



National Alliance on Mental Illness

# NAMI Madison County

\* SUPPORT \* EDUCATION \* ADVOCACY \* RESEARCH \*

Website: <http://madisoncty.nami.org>

NAMI Office Phone: 618-798-9788

**July 2009**

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### July is Minority Mental Health Awareness Month

Throughout the month of July, NAMI states and affiliates are encouraged to join efforts across the country to increase public awareness of mental illness among diverse communities.

In May 2008 the US House of Representatives proclaimed July as Bebe Moore Campbell National Minority Mental Health Awareness Month. The resolution, sponsored by Rep. Albert Wynn and cosponsored by a large bipartisan group, was passed in recognition that:

- Improved access to mental health treatment and services and public awareness of mental illness are of paramount importance; and
- An appropriate month should be recognized as Bebe Moore Campbell National Minority Mental Health Awareness Month to enhance public awareness of mental illness and mental illness among minorities.

Bebe Moore Campbell was an accomplished author, advocate, co-founder of NAMI Urban Los Angeles and national spokesperson, who passed away in November 2006.

She received NAMI's 2003 Outstanding Media Award for Literature for the book Sometimes My Mommy Gets Angry, written especially for children, about a young girl who learns how to cope with her mother's bipolar illness. In 2005, her novel 72-Hour Hold focused on an adult daughter and a family's experience with the onset of mental illness. It helped educate Americans that the struggle often is not just with the illness, but with the healthcare system as well.

Campbell advocated for mental health education and support among individuals with mental illness and their families of diverse communities.

### CRISIS HOTLINE NUMBERS

#### **Northern Madison County**

Community Counseling Center  
Crisis Hotline **(618) 465-4388**

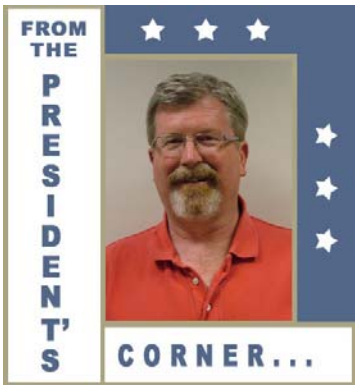
#### **Jersey County Greene County Calhoun County**

Tri-County Counseling Center  
Crisis Hotline **(618) 498-6881**

#### **Southern Madison County**

Chestnut Health Systems  
Crisis Hotline **(618) 877-0316**

**Phone lines open 24 hours.**



...Rob Roennigke

This is a call to arms, we are at war and you must do your duty. Budgets are being cut. Essential mental health services are being eliminated.

We are in for very hard times. They will be harder yet if we all don't pull together.

Fighting mental illness and winning is not a job for sissies. It's a day-in/day-out job that posts victories and defeats. NAMI Madison County has helped many people over the years to win battles they thought were hopeless; to find new friends after old friends stopped returning calls. NAMI Madison County has become a community of like-minded souls that realize that the best way to help yourself is to help others.

So what can you do to help others? Two essential ingredients include:

1. Turning off your TV and attend our monthly NAMI Madison County business meeting. That's where you can meet your fellow NAMI members and learn about the dozens of jobs that desperately need to be done.

2. Finding a NAMI project that you can be passionate about; fire in your belly is the magic bullet that can overcome stigma, ignorance and apathy.

If you are a NAMI member who has never attended a NAMI business meeting, I call on you to find that magic bullet. Come to our next business meeting on Tuesday, July 14th at 7:00 at Gateway Regional Hospital, 2100 Madison Avenue in Granite City. We meet in the conference room next to the cafeteria on the first floor.

We have 166 NAMI Madison County members. I would hope all 166 NAMI Madison County members attend the July 14th meeting. While the conference room has a 25 person capacity, the cafeteria could accommodate 166 people. If you need transportation, give me a call at (618) 465-8876.

Let's fill up that cafeteria on July 14th.



