



NEWSLINE

REPORT OF THE ANNUAL MEETING

NAMI CCNS' Annual Meeting was held Monday, January 28 at Rush North Shore Hospital, with a record number of people in attendance. Attendees heard Co-Presidents Ann George and Julie Savastio detail all our accomplishments this past year and our plans for the coming year. Afterward, Dr. Maxim Chasanov gave a presentation of the family's role and responsibilities when caring for a loved one with mental illness.

An abbreviated version of the report of the annual meeting follows:

NAMI CCNS continues to implement the strategic plan developed in December 2003. The key priorities were:

- **Public Awareness and Education**
- **Continuing and Increasing collaboration with local mental health agencies**
- **Creation of a state-of -the-art website**
- **Creation of services and programs that meet membership needs**

We are reviewing strategic planning needs and plan to undergo a more formal **Board Development and Strategic Planning** process. Consultants have been interviewed and we are ready to contract with the best candidate pending board approval.

Retiring membership chair Les Appell input all member information in the national **web membership program** that centralized the database and is now managed by office staff. The ability to join on line via our website namiccns.org automatically enrolls members locally, state, and nationally and reduces our office staff time inputting new local members.

NAMI CCNS' geographic catchment area includes 16 communities: Des Plaines, Evanston, Glencoe, Glenview, Golf, Kenilworth, Morton Grove, Mount Prospect, Niles, Northbrook, Northfield, Park Ridge, Prospect Heights, Skokie, Wilmette, and Winnetka.

We continue to address disproportionate coverage and memberships of these communities. Increasing membership and improving our renewal rate are primary goals in the coming year. In December we had 250 members and we are currently at 180 members with renewals still coming in. Our most prominent membership category is Parents of Adults with Mental Illness.

We are improving outreach to those wishing to volunteer. In 2008 we will **create more volunteer opportunities**, especially in the area of fundraising. We need volunteers to attend teacher trainings in all our psychoeducation programs. Call the office if you wish to volunteer to become a teacher, support group leader, or simply answer phone calls or stuff envelopes. Barb and Candice will put you to work!

In May 2007, we raised \$7,000 at our annual **Tag Day**, with 50 volunteers participating. This year, Tag

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Dear Readers,

After long deliberation, I have decided to step down as *Newsline* editor. I have been editor for seven years. These past years have been a wonderful experience for me. Since I love doing research, the newsletter gave me ample opportunity to delve into various topics in the mental health field. I sought, more than anything else, to make *Newsline* an educational publication. I hoped to educate families, consumers, as well as professionals.

I will greatly miss writing the newsletter.

Thank you for your readership and support.

Sincerely,

Linda Logan

Tag Day Coming Soon

Our annual Tag Day for 2008 will be Friday, May 9 and Saturday, May 10 at three locations in Glenview. We need many volunteers to make this another great success. For information or to volunteer call 847-716-2252 or 847-707-1718.

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Questions, comments?

Please e-mail:

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Visit our website: www.namiccns.org

Website maintained by Tom Maier

February March 2008



Annual Meeting Report / *continued*

Day Co-chairs Ann George and Julie Savastio pass the chairmanship of this fun and important event to Tina Nelson. We hope everyone will plan to participate either **Friday, May 9 or Saturday May 10**, when you are called. This two-day fund-raiser is fun, healthy, rewarding, and an excellent way to get our name and information out to the public.

“Friendship in Bloom” chaired by Frieda Ankin and Pat Rodbro, was our first social event and “reunion” for “Family to Family,” “Visions for Tomorrow,” and “Sundays At One members.” We raised \$1,400 in a silent auction and enjoyed catching up with old friends over coffee and dessert. Nate Maier and Candice Savastio were honored for their work with “Sundays at One,” a social group for young adults.

Board member Jim Brodnicki ably captained our **first walkathon** for “The Mind of America” in collaboration with NAMI Greater Chicago. We earned \$1,200, made many new friends, and had a beautiful day on the lake front in the heart of Chicago.

Ann George coordinated a **garage sale** with revenues of \$1,500.

Our first **Annual Appeal** raised \$9,500 and we plan to do even better this year.

