Early interventions like FEP programs are a game changer that can dramatically improve the trajectory for young people experiencing psychosis. The Washington State Department of Social and Health Services has free education materials about first episode psychosis available at www.dshs.wa.gov/GetHelpEarly.

**MENTAL HEALTH IN SCHOOLS**

The start of many mental health conditions happens in adolescence. 75% of people with a mental health condition experience onset by the age of 24.

**Schools provide a unique opportunity to identify and treat mental health conditions by serving students where they already are, and eliminating some of the stigma of seeking resources.** School personnel can play an important role in noticing early warning signs of an emerging mental health condition and linking students to services and supports.

We know our schools are stretched thin already. We support increased funding to train school staff on early warning signs and how to link students to services, plus funding that would allow (continued on next page)
NAMI Members Move Policy (continued)

school-based mental health professionals to coordinate services between school and community mental health providers. Young people with a mental health condition are more likely to drop out of school or become involved in the juvenile justice system. This is a public health issue with costly, long-term impacts for youth and our community as a whole. Creating better access to mental health services where young people already are is vital in addressing mental health issues earlier.

TREATMENT NOT JAIL

In a mental health crisis, people are more likely to encounter police than to get medical help. As a result, 2 million people with mental illness are booked into jails each year.

Jailing people with mental illness creates huge burdens on law enforcement, corrections, and state and local budgets. People who could be helped are being ignored. **Everyone should have access to a full array of mental health services and supports in their community, and if someone does come to the attention of law enforcement we need options to divert them to treatment.**

There are several specific diversion programs you can support here in Seattle and King County:

**Crisis Intervention Teams (CIT) in the Seattle Police Department:** Certified officers respond to persons in mental health crisis with the objective of de-escalating the situation and diverting them from the criminal justice to treatment resources instead. To become certified, officers must complete a 40-hour training course and ongoing continuing education each year.

**Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion (LEAD):** An innovative pilot program developed to address low-level drug and prostitution crimes by diverting offenders into community-based treatment and support services. This public safety program has the potential to reduce recidivism rates for low-level offenders and preserve expensive criminal justice resources.

**The Stepping Up Initiative:** A national effort to divert people with mental illness from jail and into treatment. This initiative challenges counties and local communities to work together to find solutions that work, and profiles people on the front lines of this issue with their “31 Days, 31 Stories” series.

CALL TO ACTION

Do you connect with these policy issues? Since funding for mental health in Washington is a patchwork of different funding streams, it’s important to share your story not only with state officials, but with local officials as well.

Here’s how you can contact the people that represent you in local government:

**Contact your Seattle City Council Member:**
206-684-8888

**Contact your King County Council Member:**
206-477-1000 (TTY: 206-296-1024)

**Contact your State Legislators:**
1-800-562-6000 (TTY: 1-800-635-9993)

To learn more about NAMI’s position on public policy issues like these, visit their website: [nami.org/Learn-More/Mental-Health-Public-Policy](http://nami.org/Learn-More/Mental-Health-Public-Policy)
Chad and I walked in this event last year for the first time, we want to be part of the solution and the only way to be a part of any solution is to get involved; learn, research, listen, help out, care, try and give. Chad is the single most important person in my life and I plan to be the best caregiver of an adult child with mental illness that I can be for as long as I can. The way to do that to get involved, we walk because it helps us be a part of the solution, we walk because we are a part of the mental illness community, we walk because it matters, we walk because we can.

– Brad Benson, proud NAMI member and walker

We walk because it helps us be a part of the solution!

Brad and Chad at the 2015 NAMIWalk
Nearly 1 in 5 people have a mental illness in the US and nearly everyone has encountered it in their life. So why are people afraid to talk about it?

The Sea

The Depressed Cake Shop

"As a psychology student at SPU I sincerely believe one of the largest challenges facing mental health progress in our country is the stigma attached to it, and I joined NAMI because I wanted to figure out what I could do to help end the stigma. I thought bringing The Depressed Cake Shop to SPU would be an excellent opportunity for spreading awareness and busting stigma with a group of people (SPU students) generally dedicated to social change."

"As a nursing student, I was drawn to the NAMI club at Seattle Pacific University (SPU) due to the desire to help reduce the stigma surrounding obtaining treatment and support for mental illness. I’m excited for our upcoming Depressed Cake Shop since I think it will be a wonderful platform to open avenues for important conversations leading to greater support and awareness in the SPU community."

Proceeds from the Depressed Cake Shop at SPU benefit NAMI Seattle

We’ve got 3 great presentations for you:

Music Therapy
Tuesday May 3rd • 6:30–8:30pm
Location: Wallingford House 4120 Stone Way N Seattle, WA 98103
Speaker: Betsy Hartman

Join Board Certified Neurologic Music Therapist, Betsy Hartman, in experiencing the benefits of music to reduce anxiety and stress while promoting wellness and relaxation. Additionally, participants will learn how music can support motor rehabilitation, improve speech and language skills, and enhance cognitive functioning. During this class you will have an opportunity to explore simple music-based techniques, current research in the field of music therapy, and live music making. No music confidence or experience necessary for this class.