**NAMI Madison County Office**  
Gateway Regional Medical Center  
2100 Madison Avenue, 4th floor  
Granite City, IL 62040

**Pam Conley, Office Coordinator**  
E-mail: [namimadisoncty@sbcglobal.net](mailto:namimadisoncty@sbcglobal.net)

Office Hours: Phone: 618-798-9788  
Noon to 4:30PM Fax: 866-332-5338  
Monday thru Thursday

Website: <http://madisoncty.nami.org>

## Family-to-Family Partners with Veterans Health Administration

The launch a year ago of an initiative between NAMI and the Veterans Health Administration (VHA) to host a Family-to-Family class in designated VHA facilities in each of the 49 Family-to-Family program states has already yielded impressive results: Since the initiative's inception, more than half of the program states have started classes.

NAMI affiliate representatives and designated Family-to-Family teachers have participated in numerous VHA staff meetings and sponsored events to introduce the Family-to-Family program model to VHA personnel. With the aid of presentations, a designated point person helps to promote the initiative within the VHA facility.

Reaching veterans' families with information about Family-to-Family is a challenge at many of the project sites. At sites where outreach has been successful, using "family day" events, distributing Family-to-Family brochures in packets and sending program information for display in waiting room areas are just a few strategies that have sparked interest and increased attendance.

The project is nearing its goal of having a designated site serve as a model for other VHA facilities to implement Family-to-Family classes, and exciting news is coming from Family-to-Family program states about non-designated VHA facilities interested in starting Family-to-Family classes, as well. Many designated VHA sites are requesting more information about NAMI consumer programs (IOOV, Peer-to-Peer and NAMI Connection), and NAMI hopes to offer these additional programs at the sites along with the Family-to-Family classes.

Family-to-Family graduates familiar with military culture (either as veterans or dependents) are asked to help with this project. There are hundreds of untapped families of veterans with serious mental illnesses who will benefit from finding NAMI. They will learn they are not alone. We hope this exciting NAMI/VHA partnership will offer continuing opportunities for veterans' families to get the help and support that they need.



**Experience the Revolution**

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ **JOIN TODAY!**

Call the NAMI Office at 618-798-9788 to have a membership form sent to you or download one from our website by clicking here:  
[http://madisoncty.nami.org/nami\\_membership\\_form12d.pdf](http://madisoncty.nami.org/nami_membership_form12d.pdf)

## Act Now to Prevent the Incarceration of People with Mental Illness

The criminalization of people with mental illness is a growing problem that devastates many members of our community. A study released this month in the journal *Psychiatric Services* shows that the prevalence of people with serious mental illness in jails is increasing. The study, which was presented June 1st at a Senate briefing featuring NAMI National board member Fred Frese, found that overall, 16% of jail inmates have a serious mental illness. Even more alarming, 31% of female jail inmates have a serious mental illness. These numbers suggest that up to 2 million jail bookings every year involve an individual with serious mental illness.

In light of this study, it is more important now than ever before to support programs that help people stay out of jail. This week, the House Appropriations committee approved the FY 2010 budget for Commerce, Justice and Science programs, which includes \$12 million for the Mentally Ill Offender Treatment and Crime Reduction Act (MIOTCRA). MIOTCRA grants support communities working on crisis intervention teams (CIT), mental health courts, and similar programs that are proven to help break the cycle of incarceration. The bill also includes \$100 million in funding for the Second Chance Act, which supports re-entry programs to help people get the services and support they need to successfully reintegrate into society. The full House is expected to vote on the bill the week of June 15.

**Act Now!** Let your Representatives in the House know that people with mental illness should not be in jail. Write a letter today telling them to support funding for MIOTCRA and the Second Chance Act as part of the 2010 Commerce, Justice and Science Appropriations Bill.

### Learn More!

1. Visit the Criminal Justice/Mental Health Consensus Project Web site to learn more about the study.
2. Visit the House Appropriations Committee Web site to read a summary of the Commerce, Justice and Science Appropriations Bill.
3. Read more about the briefing on the prevalence study hosted by the Senate Judiciary Committee.

