

National Alliance for the Mentally Ill of Maryland (NAMI MD) Educational Programs

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The Family-to-Family Education Program

The NAMI Family-to-Family Education Program is a free 12- week course for family caregivers of individuals with severe brain disorders (mental illnesses). The course is taught by trained family members and all instruction and course materials are free for class participants.

The Family-to-Family curriculum focuses on schizophrenia, bipolar disorder (manic depression), clinical depression, panic disorder and obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD). The course discusses the clinical treatment of these illnesses and teaches the knowledge and skills that family members need to cope more effectively.

“Parents and Teachers as Allies: Recognizing Early Onset of Brain Disorders in Children and Adolescents” Presentation

NAMI-Metropolitan Baltimore has developed a presentation to educate parents, school counselors, nurses and teachers about early-onset brain disorders in children and adolescents. This presentation is based on “Parents and Teachers as Allies” by NAMI’s Director of Education Joyce Burland, PhD. This presentation has been given to elementary school PTA meetings, the Baltimore County Summer Academy for Counselors, Maryland School Counselor Association, and has been used for teacher-in-service training programs.

The main hope for children at risk of serious mental illness lies in early detection and the fact that the school years are the most watched developmental period in life. With early recognition, accurate diagnosis and appropriate treatment, young people with mental illness can be helped. This presentation will forestall years of suffering by these children and adolescents and their families.

In Our Own Voice: Living with Mental Illness

The In Our Own Voice (I.O.O.V.) program is an informational outreach program on recovery, presented by trained consumers to other consumers, families, students, professionals, and all people wanting to learn about mental illness. It is designed to offer insight into how people with serious mental illnesses cope with the realities of their disorders while recovering and reclaiming productive lives with meaning and dignity. It is an opportunity for consumers to gain self-confidence, self-esteem, and a stipend while serving as role models for the community. Each presenter is living proof that mental illness is nothing to be ashamed of and that recovery is an ongoing reality. Presenters offer insight and

hope to others by sharing their experiences. In Our Own Voice (I.O.O.V.) is a national program being presented in 14 states across the nation.

Peer-to-Peer: NAMI's Recovery Curriculum

Peer-to-Peer is a unique, experimental learning program for people with any serious mental illness who are interested in establishing and maintaining their wellness and recovery. The course was written by Kathryn, Cohan, a person with a psychiatric disability who is also a former provider and manager in the mental health field and a longtime mutual support group member and facilitator. An advisory board comprised of consumer members of NAMI, in consultation with Joyce Burland, Ph.D., author of the successful NAMI Family-to-Family Program, helped guide the curriculum's development.

- Peer-to-Peer consists of nine two-hour units and is taught by a team of trained "mentors" who are personally experienced at living with mental illness.
- Mentors are trained in weekend-long training sessions, supplied with teaching manuals, and are paid a stipend for each course they teach.
- Participants come away from the course with a binder of hand-out materials, as well as many other tangible resources: an advice directive; a "relapse prevention plan" to help identify tell-tale feelings, thoughts, behavior or events that may warn of impending relapse and to organize for intervention; mindfulness exercises to help focus and calm thinking; and survival skills necessary for working with providers and the general public.
- Each class contains a combination of lecture and interactive exercise material and closes with Mindfulness Practice (techniques offered to develop and expand awareness). Additionally each class builds on the one before: attendance each week, therefore, is required.

For more information about how to register for these educational programs, please contact Corey Chandler at 410-863-0470 or 1-800-467-0075 or cchandler@nami.org.