

## ***About Mental Illness***

**M**ental illness is a term used for a group of disorders causing severe disturbances in thinking, feeling, sensing, and relating that can result in a diminished capacity for coping with the ordinary demands of life. Mental illness can affect persons of any age, sex, race, religion, social, and economic background.

**M**ental illness affects 20% of Americans and is more common than cancer, diabetes, or heart disease. Yet less than one third seek treatment because of stigma or lack of affordable, accessible, effective services.

**T**he number of children who have mental disorders is estimated to be 18 million. 50% of children with a serious mental illness drop out of school. A large percentage of those who drop out, end up in juvenile detention centers.

**S**uicide is the third leading cause of death among people aged 15 to 24 and the eighth leading cause of death in the United States. A majority of the 30,000 Americans who commit suicide each year are believed to suffer from a mental illness.

**N**early one-third of the nation's estimated 600,000 homeless individuals are believed to be adults with mental illness.

## ***Other NAMI NJ Programs***

***Family-to-Family Education Program:*** A free 12-week course for family caregivers of individuals with severe mental illnesses.

***Visions for Tomorrow:*** A free 8-week workshop for primary caregivers of children and adolescents with brain disorders.

***In Our Own Voice, Living with Mental Illness:*** A powerful and inspiring community outreach presentation of hope by recovering consumers.

***Law Enforcement Education Program:*** Designed for law enforcement officials on recognizing symptoms of mental illness and handling crisis situations.

***Professional Education:*** Education program for mental health service providers co-taught by consumers, professionals and family members.

***Multicultural Programs:*** Education and support programs providing outreach to Hispanic, Asian and other communities.

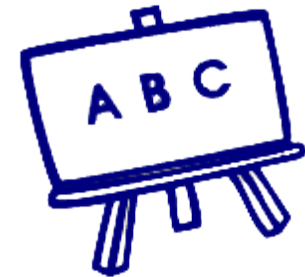
***Mental Illness Awareness Programs:*** Educational activities designed to overcome stigma and increase understanding about mental illness.

***Breaking the Silence:*** Separate age-appropriate programs designed to educate elementary, middle, and high school-age children about mental illness.



## ***NAMI NEW JERSEY “EDUCATING the EDUCATORS”***

***A program designed to help  
educators understand children with  
biologically based mental illness.***



***“Great things are not done by impulse,  
but by a series of small things  
brought together.”***

***- Vincent Van Gogh***

## ***About the Program***

### ***“Educating the Educators”***

is a program developed by NAMI NEW JERSEY (NAMI NJ) to enlighten/inform educators about mental illness and present practical tools to help motivate children with social and emotional disorders. Most children with these disorders are bright and creative. Many are gifted with extraordinary talents waiting to be explored. But they are often hindered by the exhaustion of the constant struggle to cope with the effects of their disorder.

This program offers insights into the magnitude of their courageous struggle and offers resources for educators to share with co-workers, families, and students to help every child stay in school and reach their full potential.

Come share their journey and open your horizons to a whole new appreciation for the road they walk and the role you can play in positively shaping their lives.

NAMI NJ is registered with the New Jersey Department of Education as a provider of Professional Development credit hours for “*Educating the Educators*” (ETE).

*Please visit the  
NAMI NEW JERSEY  
website at [www.naminj.org](http://www.naminj.org).*

## ***Part I: Biological Nature of Mental Illness***

Mental illnesses are biological brain disorders. They are not caused by poor parenting skills, or weaknesses of character. Learn the facts and the fiction of childhood-onset mental illness.

## ***Part II: Family Perspective***

Mental illness has a devastating effect on the child as well as the family. Most families are very devoted and work tirelessly to help their seriously ill children understand, cope, and persevere in spite of everyday challenges. Experience a walk in their shoes.

## ***Part III: Where Do We Go From Here?***

Learn what resources/tools are available to the school, the students, and to the families that will lead to a more enriching experience for everyone involved in guiding each child towards a successful future.



***For more information on  
“Educating the Educators”  
and to schedule a presentation, please  
contact Lorrie Baumann, Director of  
School Education Programs, at  
1 (800) 706-0316 or  
[schoolprograms@naminj.org](mailto:schoolprograms@naminj.org).***

National Alliance on Mental Illness of New Jersey  
1562 Route 130, North Brunswick, NJ 08902

## **NAMI NEW JERSEY**

NAMI NJ is a state affiliate of NAMI, National Alliance on Mental Illness, a national grassroots, non-profit organization with over 220,000 members nationwide dedicated to fighting the devastating effects of mental illness on individuals and families. NAMI NJ has local affiliates throughout NJ.

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***One in five is affected by severe and  
persistent mental illness.***

***No segment of our society is immune.***

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## ***Famous People Affected by Mental Illness***

*Abraham Lincoln  
Winston Churchill  
Vincent Van Gogh  
Terry Bradshaw  
Patty Duke  
Sylvia Plath  
Vivian Leigh  
Emily Dickinson  
Marilyn Monroe*

*Eugene O'Neill  
Ernest Hemingway  
Isaac Newton  
Jane Pauley  
Ludwig Von Beethoven  
Janis Joplin  
Edna St. Vincent Millay  
Agatha Christy  
John Nash*

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***50% of children with a Serious Emotional Disorder (SED) drop out of school. (President's New Freedom Commission Report on Mental Health, 2003). We want children to learn and grow up to be productive members of society. There are no magic answers to making that happen, especially for kids facing the constant challenges of living with a brain disorder.***