*(Source: NAMI E-News, June 12, 2009)*

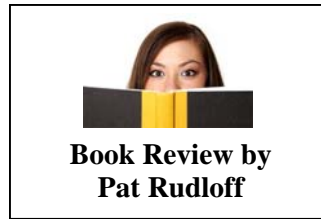
### NAMI Connections Invite by Shelly Holmes, Jerseyville

Our last meeting in May met on May 28th 2009. We were once again small in number but big in heart. Those of us who attended shared our stories just like we were a close knit family. We're not afraid to share anything when we're together, because we trust each other.

That's the one ingredient for a great NAMI Connections meeting—trust. Trust isn't easy to build, but once built, it can last a lifetime if tended and nurtured along the way. We hope with each meeting that new faces will join our group.

Our doors are open to anyone who has a mental illness.

Please, won't you come and see us and maybe find some new freedom.



### Souls In The Hands Of A Tender God by Craig Rennebohm with David Paul and The Soloist by Steve Lopez

Souls In the Hands Of A Tender God and The Soloist are both about homeless people with chronic mental illnesses living in wretched conditions on the streets of a major city (Los Angeles and Seattle) who are the focus of two men, one a minister and the other a newspaper reporter. UCC minister Craig Rennebohm has worked the streets of Seattle for the past 20 years helping homeless people with mental illnesses get to doctors' appointments, access services, find housing, etc. Steve Lopez, a columnist with the Los Angeles Times, comes into contact with Nathaniel Ayers, "The Soloist", playing Beethoven on a battered violin with only two strings in the heart of Skid Row in LA. He is dressed in rags and homeless. Mr. Lopez senses a story and thus begins a long-term relationship between him and this African-American man who thirty years earlier had been a promising student at Juilliard.

Rennebohm's ministry is underscored by his strong belief that a loving God holds each of us, no matter what our circumstances, in His hands. As he stresses the value of spiritual support and includes numerous quotes from The Bible in his story-telling, he also talks about mental illnesses as biological brain disorders, the need for good psychiatric care, medications and mental health services.

Steve Lopez discovers that just writing a column about Nathaniel's plight is not enough. As he investigates his "subject" he finds that he is being drawn into a relationship that enables him to see Nathaniel's humanity, his survival skills and his love of music which help him survive a life on the streets.

Rennebohm and Lopez find their lives deeply affected by their "work." Both express deep misgivings about the mental health system in our country. Both use their professions to address stigma, the need for more effective treatment and better services. What to me was striking about both authors is the emphasis they place on developing friendships, providing companionship, building relationships, and overall being patient, patient, patient.... Homeless people with severe mental illnesses do not suddenly become model citizens -- lapses occur, setbacks are frequent, help is rejected, help is accepted, an offered apartment becomes "home." The relationships continue; the work goes on.

Souls In the Hands of A Tender God can be purchased in paperback from Amazon.com by going to [www.nami.org](http://www.nami.org) and clicking on "NAMI Store." NAMI will get a portion of the sale. The Soloist is available from your local library and/or bookstore and has been made into a feature-length movie starring Jamie Foxx and Robert Downey, Jr. Read the book before seeing the movie!



# 2009 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Madison County Board Mtg, Edwardsville, 5:00PM.....Jul 14  
 Continuum of Care Meeting, Woodriver.....Jul 16  
 NAMI National Conference, San Francisco.....Jul 6-9  
 SS WISE Event, Greenville, IL..... Jul 8  
 6th Annual Walk for Mental Health & Picnic.....Sep 26  
 Consumer Conference.....Oct 9  
 NAMI IL State Conference.....Oct 16-18

**For Family Support Group and NAMI Connection Meetings, look on the back page of this newsletter and pick a location and day that best fits your schedule and area.**