Another **gala benefit, honoring Ann George** is in the works for November 1. Watch for details. The board likes the idea of alternating years between a gala benefit and other fund raising events. Again, those of you who enjoy fundraising, event chairs Frieda Ankin and Pat Rodbro would love to hear from you as soon as possible. Call the office.

AWARENESS

Newsline, our bi-monthly newsletter was better than ever this past year; “Medication Updates” is a valuable resource about new meds, possible side effects, class action lawsuits, and other important information around medication. Researched articles on local housing, diagnosing and treating bipolar disorder in children, and sexual dysfunction and meds, by editor Linda Logan were well-received. Every so often Linda will pour out her personal thoughts and experiences in articles that speak to our hearts, such as “Psychopharmacology and the Crisis of Self, an open letter to my doctor.” Members are encouraged to submit articles of their own, or let us know about articles they think would be helpful to be published. **Sally Mann’s legislative updates** continue to keep readers abreast of crucial **legislative**

concerns. We are indebted to her for her political depth of knowledge and passionate advocacy for our families.

Newsline is mailed to approximately **600 readers** in northern Cook County, including mental health providers, and schools. We receive accolades from professionals and gained new professional memberships as a result of our newsletter. Thanks to webmaster Tom Maier, our newsletter can now be accessed online, and forwarded to friends and family. Our office staff is now able to mail newsletters at the Bulk Rate, allowing us to save several hundred dollars with each mailing.

Linda Logan will be retiring after 7 years as an outstanding editor of **NAMI Newsline**. No one will be able to fill Linda’s shoes, but we are in need of her replacement. Anyone who enjoys writing and editing, please call the office if you would like to find out more about this volunteer opportunity.

Thanks to **Webmaster Tom Maier**, we have quite a website. The NAMI CCNS web site’s traffic has more than doubled to over 20,000 hits per month. It also offers a vast array of photographic records of many CCNS events, so take a peek when you get a chance. Tom linked our site to national’s for easy online membership; created a web calendar for posting and viewing events; and instituted an electronic e-mail version of *Newsline*. Many organizations pay a great deal for what Tom does on a weekly basis.

Our first **Public Relations Coordinator**, Wendy Smith, accomplished a great deal this past year, including announcements in the Pioneer Press, churches and professionals about our support groups, classes, the Thresholds Theater Event, and our Education Programs. Our attendance rates increased dramatically as a result. She was able to get our “Family to Family” course featured in a wonderful article in October by Pioneer Press reporter Joanna Broder. Reprints are available upon request. Public Service Announcements were sent to local radio stations, referring listeners to the national website to find local affiliates, and Wendy included NAMI CCNS in a feature story for Highland Park’s Chamber of Commerce.

NAMI CCNS had a letter to the editor in several Pioneer Press publications following the killings and suicide at Virginia Polytech, and a feature article in the Winnetka Talk about NAMI CCNS. Erika Ernquist has generously volunteered to take over PR and we have agreed a goal is to get another feature article in the papers, as well as regular announcements about all our support groups, education programs, and classes.

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Annual Meeting Report / *continued*

Tom Maier redesigned and updated our **general brochures**. It has a stunning picture of the brain and is our best-ever local brochure. Call the office for a free copy and send one to a friend.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

A major commitment of NAMI CCNS is to increase contact with organizations serving families with mental illness. Telephone calls to agencies and hospitals, community information books, police, schools, and Chambers of Commerce directories allowed us to create a database for community outreach. From that database we will work to provide organizations with our information, and they, in turn, will make our information available to their families.

NAMI's Northern Illinois Affiliates committee has produced a hospital resource guide for hospitals to give to patients and families at discharge meetings. This will be an important tool for getting patients and families our information as quickly as possible. Distribution details are to be worked out.

SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS, COMMUNITY EDUCATION & LINKAGES

Board member Jill Freidberg-Rubin developed and coordinated a **Speakers Bureau** and has contacted schools and religious organizations about hosting NAMI CCNS presentations. She spoke to WilPower, Inc.'s family support group, and participated in an anti-stigma phone conference.

Todd and Linda Logan addressed the attendees of the Foundation on Human Potential's symposium, "Mental Health and the Brain: Implications for Lifelong Learning," sharing their stories of recovery.

