NAMI NJ HEARTS & MINDS
A PROGRAM FOCUSED ON INNER AND OUTER WELLNESS

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Individual Advocacy for Wellness

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ADVOCACY:

To change “what is” into “what should be”
OBJECTIVES

• Exploring how your voice can be heard and take action through advocacy.
• Identifying types of advocacy
• Creating a PAD as a self-advocacy tool
• Defining the legislative process for advocacy at the local, state and national levels
What is Advocacy

What is Advocacy?
Educating someone about a cause, and changing perspectives.
Expressing support for a cause, idea, or policy.
Putting a problem on the agenda, presenting a solution, and building support for the solution.
Self-advocacy is the ability to speak up for ourselves and for the things that are important to us as individuals. As we move through life and have more responsibilities, self-advocacy helps us:

- Get what we need
- Make Our Own choices
- Learn how to say no
- Express our feelings respectfully
CORE CONCEPTS

- **Attitude:**
  Believing in yourself, asserting yourself, and taking control

- **Knowledge:**
  Educating yourself, identifying your rights, doing research

- **Skills:**
  Communication, presenting yourself, managing your emotions, following up, and evaluating your success

- **Mentoring others**
CANNOT (WILL NOT) MISS AN OPPORTUNITY TO MENTION –

Psychiatric Advanced Directive (PAD):

A PAD can:

- Be a source of useful information that is available whenever you need it.
- Give you peace of mind that you have a plan in place that you,
- Assist others in helping you
- Open the conversation in a family, with friends, with those we support and support us
“Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about things that matter.”
- Martin Luther King, Jr.
SYSTEM ADVOCACY

Involves the following:

- Agency Access/Quality of Care Issues
- Legislative Action
- Legal Action
- Public Education/Media Intervention
- Grassroots Action
System Advocacy
Involves the following:

- Asks something of others
- Puts demands into political arenas
- Addresses issues that would otherwise go unaddressed
- Requires a forum for public argument and discussion
WHEN DO YOU ADVOCATE?

- In response to:
  - Obstacles
  - Action alerts
  - Gaps in services
  - Media coverage of contemporary issues
  - During the budgetary process
WHERE DO YOU ADVOCATE?

- If the issue is federal, you advocate in Washington
- If the issue is state, you advocate in your state
- If the issue is local, you advocate in your community
HOW TO MAKE YOUR CASE:

- In writing
- In person
- Over the phone
- By e-mail or fax
- In a crowd at a rally
- By testifying at a hearing
- By writing to the editor
- By teaching other people to advocate
- By educating others about your issue
How a Bill is Created in NJ

**How a Bill Becomes a Law**

- **Bill is introduced**
- **Committee Hearings**
- **Floor Action**
  - If passed with amendments
  - If not vetoed
  - Most bills become law January 1 of the next year
- **Bill goes to Governor**
  - If original house concurs
  - If passed without amendments
  - If passed with amendments
- **Returned to original house**
  - (Sent to other house)

*Flowchart showing the process of how a bill becomes a law.*
WHO REPRESENTS YOU?

To find out who your representatives are in Washington D.C. in the internet:

• http://www.house.gov/ - the United States House of Representatives
• http://www.senate.gov/ - the United States Senate

To call a Federal Legislator:

• (202) 224-3121 – the Congressional Switchboard

To find out who your State legislators are on the internet:

• http://www.ncsl.org/ - the National Conference of State Legislatures
• http://www.njleg.state.nj.us/ - New Jersey Legislature
Advocating for what you believe in is crucial – if you don’t ask for it, people assume you don’t need it!

Advocacy WORKS

Keep the Conversation Going!

Thank you.

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