## NAMI Madison County Project Leaders

Pam Conley.....Consumer Council Member & Office Coordinator  
 AJ French..... IOOV Coordinator  
 Mary Gauen..... Webmaster  
 Matt Gauen.....NAMI Madison County Llama Artist  
 Sandy Giger..... Newsletter Editor  
 Tom Johnson.....CIT Coordinator  
 Carol Morrow and Lynn Piggot.....Newsletter Mailing  
 Diane Pisko and Pam Conley..... Newsletter Labels  
 Jane Roennigke..... Education & PIAT Coordinator  
 Pat Rudloff.....Support Groups Coordinator  
 Rita Watters & Pat Rudloff.....Walk for Mental Health

**If you would like to help any of these members, please call the NAMI Office at 618-798-9788.**

**DEADLINE for the August 2009 issue of newsletter is July 15, 2009. Please e-mail your article to Sandy at skgiger@hotmail.com on or before due date.**

## OTHER LOCAL MEETINGS

**NAMI CUPFUL:** 4th Saturday of each month, 2:00-4:00PM, 1505 Market Ave., East St. Louis. Call Pamela Perry, Central Comprehensive Mental Health, at 618-274-0881 (work) or 314-868-8031 (home) for more information.

**ST. LOUIS OBSESSIVE COMPULSIVE DISORDER SUPPORT GROUP:** 3rd Saturday of each month, 10:00AM, St. John's Mercy Medical Center, McAuley Room South, 615 S. New Ballas Rd., Von Gontard Conference Center. Speakers start at 10:00AM and support groups meet from 11:00AM till noon. For more information, call 314-842-7228, ext. 3.

**DBSA (Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance) MEETING:** Every Monday 7:00-8:30PM, O.C. Anderson Hospital, Maryville, IL, next to the cafeteria on Lower Level B. Contact: Diane at 618-667-8781 or by e-mail at [dbsamc@yahoo.com](mailto:dbsamc@yahoo.com) for more information.

**"With Hope in Mind" Support Group:** for family members or caregivers; meets the 4th Tuesday of each month from 7:00-8:30PM at Christian Hospital Northeast (CNE), 11133 Dunn Road, St. Louis, MO, Room 2100. For more information contact Larry Daniels at 314-830-4642 or 314-660-9093 (cell).

**Karla Smith Foundation Support Group** for family and friends of persons with mental illness: 1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of each month, 7:00 – 8:30 p.m., Peace Chapel, 10101 W. Main St., Belleville. For more information call Tom or Fran Smith at 888-KSF-HOPE or [ksf@karlasmithfoundation.org](mailto:ksf@karlasmithfoundation.org).

**Karla Smith Foundation Suicide Survivor Support Group:** 2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday of each month, 7:00 – 8:30 p.m., Peace Chapel, 10101 W. Main St., Belleville. For more information call Tom or Fran Smith at 888-KSF-HOPE or [ksf@karlasmithfoundation.org](mailto:ksf@karlasmithfoundation.org).

**Southwestern Tourette Syndrome Support Group of TSA Illinois:** 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday of each month, 6:30 – 8:00 p.m., Copper Creek Christian Church, 2184 Vadalabene, Maryville. Child care available. For more information contact Amy Shirley at 618-656-2135 or [amyshirley72@hotmail.com](mailto:amyshirley72@hotmail.com)

## SPECIAL THANK YOU

Effective with the start of the new fiscal year, July 1st, our new slate of board members will start their term of office. See the Board of Directors list on Page 1 of this newsletter and notice that some are new members serving their first term while others are completing their terms or have accepted a new position as officer. We would like to thank the board members for their time that they devote to our organization.

We also would like to thank the outgoing board members. Pat Rudloff has served multiple terms as President & Past President. A man who served as our Treasurer for many years is Keith Gauen. Ann Dirks-Linhorst did a fantastic job serving as our secretary. Jim Giger served several terms also. Jan Stephens was very active before she had to resign due to health problems and we pray for her recovery. Jan is a trooper and still attends some board meetings whenever she can.

Although some members are no longer on the board, they are still very active with the organization which we are very grateful. Board members are not the only ones we are appreciative of. Look at the names of active members in the Project Leaders box above. Thanks to ALL who help make our organization successful!

# SPECIAL THANK YOU TO OUR ADVERTISERS!!

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Please call (618) 465-0120 for more information.