A NAMI CCNS panel comprised of Candice Savastio, Agnes Byrne, Diane Thurnblad and Barb Maier, presented "Family Stories" at the Naomi Ruth Cohen annual June conference, receiving the highest evaluations of all twelve break-out sessions.

Ann George and Barb Maier presented our information to The Family Institute, at Northwestern University, courtesy of Todd Logan's outreach to that clinic.

Barb Maier worked with Kenilworth Union Church's Alison Tobey Smart Committee to bring Dr. Ross Greene, author of *The Explosive Child* to present a 2-day conference. Dr.

Greene was invited back again in January of this year.

Barb Maier serves on the Illinois Children's Mental Health partnership and along with Candice Savastio and Adrienne Nelson and Kate Hutchins attended a conference on Evidence Based Practices for Children. Barb presented an in-service on EBP's for Children to DCFS Latino staff.

In Our Own Voices, a 60-minute presentation by trained presenters Jenny George and Candice Savastio, was given at St. Simon's Episcopal Church in Arlington Heights, and are scheduled to present twice to Thresholds members and staff, and at Whitney Young School in Chicago, courtesy of former board member Charlene Floreani.

Agnes Byrne represented NAMI at a presentation by Erica's Lighthouse to Northfield Middle School.

Candice Hughes organized and facilitated "Tweaking the Dream" to a large group of parents through NSSD.

Julie and Candice Savastio and Judy Graff represented NAMI CCNS at the national NAMI conference in San Diego in June.

Julie Savastio attended the NAMI Illinois Leadership Training in Springfield. The main topic was "How to Capture and Retain More Members."

Ann George attended the DBSA Greater Chicago's seventh annual symposium. She addressed the Turning Point Annual Town Hall meeting, and attended a roundtable discussion with the Metropolitan Chicago Healthcare Organization to collaborate on how providers can work together better in the Northern suburbs. Ann and Sandra Shovers attended NAMI DuPage's presentation of author Pete Early talking about his outstanding book, *Crazy*.

Pat Rodbro met with Lincolnshire police about implementing Crisis Intervention Training.

Tina Nelson attended a Mental Health Fair at Read Mental Health Center to gather resources on residential facilities for youth approved by the state of Illinois.

Todd Logan, Candice Hughes, and Wendy Smith produced a feasibility report for establishing a mental health center on the North Shore.

NAMI CCNS had information tables at the Naomi Ruth Cohen Conference, Glenbrook North High School Parent

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Education Day, Josselyn Center's Ohadi Conference, and Maine Township Agency Day, and Evanston Townships Latino Mental Health Day.

Candice Hughes is a board member of Turning Point and chaired the Community Awareness committee, promoting ways to implement new federal and state initiatives for services for underrepresented community members. We are considering collaborating with Turning Point on a conference for culturally diverse families.

Barb Maier serves on WilPower Inc.'s Advisory Committee. She attended the Josselyn Center opening of the CLR Drop-In Center. "Sundays at One" will meet at the Drop in Center for their September gathering.

Barb Maier joined Winnetka Northfield Communicators, and along with WilPower will host a meeting at New Trier Township offices. This group meets to enhance communication among non-profit organizations.

EDUCATION

Our **Public Education Programs** at Rush North Shore Hospital have enjoyed record turn outs thanks to the efforts of Vice President Sandra Shovers. These free programs are given every other second Monday and address such critical topics as "Government Aid for the Mentally Ill: What You Need to Know," "Overcoming Obstacles to Finding Employment," "Strategies for Convincing your Loved One to Adhere to Medication," "How To Avoid and Manage Crisis Situations,"

"Family-to-Family" again leads the way in participation and number of times offered thanks to the tremendous organization of program coordinator Joyce Schladweiler. Joyce and her teaching team of Ann George, Sandra Shovers, Tina Nelson, Joan DeCleene, Julie Savastion and Diane Thurnblad are offering F2F three times per year. This group of dedicated teachers are to be commended for their time and effort helping family members learn to cope effectively, and giving hope where too often there was none. Tina Nelson and Julie Savastio, our newest teachers, completed their training on Sunday and began their first class on Tuesday this past summer, in our first ever classes in the summer.