Art Therapy — Who, What, Why, Where?
Tuesday May 10th • 6:30–8:30pm
Location: Wallingford House 4120 Stone Way N Seattle, WA 98103
Speaker: Suzie Hill

It’s not just coloring. Art therapy is a non-medical approach that is effective, safe, fun and used with a wide variety of mental illnesses. Currently studying to be an Art Therapist, graduate student Suzie Hill will give an overview of this interesting practice.

Mindfulness
Tuesday May 17th • 6:30–8:30pm
Location: Wallingford House 4120 Stone Way N Seattle, WA 98103
Speaker: Alanna Lake

Mindfulness and meditation can have a significant impact on improving the lives of those living with mental illness in any form. More specifically, it provides a framework for dealing with life “stressors” that can negatively impact anyone’s life. By training in kindness for oneself and others, it provides much needed respite from the negative impacts of illnesses such as mental health challenges. In a brief discussion by Alanna Lake, long time meditator and mental health advocate, we will explore some basic strategies for encouraging kindness and mindfulness in everyday life.

Proceeds from the Depressed Cake Shop will be donated to the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) of Seattle. Let’s end the stigma around mental illness and eat some yummy sweets!
Elizabeth is a volunteer of many talents. She started volunteering for NAMI Seattle as a Support Link Volunteer over a year ago, and has since become an Ending the Silence presenter as well as a support group facilitator for NAMI Seattle’s new knitting and crocheting support group. We are so appreciative of the kindness, compassion, and creativity Elizabeth brings to each of her roles at NAMI. Her dedication is truly inspiring, and it has been wonderful working with her. Thank you so much Elizabeth, and keep up the good work!

Q&A WITH SAMANTHA
Ending the Silence Presenter

Q. Why did you choose to become an Ending the Silence presenter?

A. I know how it feels to be suffering in silence with the weight on a mental health condition suffocating you. I wanted to help people lessen that weight by sharing my story. I wanted to give teens hope.

Q. What inspired you to present at your own high school?

A. I think that it is more impactful to see someone you know talk about the tough things. I wanted my friends to see that someone they know has a mental health condition. I wanted my peers to know that there is nothing to be ashamed of.
In recent years, it has become more and more common for Hollywood to incorporate mental health issues within the framework of their movies. Mental health conditions are a challenge that many people experience in real life, so why not use that as a theme within a movie? Having a character who experiences symptoms makes them relatable to the millions of people in this country who live with mental illness. Hollywood has started to catch-on to this, and the film industry is continuously learning how to accurately portray this complex issue. Here are some of those movies that were released last year—the first three received Oscar nominations—that successfully portrayed mental health.

**What Happened, Miss Simone?**

Iconic and powerful singer-songwriter, Nina Simone, known for songs such as “Feelin’ good” and “I Put a Spell on You” was also a person who lived with bipolar disorder. *What Happened, Miss Simone?* depicts the various aspects of her life from her on stage personae, civil rights activism, to challenging mood swings. The movie candidly showcases her symptoms as she shouts at audience members during her shows or simply walks out in the middle. It also goes into detail about her time abroad when she simply abandoned her life and was later officially diagnosed with bipolar disorder and put onto medication.

**AMY**

Another powerful female singer-songwriter, Amy Winehouse, was also memorialized in a documentary last year. Amy was known for having a substance abuse problem and often sang about it in songs such as “Rehab” and “Addicted.” *AMY* shows her transition into stardom and the toll that it took on her, which led to her early death from alcohol poisoning at 27 years old. This film was also nominated for best documentary at this year’s Oscars. But has already won a slew of other awards, such as Best European Documentary, 2015 European Film Award and Best Documentary at the British Academy Film Awards.

**Inside Out**

What would your brain look like if you could peak inside? What would your emotions be like if you could talk to them? Nominee for best animated feature film, *Inside Out*, is an imaginative movie that attempts to depict the mind of a young girl, Riley. Her emotions—joy, sadness, anger, fear and disgust—are personified to be the main characters. As Riley undergoes hard times after her family moves to a new city, it’s up to her emotions to set her back on track.

**Love & Mercy**

Sticking with the theme of famous musicians, *Love & Mercy* tells the story of the Beach Boys’ Brian Wilson (John Cusack) when he first started experiencing psychosis as well as twenty years afterwards. *Love & Mercy* displays his symptoms including panic attacks, voices in his head and his occasional inability to distinguish truth from reality. The most shocking aspect of the movie is the relationship that Brian has with his psychotherapist, Dr. Eugene Landy (Paul Giamatti), which is one of power and abuse. Dr. Landy attempts to control each aspect of his life, and Brian’s love interest is determined to save him from his caregiver’s manipulation.
**Infinitely Polar Bear**

“Our dad is totally polar bear.” Infinitely Polar Bear accurately portrays the perception of two young girls whose father, Cam (Mark Ruffalo) struggles with manic-depressive episodes. When his wife (Zoe Saldana) leaves the state to enter into a graduate school program, Cam is left to care for their two young daughters on his own. Cam copes with his symptoms by starting a ton of projects that he never finishes. Their house is inundated with Cam’s belongings and unfinished projects, causing the girls’ to be too embarrassed to have friends over or show anyone how they live. This slice-of-life comedy is a realistic depiction of family life is like when a family member is living with a mental health condition.