Applications are being accepted for HUD rent-assisted apartments at Community Court, Hempel House and Yakubian Apartments in Alton. To qualify, you must be between the ages of 18-62 with a maximum income of \$23,050 and have a chronic mental illness.



2615 Edwards St.  
Alton, IL 62002  
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24 hr. Crisis Line:  
(618) 465-4388  
[www.cccnmc.org](http://www.cccnmc.org)

Outpatient group counseling for adults and children; case management; residential and housing options; 24-hour crisis services for adults and children; Methadone maintenance treatment; psychosocial rehabilitation services; psychiatric and medical services; senior/caregiver services.

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Mary Jo Swengrosh  
Owner

1414 Milton Road • Alton, IL 62002  
(618) 465-1351 • (618) 465-1367 • Fax (618) 465-3751



337 E. Ferguson Ave.  
Wood River, IL 62095  
Phone (618) 251-4073

Behavioral Health Alternatives provides Mental Health Case Management Services, which includes but is not limited to: Individual Therapy; Group Therapy; Medication Monitoring and Training; and Representative Payee Services.  
Call (618) 251-4073 for more information.



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## PICTURE YOUR BUSINESS CARD RIGHT HERE!!

- ◆ Place your single business-card size ad here for \$50.00 per year.
- ◆ Get a double size ad for \$100.00 per year. **Contact the NAMI Madison County Office at (618) 798-9788.**
- ◆ Your ad will run monthly in the newsletter which is received by approximately **300** people.
- ◆ The e-newsletter is also e-mailed to an approximate additional **100** recipients.
- ◆ The newsletter is posted to our website and therefore can also be seen **world-wide.**



Thank you to  
**Chestnut Health Systems in Granite City  
and Community Counseling Center in Alton**  
who alternately each month print this newsletter as a service to NAMI.

## Reducing the Turmoil:

### Consider SSDI Benefits When You Must Stop Working

Mental illness can be different for everyone who experiences it, and its effects reach across families and the local community. A number of mental disorders can develop at any age, such as depression, bipolar disorder, post-traumatic stress disorder and others.

One repercussion from mental illness is the need to stop working on a long-term basis, which adds to the emotional and daily turmoil. The inability to work leads to financial hardships for individuals and their families. But people with severe disabilities that prevent them from working have the option of applying for Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) benefits.

Allsup representatives know that your experience with mental illness is uniquely your own. They assist people with their personal situations to get them through the SSDI application process. They are dedicated to helping you receive the entitled monthly benefits that you have worked for and deserve because of your severe disability.

SSDI benefits can provide needed income when work is no longer possible. In its 25 years of helping people with disabilities, Allsup has provided answers to thousands of questions from people about Social Security disability benefits. Below, Allsup provides answers to 10 of the most common questions about SSDI.

1. **What is SSDI?** It is a payroll tax-funded, federal insurance program. Its purpose is to provide income to people unable to work because of a severe or permanent disability.
2. **How do you qualify for SSDI?** You must be insured. That generally means you must have worked and paid into the program (payroll taxes) for five of the last 10 years. You also must have been disabled before reaching full-retirement age (65-67), and you must meet Social Security's definition of disability. Your full-retirement age varies depending on your birth date.
3. **What is Social Security's definition of "disability"?** Generally, it's being unable to work because of a verifiable mental or physical impairment expected to result in death, or has lasted, or is expected to last, for at least 12 months.
4. **Is it difficult to get Social Security disability benefits?** It can be. The Social Security Administration (SSA) denies about 65 percent of the people filing initial disability claims and the average length of time to receive benefits can typically take two to four years. Allsup representatives help people get through the process months faster than the national average.
5. **Do I need to have a disability representative or disability advocate?** You can apply on your own. However, a disability representative such as Allsup may dramatically improve – and speed – your

chances of receiving disability benefits. As a group, our representatives have accumulated decades of disability benefits experience. The vast majority of SSDI applicants have a representative for their appeal.