"Visions for Tomorrow" will be replaced by our newest NAMI Signature Course, **"NAMI BASICS, the fundamentals of caring for you, your family and your child with mental illness."** This past year Visions teachers Agnes

Byrne and Carol Milgram taught to a class with an unusually high number of fathers at Kenilworth Union Church, and Helene Rhodes and Mary Mays taught at New Trier Northfield in the fall. NAMI CCNS has graduated more than 80 parents of children and adolescents over the past six years, and in doing so made a significant difference in the lives of children and their families. We are thrilled to have our new signature program in place however, and honored to have been the first state to receive this training, thanks in large part to the outstanding success of the Visions program throughout Illinois. Newly trained teachers Judy Graff, Helene Rhodes and Barb Maier will begin teaching **"BASICS" Wednesdays, March 12.** Please call the office for information or to register.

"Provider Education Program" is arguably one of the most important trainings mental health providers can receive. PEP program coordinator and Executive Director Barb Maier continues to work hard to find agencies who will host this 10-week course, CEU's provided. The PEP team, John Neri, Adrienne Nelson, Diana Semmelhack, Diane Thurnblad and Barb Maier presented to nearly 100 Thresholds staff a "taste of PEP" at Thresholds' Staff Development Day and received outstanding evaluations. Barb is working hard to put together a class this summer to a consortium of providers. This award winning course presents the family and consumer's lived experiences and teaches professionals how and why it is absolutely essential that family members be included in the treatment plan. If you know of any agency, clinic, or service provider who may like to hear about PEP, please contact Barb at the NAMI CCNS office.

SUPPORT

We offer four support groups year-round, and a Response Line for those in need of resources and support. (This is not a crisis line.) Our support groups and Response Line are vital to the well-being of families and consumers in our community. Thanks to our new office and staff, calls have steadily been increasing. The ability to answer requests for assistance immediately has been a significant factor in increase of membership, and attendance at meetings, programs and classes.

"Care and Share," wonderfully facilitated by Jan Magoc every first Monday at Rush North Shore from 7:00 to 8:30 p.m. is helping many families, many "first timers" as well as those who have coped with a loved one's illness for decades. Due to Jan's and Sandra Shovers efforts to promote C&S,

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and to Jan's leadership, this year we have seen a large increase in attendance. We are truly grateful to Rush North Shore for hosting this important group at their facility.

Kenilworth Union Church's BASICS Support Group for parents of children and adolescents is now being facilitated by trained husband and wife Jean and Jim Jorgensen. This free support group has provided help, understanding, resources and hope to parents who often feel especially isolated due to a child's mental illness for nearly eight years. It is confidential. Although attendance has steadily increased over the years, parents of kids are a difficult population to reach, please share this group with any parent you know who has a child whose behavior is of concern. We are looking at ways to increase attendance in the coming year.

"NAMI Connection" is our newest support group, and it is specifically for those coping with a mental illness. It is facilitated by trained people in recovery who are at a point in their lives where they wish to "give back." NAMI CCNS members Avigal Rhodes, Lisa Weintraub, Candice Savastio, David Booker, and John Neri are trained Connection facilitators. Avigal and Lisa have enjoyed excellent attendance and response to their Monday group at Beth Emet in Evanston from 4:00 to 5:30 p.m.; John and David are scheduled to begin their group every Saturday at Lutheran General Hospital, Park Ridge, from 4:00 to 5:30 p.m. Both groups are free, call the office for details. No registration is required. Holding a weekly support group has proven to be a larger commitment than monthly, but we are thrilled our Connection team has risen to this considerable challenge.

"Response Line" Maun Dee and Tina Nelson responded to callers for the first half of this year, answering messages and providing information and assistance, and often, just listening, something many professionals sadly don't have time to do, and yet is one of the most important needs families have. Again, the new office and staff have provided this help instantly rather than callers having to wait for their calls to be answered. It is making a difference in the quality of this service. We are so grateful to Maun and Tina, and know they helped many, many families. Ideally we would like to have trained volunteers answer the Response Line in the office. As of now we do not have enough space to do so. A larger office with room for volunteer Response Line people is a goal for us to work towards.