**Welcome to Me**

When Alison Klieg (Kristen Wig) wins $86 million in the lottery, her first instinct is to have her own TV show about her life. Welcome to Me, showcases the symptoms of borderline personality disorder when Allison decides to stop taking medication and broadcast all of her opinions to the world. Allison is incredibly quirky and weird, a perfect role for Kristen Wig, and displays her mental health condition in a way that’s awkwardly funny and honest.

**Silver Linings Playbook**

A delightful comedy about family dealing with mental illness and community.

After his release from a state mental hospital, Pat Solitano (Bradley Cooper) moves back in with his parents. His father, Pat Sr. (Robert De Niro) has his own issues with compulsive gambling and obsessions. Pat wavers about complying with his medications as he tries to reconcile with his ex-wife. Then he meets Tiffany (Jennifer Lawrence) who has her own issues and challenges him to overcome his own.

Rated R for language and some violence and sexual content/nudity.

**QUESTIONS TO DISCUSS AFTER THE MOVIE**

- Was there a time in the film you felt people were stigmatizing toward mental health?
- Did you relate to the main character?
- What felt “real” in the way the film portrayed mental illness?
- How did relationships support (or not) the character on their journey?
- Did you think the movie successfully portrayed mental health issues?
- Did you think the use of humor helps reduce stigma about mental illness?
Two Great Conferences Coming up this Summer

2016 Washington Behavioral Healthcare Conference
Strengthening Lives, Building Community

June 22-24, 2016
Yakima Convention Center, Yakima WA
http://bit.ly/1SxGhzo

Confirmed keynoters include: Daniel James Brown, New York Times best-selling author of The Boys in the Boat; Kevin Hines, a suicide attempt survivor and national mental health advocate; Joel Dvoskin, PhD, a national expert on mental health and criminal justice policy.

NAMI National Convention

July 6-9, 2016
Denver, Colorado
www.nami.org/convention

The 2016 National Convention will feature:

• Top-notch researchers and clinicians providing information and tools to advance and sustain recovery from mental illness.
• People living with a mental illness and their families providing their own important perspectives on recovery.
• The country’s keenest minds and savviest policymakers offering strategies and tactics to effectively advocate for changing the mental health system in our nation.
• Abundant networking opportunities so we can learn from each other about how we can improve the lives of all people living with mental illness and their families.
• Inspiration, innovation and an exhilarating four days in Denver.

NAMI Washington

Call for Proposals

NAMI Washington is seeking workshop proposals for the 2016 state conference — The Road to Recovery: Mental Health Matters. NAMI Washington is looking for proposals in all areas which touch upon Recovery including People, Research, Treatment, Law and Justice, Systems and Policy for all populations including youth, veterans, communities of color and under-served populations. For specifics on criteria and submitting a workshop proposal view the Workshop Proposal Submission Form. All submissions are due by June 3, 2016.


Conference Dates
Sept 30 – Oct 2, 2016
Port Angeles

NAMI Seattle has King County Consumer Training Fund scholarships available!

Are you...

— A resident of King County?
— Enrolled in the King County Mental Health Plan, or a family member of someone who is?
— A personal or community advocate for consumers of publicly-funded mental health services, who is not employed by a mental health agency?

If you answered yes to these questions, you could be eligible for a scholarship up to $500 for mental health related training or conferences. Visit our website for more details and to complete the application: www.namiseattle.org/scholarship-application.
Do you want to learn all about the mental health system in Seattle? Are you ready to fight stigma and educate?

Do you want to make a difference for people impacted by mental health issues*?

*Hint: that’s basically everyone!

If you’re about getting things done then we have an opportunity for you.

APPLY TO JOIN NAMI SEATTLE AS AN AMERICORPS MEMBER!

Deadline to apply for our Support Link Lead AmeriCorps position: July 15

Questions? Email us. katiem@nami-greaterseattle.org

APPLY HERE: http://1.usa.gov/1RzQwsY
OFFICE HOURS
The NAMI Seattle office is staffed 8am–5pm on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday; and Wednesday 9am–6pm. Callers to our Support Link 206-783-9264 will reach a staff member, intern or volunteer who will offer supportive resources and referrals.

MENTAL HEALTH MONTH WORD SEARCH

ASK FOR HELP RELAXING
ATTITUDE LEISURE TIME
STRESS BALANCE
MANAGEMENT TENSE
COPING WITH MIND AND BODY
THOUGHTS EXERCISE
NUTRITION TIME FOODS
POSITIVE UPTIGHT GOOD
REDUCTION PLAN WELLNESS