6. **How long does it take to get a decision?** Unfortunately, it's not a quick process. Generally, it takes about three to five months for the initial decision. Reconsideration (first appeal) will take another three to five months on average. The second appeal is before an administrative law judge. The average time to receive a decision at this level in 2008 was 535 days. In comparison, the people Allsup represents at this level usually receive an award months faster than the national average.
7. **How much will I receive?** Benefits are largely determined by the amount of your past earnings that have been subjected to FICA taxes. The current maximum monthly benefit for an individual is about \$2,000. The current maximum that a family can receive is about \$3,400 a month.
8. **Can Social Security take away my SSDI benefits?** You can lose your disability benefits if your condition improves to the point that you no longer meet the SSA's definition of "disabled." SSA must show there has been medical improvement related to your ability to work before it can cease your SSDI benefits.
9. **Can I get additional benefits if I have children/dependents?** Children up to age 18 or who have not graduated from high school are entitled to benefits if a parent is deceased, retired or disabled. Generally, dependent children of a disabled parent will receive about 50 percent of the disabled parent's monthly benefit. The 50 percent is divided equally among all eligible dependents.
10. **Where can I get more information?** You can find out more by visiting [www.Allsup.com](http://www.Allsup.com). If you are not certain you are eligible for SSDI or you would like a free disability evaluation, go to [www.NAMI.Allsup.com](http://www.NAMI.Allsup.com) or call (800) 279-4357.

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### CIT Numbers

by Tom Johnson, CIT Coordinator

There are 392 trained CIT (Crisis Intervention Team) officers in this seven-county region: Madison St. Clair, Bond, Randolph, Monroe Clinton, Washington, plus a couple from Fayette and Marion, plus one state police officer and several each from SWIC and SIUE. Madison is largest single county in this region in terms of number of CIT officers.



**NAMI members** - don't forget to request a CIT officer whenever you call law enforcement for assistance in situations which impact you and your family.

## Online Help for Tough Economic Times

You can't see stress, but you certainly can feel it. Whether it's a family member's job loss, foreclosure, another stock market drop, a glance at your 401(k) balance, or a host of other concerns, are you feeling worn out and overwhelmed? Many of us are.

To help, a first-of-its-kind, online guide now provides crucial information and resource referrals for people dealing with emotional or other health problems associated with economic hard times.

The "Getting Through Tough Economic Times" guide—[www.samhsa.gov/economy](http://www.samhsa.gov/economy)—provides practical advice on identifying health concerns, developing coping skills, and finding help. (*Remember...if you are reading this newsletter electronically, just click on the link above.*)

For example, the guide provides important information on identifying the warning signs of depression, suicidal thinking, and other serious mental illnesses.

Developed by SAMHSA in collaboration with other Government agencies and the Suicide Prevention Resource Center, the guide gives you the primary tools you need to protect your health and your family's well-being.

(Source: SAMHSA News)

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## Goldie Hawn Stands Up for Children's Mental Health

On May 7th, NAMI jointly hosted the third annual Capitol Hill briefing in honor of National Children's Mental Health Awareness Day.

This year's Congressional briefing, titled "Investing in the Educational Future of Youth with Mental Health Needs," focused on raising awareness about school and community-based programs that effectively promote positive youth development, increase resiliency and support recovery, and demonstrate how youth with mental health treatment needs can thrive in their schools and communities.

Goldie Hawn, Academy-Award winning actress and children's mental health advocate, spoke during the briefing about the critical need for schools to better address the needs of students with mental illness and how school-based programs can effectively benefit the health and well-being of all students.

The briefing also featured Kathryn Power, director of the Center for Mental Health Services (CMHS), who shared newly released data on positive outcomes achieved with school and community-based grant programs administered through CMHS. The panel also included Howard Muscott, Ed.D., director of the New Hampshire Center for Effective Behavioral Interventions and Supports. Dr. Muscott discussed positive outcomes that they have achieved in New Hampshire with Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBS) and his work in linking schools with the community mental health system.

The briefing was a tremendous success with many Congressional members and their staff in attendance and a packed briefing room.