"Sundays at One" is in a category by itself, neither a support group, nor a class, S@1 is into its fifth year of

providing a place for young adults with mental illness to gather simply to have fun. Co-leaders Kate Hutchins and Chris Jordan, and sponsors Brenda Jordan and Barb and Tom Maier, with occasional help from Chris and Maun Dee, have had a fabulous year, and plans are in the works for a great 2008. This past year attendance has again, steadily increased. With a core group of 12 to 15 members, and new young people constantly attending. Activities last year included day of Bocce and Bowling and a three course meal at Pinstripes hosted by the Hutchins family; a visit to the restored habitat at Somme Woods in Northbrook; checking out street art in Evanston; and the fourth annual picnic and fourth annual Holiday Bash at the Maier home.

"In Our Own Voice," mentioned earlier in detail, is a signature education program (that means it was produced and funded by national and accordingly will be updated and kept current by national) that trains consumers to speak to a community audience about their experiences with brain disorders, treatment and recovery. It is a stunning 60 minute presentation including two personal stories, and a DVD and is presented in the following format:

- Dark Days
- Acceptance
- Treatment
- Coping Strategies
- Successes, Hope and Dreams

Any program, course, or in-service is only as strong as its team, and the NAMI CCNS team of Candice Savastio and Jenny George is stellar. These two young women have done their homework and are ready to go out to schools, churches, community meetings—anywhere the public wants to really learn about the reality of mental illness, and to meet two young women who have excelled in the recovery process. Talk to your principal, minister or rabbi about having them come tell the real story.

ADVOCACY

Legislative Alerts

Legislative chair Sally Mann served as the eyes and ears of our advocacy function. She monitored legislative activities and sent alerts via emails and newsletter. Timing is crucial so we are inviting new and renewing members to provide their email addresses to enable our voices to be heard quickly. Tracking the number of calls, emails and letters and visits to legislators from our members are goals for the coming year.

Alerts sent out this year included:

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- White House Budget: Shortchanging American with Mental Illness
- Keeping Families Together Act
- Insurance Parity 5.558
- Restoration of Cuts to Mental Illness Research, Housing and Veteran Programs

HOUSING

Judy Graff, (a.k.a. Wonder Woman) responded to people who call our Response Line for help with housing. Our mission is to **facilitate and advocate for appropriate housing** and support services for our membership and community at large. This is monumental because housing is inadequate, and, “one size” does not fit all. We have barely scratched the surface according to Judy. This coming year Judy will be joined by new Board Member Teddie Cheopelas; we anticipate they will be an outstanding team. In the past year Judy and her housing committee:

- Set up housing resource tips on our resource page at our web site namiccns.org
- Attended the national NAMI conference in San Diego to address those who advocate for us nationally and to learn ways to advocate effectively locally
- Learn about how people with mental illness across the U.S. live, and the types of services recommended by Evidence-Based Practices
- Participated in advocacy campaigns under the direction of SHPA (Supportive Housing Providers Association). We succeeded in keeping an additional \$3.9 million in the FY budget for housing and support
- Attended a legislative hearing in Wheeling where 5 members spoke about their personal difficulties providing housing and services for their loved ones. Those in attendance requested the testimonies be repeated to educate government workers and the public
- Supported local housing initiatives
- Attended legislative meetings on housing
- NAMI CCNS became a voting member of AHAND – Association of Homeless Advocates in the North/Northwest District. AHAND is part of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Continuum of Care Systems being developed nation-wide to address the unique challenges in creating a seamless delivery system for the homeless
- CCNS is an active participant in the North West Community Housing Task Force. We collaborate with four area NAMI affiliates to combine our unique talents to find adequate housing and services for our loved ones. **Judy is pleased to announce through this affiliation**

NAMI CCNS will host a national housing advocate in May to help us work with the housing crisis in our area

RESEARCH

As in the past we will contribute to NARSAD, the National Alliance for Research on Schizophrenia and Depression this year. Look for opportunities to participate in local research initiatives in our newsletter. Several members received small stipends to participate in Evanston Northwestern’s ongoing research on schizophrenia this year, following a presentation at our Public Education Program.

