



Educating the Educators (ETE)

Strategies/Information/Resources to Help Educators who work with Students who have Psychiatric Disorders

The "Educating the Educators" (ETE) Program is a professional development in-service program for educators. It was developed by NAMI NJ (National Alliance on Mental Illness of New Jersey), a New Jersey non-profit corporation, and has been reviewed by the New Jersey Psychiatric Association (NJPA) and the New Jersey Council on Child and Adolescent Psychiatry (NJCCAP). ETE helps K-12 educators support and understand children with biologically-based mental illnesses. **"Educating the Educators" (ETE) is a NAMI NJ copyrighted program.** ETE is the only NJ program dedicated solely to educating teachers and other educators about mental illness in the classroom.

"Educating the Educators" is presented by a medical professional, an experienced educator, and a family member (parent). During an ETE session, presenters provide an overview of practical tools to help children with social and emotional disorders be successful in school. Topics will include symptoms, treatment, collaboration, resources, referrals, stigma, empathy, accommodations, and strategies. The development/reviewing team included general and special education teachers, a principal, a special education specialist, and a superintendent of schools as well as mental health professionals.

ETE programs are flexible and can vary in presentation time from 2 to 3 hours.

NAMI NJ is registered with the NJ Department of Education as a Provider of Continuing Education Credits (CEUS) for ETE. Presentations can be tailored to the needs of a particular school or school district with respect to cultural competency, the specific disorders addressed, the composition of the presentation team and resources provided. It is recommended for all educators and school personnel who work with students who have psychiatric and/or serious emotional disorders.

▶ Part I – The Biological Nature of Mental Illness *(presented by a medical professional)*

Mental illnesses are biological brain disorders. Learn the facts and the fiction about childhood-onset mental illness. The medical professional speaks about specific brain disorders such as depression, bipolar disorder, ADHD, anxiety disorders, oppositional defiant disorder, conduct disorder, mood dysregulation disorder, their symptoms, and treatments.

▶ Part II – Strategies, Lesson Plans, and Resources for Educators *(presented by an experienced educator)*

Learn what resources/tools are available to the educator that will lead to a more enriching experience for everyone involved and help children with mental illness succeed in school. The educator shares strategies and accommodations that can help children with serious emotional disorders succeed in the classroom. **The educator provides participants with a quick reference chart of useful classroom strategies.**

▶ Part III – The Family Perspective *(presented by a family member)*

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. Experience a walk in their shoes. Learn how to communicate with and support families who have a child with a mental illness.

Evaluations have been consistently excellent (averaging 9.3 out of a possible 10). Since the program's inception, **ETE** has been presented to more than 9000 educators throughout New Jersey, including public school district staff, Juvenile Justice Commission, Traumatic Loss Coalition, Youth Services Commission, Middlesex Regional Educational Services Commission Roundtable, NJ Department of Education Learning Resource Centers, NJ Department of Children and Family Services Schools, and the Annual Conventions of the NJEA. NAMI NJ is one of only 51 organizations nationwide selected as Outreach Partners of the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH), a distinction which allows **ETE** to present and distribute the most up-to-date research findings on children's mental health.

"Educating the Educators" (ETE):

- + Provides educators with a resource packet which includes strategies, resources, and lesson plans for working with students with SED.
- + Provides lessons on mental health and stress relief for all students that integrate other subject areas such as language arts
- + Employs a three person approach: medical professional, experienced educator and family member.
- + Issues (CEUs) to every attendee. NAMI NJ is a registered NJDOE Professional Development Provider.
- + Provides referrals for free NAMI NJ family support/education programs in both Spanish and English.
- + Provides free follow-up consultation with educators needing more information.
- + Tailored to meet the needs and time constraints of each district and each school.
- + Meets state mandates for educating staff about the needs of students who have mental illness.
- + Helps teachers who work with students in inclusive classrooms or specialized settings.
- + Provides information about NAMI NJ "Every Mind Matters" mental health education resource for educators

Some comments by recent attendees include:

- *"Best presentation I have ever been to."* Educator, NJEA Convention
- *"Down to earth. Great resources."* Special Education Supervisor, Burlington County
- *"Each speaker was dynamic and rich with realistic personal experience. This really helped me recognize where I could improve working with my students."* Teacher, NJ Juvenile Justice Comm.
- *"I learned more at this presentation than all my prior training."* Educator, NJEA Convention
- *"Well organized. Each speaker was well prepared, knowledgeable, with good style."* K-8 Educator, Millburn PS
- *"The three viewpoints were strengths. All different and important."* K-6 Educator, Mine Hill Twp SD
- *"Excellent presentation from various perspectives."* Administrator, Paterson School #3
- *"Strategies sound and contemporary."* High School Teacher, Carteret School District

The cost of a presentation is \$750 and can accommodate up to 80-100 participants. Allow 2 months to schedule a presentation. For further information and to schedule a presentation, please contact:

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