LOOKING AHEAD – 2008 GOALS

- Board Development and Strategic Planning with a professional consultant
- Community Outreach via the Hospital Resource Guide
- Increasing our name recognition and program attendance
- Increase the number of classes and programs, specifically: In Our Own Voice, Provider Education Program, NAMI BASICS, Speakers Bureau and school programs
- Host our second major gala honoring Co-President Ann George
- Participating in a joint fund-raiser with WilPower, Inc in the theater event “**Botanic Garden**,” written by former Board Member **Todd Logan** playwright. Call the office for tickets for this **March 9** event.
- Increase amount raised, materials distributed, and number of volunteers tagging at our annual **Tag Day event, May 9 and 10th.**

We warmly welcome the following new board members to two year terms:

Teddie Cheopelas, Erika Ernquist, Brenda Jordan, Susan and Michael Kuhn

And an enthusiastic and grateful welcome back to renewed board members Frieda Ankin, Jim Brodnicki, Joan DeCleene, Ann George, Candice Hughes and Julie Savastio.



Calendar

February 4 “NAMI Connection—Monday Group,” a weekly recovery support group for adults with mental illness regardless of diagnosis. 4:00-5:30 pm at Beth Emeth Synagogue, 1224 Dempster, Evanston [Pearlman Room, lower level], free of charge. For information, call Candice or Avigal at NAMI CCNS 847-716-2252.

February 4 “Care & Share” support group is open to anyone dealing with mental health issues. 7:00-8:30 pm at the Kenton-Knox Conference Center, Rush North Shore Medical Center, 9701 N. Knox, Skokie. For information, call Jan Magoc 847-297-0396.

February 6 NAMI CCNS Board of Directors meeting, 7:00 pm at WilPower, Inc. 444 Frontage Rd., Northfield. All members are welcome to attend. For information, call Barb Maier 847-716-2252.

February 9 “NAMI Connection/Saturday Group” is a second weekly recovery group.

Lutheran General Hospital, Park Ridge, 4:00-5:30 pm. Call office for details 847 716-2252.

February 11 “NAMI Connection/Monday” (see Feb. 4)

February 14 “NAMI BASICS Support Group” (formerly “Visions for Tomorrow Parent Support Group”) for parents of children and adolescents dealing with mental disorders. 7:30-9:00 pm at Kenilworth Union Church, 211 Kenilworth Ave., Kenilworth. For information, call Jean or Jim Jorgensen 847-251-1476.

February 16 “NAMI Connection/Saturday Group” (see Feb. 9)

February 18 “NAMI Connection/Monday” (see Feb. 4)

February 23 “Sundays at One” is a social group for young adults (ages 20-35) dealing with mental illness. Call Kate 847-446-5907 or Chris 847-220-0199 for information.

February 23 “NAMI Connection/Saturday” (see Feb. 9)

February 25 “NAMI Connection/Monday” (see Feb. 4)

March 1 “NAMI Connection/Saturday” (see Feb. 9)

March 3 “NAMI Connection/Monday” (see Feb. 4)

March 3 “Care & Share” (see Feb. 4)

March 4 NEW “Family to Family” course starts (through May 27). Family to Family is a 12-week class designed for family members and close friends of individuals with mental illnesses. Class is free of charge. 7:00-9:30 pm at New Trier, Northfield. For more information and to register, call Joyce at 847-853-6191.

March 5 Board of Directors meeting (see Feb. 6)

March 8 “NAMI Connection/Saturday” (see Feb. 9)

March 10 Education Program Guest Speaker, Dr. Karen Pierce, “How the Media Affect our Youth.” Rush North Shore Medical Center, Kenton-Knox Conference Center, 9701 N. Knox, Skokie, 7:00-8:30 pm. Lecture is free and open to the public. For information, call Sandra Shovers 847-486-0231.

March 10 “NAMI Connection/Monday” (see Feb. 4)

March 12 NEW “NAMI Basics” a new signature education program for parents and caregivers of children and adolescents living with mental illness (for more information, see NAMI CCNS News Update).

March 15 “NAMI Connection/Saturday” (see Feb. 9)

March 19 “NAMI Basics” (see March 12)

March 17 “NAMI Connection/Monday” (see Feb. 4)

March 22 “NAMI Connection/Saturday” (see Feb. 9)

March 24 “NAMI Connection/Monday” (see Feb. 4)

March 25 NO “Family to Family”

March 26 NO “NAMI Basics”

March 29 “NAMI Connection/Saturday” (see Feb. 9)

March 30 “Sundays at One” (see Feb. 23)

March 31 “NAMI Connection/Monday” (see Feb. 4) ■

Upcoming

Summer session of “Family to Family” will run from June through August in Skokie; the fall session commences in September and continues through November in Northfield.

Classes are free of charge. For information and to register, call Joyce Schladweiler at 847-853-6191 or the NAMI CCNS office at 847-724-1460.

NAMI CCNS NEWS UPDATE

New Programming New National Program for Parents of Children and Adolescents

By Barb Maier

“NAMI Basics” is the new signature education program for parents and caregivers of children and adolescents living with mental illnesses. NAMI CCNS and four other affiliates in Illinois were the first to be trained in the country. Illinois and two other states, Utah and North Carolina, were selected to pilot this exciting new 6-week course, which will replace “Visions for Tomorrow.”

In developing “NAMI Basics,” NAMI drew on course elements which have been extensively tested and found to be highly effective in the field. These include:

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

“NAMI Basics” includes a rigorous evaluation process to build an evidence base on the effectiveness of the program and help ensure it continually delivers best practices to meet the unique needs of families. The NAMI CCNS board is proud to be among the first affiliates in the country to offer this outstanding new program that is badly needed by parents.

Judy Graff, Barb Maier and Helene Rhodes completed a three-day training and are preparing to teach “NAMI Basics” beginning Wednesdays, March 12 through April 23rd, at New Trier Northfield High School. Registration is required and class size is limited. To find out more and to register call the office at 847-716-2252.

Second “Connection” Group Forming

By Candice Savastio

Last Fall, we described our new “Connections” group as a place to “Talk to someone who understands—someone just like you” and that’s just what the NAMI “Connection” group is all about. NAMI “Connection” is a recovery support group for adults with mental illness. It is the first support group in NAMI that is specifically for people with mental illness. It is a group for people to share their stories, often problems, having to do with their mental illness. Often such talk therapy is essential in recovery. Also, what happens that is not so often mentioned is the common occurrence of making friends. People exchange phone numbers and make plans together.

The people that run the support groups are consumers and have insight into how others with mental illness feel. Currently, Lisa Weintraub and Avigal Rhodes co-facilitate “Connection” at Beth Emet on Mondays, and John Neri and David Booker will co-facilitate at Lutheran General Hospital every Saturday.

We are happy to report that our “Connection” support group is the most successful in the area. It is so successful that other regions’ support groups are looking to us to find ways for their groups to have higher attendance rates.

It’s not too late to attend. Each group meets once a week. There are two “Connection” groups in our affiliate. In addition to the group from 4-5:30 P.M. Mondays at Beth Emet in Evanston, a new support group will be held from 4:00-5:30 P.M. Saturdays at Lutheran General beginning February 9th. People with any type of mental illness are welcome. ■

Editor Wanted

Newsline is seeking a new editor to take over all responsibilities for the NAMI CCNS newsletter. Must be able to research and write articles, edit articles, work with lay-out and design professional. Interested persons should call the NAMI office at 847-716-2252.



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NAMI CCNS EDUCATION CLASSES, SUPPORT GROUPS AND OTHER SERVICES

**NAMI CCNS psychoeducational classes*

***NEW NAMI Basics** A 6-week course designed for parents of children with mental disorders. The class covers bipolar disorder, schizophrenia, anxiety disorders, eating disorders, ADHD, as well as brain biology, treatments, medications, communication, and coping skills. Class is free of charge. Call Barb Maier for information at 847-716-2252. *(See Calendar)*

***Family to Family** A 12-week class designed for family members and close friends of individuals with mental illnesses. The class covers schizophrenia, depression, bipolar disorder, borderline personality disorder, panic disorder, obsessive-compulsive disorder, co-occurring addictive disorders, as well as medications, coping skills, and advocacy. Class is free of charge. To register, call Joyce at 847-853-6191. *(See Calendar)*

NEW NAMI Connections A weekly recovery support group for adults with mental illness (regardless of their diagnosis), led by trained individuals also in recovery. Beth Emet Synagogue, Pearlman Room (lower level), 1224 Dempster, Evanston, 4:00-5:00 pm. Call NAMI CCNS 847-716-2252 and ask for Avigal or Candice. *(See Calendar)*

Education Program features speakers with expertise in the mental health field. *(See Calendar)*
Care and Share is a support group for people with mental disorders, as well as their friends and families. *(See Calendar)*

NAMI BASICS (formerly **Visions for Tomorrow Support and Discussion Group**) is for parents of children, adolescents, and young adults with mental disorders. Call Jean or Jim Jorgensen 847-251-1476. *(See Calendar)*

Response Team A "warm line" (not a crisis hot line) for anyone looking for resources, referrals, or support about dealing with mental disorders. Call the NAMI CCNS office and leave a message at 847-716-2252.

Sundays at One is a social meeting group for young adults (ages 18 to 35) coping with mental disorders. Call Kate, 847-446-5907 or Chris, 847-220-0199 for information. *(See Calendar)*

Other Organizations

Anorexia Nervosa and Associated Disorders offers information on referrals and local support groups for eating disorders. Call Dawn at 847-831-3438.

Autism Society of America, North Suburban Autism Support Group is held the first Tuesday of the month and is open to anyone interested in meeting families, professionals, and others involved with autism spectrum disorders. Skokie Village Hall (Community Room, lower level), 5127 W. Oakton, Skokie, 7:00 p.m.

Child and Adolescent Bipolar Foundation is a national, parent-led organization of families raising children diagnosed with bipolar disorder. For information on support groups, visit www.bpkids.org or call 847-256-8525.

Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance of Greater Chicago meets the second and fourth Monday of each month at the Devon Bank, 6445 N. Western Ave., Chicago, 7:30 p.m. Call Chet for details at 773-465-3280.

Depression Support Group meets the fourth Monday of every month at the Kenilworth Union Church, 211 Kenilworth Avenue, Kenilworth, 7:00-9:00 p.m. Individuals and families interested in learning more about depression and bipolar disorder are invited to attend. Call 847-251-4272 for information.

Obsessive Compulsive Disorder Support Group meets the first Monday evening of each month at the Anxiety and Agoraphobia Treatment Center in Northbrook. \$20 fee. Call Alana at 847-559-0001, ext. 8.

Obsessive Compulsive Foundation of Metropolitan Chicago has a complete list of area support groups. Call 773-880-1635.

Panic Disorder Support Group meets Wednesday evenings at the Anxiety and Agoraphobia Treatment Center in Northbrook. \$15 fee. Call Marleen Lorenz for information at 847-559-0001, ext. 6.

Recovery, Inc. is a self-help group for people with mental disorders. Call 312-337-5661 for meeting places and times.

TARA Chicago Personality Disorder/Emotion Dysregulation Family Support Group Professionally led group for family members of persons with borderline personality disorder or other emotional dysregulation issues. Meets the third Wednesday of each month at Feinberg Pavilion (3rd floor), Northwestern Memorial Hospital, (conference room F), 251 E. Huron, Chicago, 6:30-9:00 p.m. Suggested donation \$5. Contact rh5mail-tara@yahoo.com before attending for information.

Drop-in Center for Adults with Mental Illness open Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays from 5:00-9:00 pm. Sundays from 11:00 am-3:00 pm. Snacks provided; meal on Sunday. Josselyn Center, 130 N. Waukegan Road, Suite 102, lower level, Deerfield. For information, call 847-441-5600 X 350. \$2 donation. **Trichotillomania (hair-pulling) support group** meets monthly at the Anxiety and Agoraphobia Treatment Center in Northbrook. Call Karen Cassidy, PhD, at 847-559-0001, ext. 3 for information, dates and times.

Raising Complicated Children support group is for mothers of complicated children. Mothers of children suffering from multiple diagnoses and developmental delays are welcome. Meets at the Anxiety and Agoraphobia Treatment Center in Northbrook. Call Karen Cassidy, PhD, for information at 847-559-0001, ext. 3.

Social Anxiety Disorder support group forming at the Anxiety and Agoraphobia Treatment Center in Northbrook. Call Karen Cassidy, PhD, for information at 847-559-0001, ext. 3. ■