After the briefing, Ms. Hawn joined NAMI and other advocates for a meet-and-greet with Congressional members who have been champions of mental health issues on the Hill. She then participated in multiple meetings with Congressional leaders. While on Capitol Hill, she spoke powerfully about the need to better identify children with mental illnesses early and the need to link them with effective services and supports, and promised to come back to engage in further advocacy on behalf of children's mental health.

Mark your calendars for next year's National Children's Mental Health Awareness Day on May 6, 2010.

(Source: NAMI Advocate)



**Education is the Key to Success!**

by Jane Roennigke

NAMI doesn't solve everything but it has been the anchor that held us firm when we got buffeted by the winds of mental illness. My husband and I frequently felt lost and alone while raising our two adopted children, both of whom had early onset severe mental illnesses. What would our lives be without NAMI and the education and support we received? I shudder to think...

While getting help for our children, I got to know our community mental health center and was asked to become a board member. A fellow board member, who was also a NAMI Family to Family teacher, badgered us into taking her class. We went to be polite and figured we would tell her afterwards that it wasn't for us. Boy, were we wrong! Her insistence that we attend Family to Family was truly life changing. We found others who were just like us – hurting, struggling, and doing the best they could. At the end of Family to Family, we joined NAMI. Shortly afterwards, we were encouraged to attend teacher training for Visions for Tomorrow for parents of children with a mental illness. Rob and I discovered our passion – teaching and helping others with their struggles of raising children with a mental illness. NAMI Basics was developed, Illinois was the first state to be trained and Rob and I were the first in the world to teach a NAMI Basics class.

Our NAMI affiliate now collaborates with parents, educators and mental health professionals in a yearly children's mental health conference. Since 2003, "Piecing It All Together" has brought together hundreds of diverse advocates on children's mental health issues. You know the drill, classic grassroots – it's what we do in Southern Illinois, it's what NAMI does everywhere.

## Mental Health Providers: Find One to Suit Your Needs

Choosing mental health providers can be challenging. Try to match your needs with their experience and specialty. Here's what to consider — and which questions to ask.

If you've never seen a mental health provider before, you may not know how to find one who suits your specific needs. Here are some issues and tips to think about, along with questions to ask potential mental health providers.

### Consider the types of mental health providers

You may not realize just how many types of mental health providers are available until you start looking for one. Should you see a family practice doctor? A psychiatrist? Psychologist? Social worker?

Most mental health providers have either master's degree-level or doctoral-level training. There are a number of titles for master's degree-level mental health professionals. Licensed professional counselor (LPC) and master of social work (MSW) are common examples. Mental health providers who have doctoral-level training include psychologists and medical doctors who specialize in mental health (psychiatrists). Family medicine doctors also can diagnose mental health conditions and prescribe medications.

Keep these factors in mind when choosing among the various types of mental health providers:

- Your concern or condition. While most mental health providers can provide treatment for a range of conditions, a mental health provider with a specialized focus may be more suited to your needs. For example, if you have an eating disorder, you may need to see a psychologist who specializes in that area. On the other hand, if you're dealing with teenage conflicts, you may want to consult a marriage and family therapist. You may need to see more than one mental health provider to meet your needs.
- Whether you need medications. Only certain mental health providers can prescribe medications. Your family doctor can diagnose and prescribe medications for mental health issues. However, depending on your concern and the severity of your symptoms, your doctor may recommend consulting a psychiatrist — a medical doctor who specializes in diagnosing mental health conditions and managing mental health medications. Other types of mental health providers generally can't prescribe medications.
- The severity of your condition. In general, the more severe your symptoms or complex your diagnosis, the more expertise and training you need to look for in a mental health provider. Medications prescribed by your family doctor, seeing a counselor or a combination of the two may be enough. However, mental health issues that are more serious — schizophrenia or severe depression, for example — may require seeing a psychiatrist, a psychologist or both.

- Your health insurance coverage. Insurance policies vary widely on coverage of mental health providers. Check your coverage beforehand. Your insurance policy may have a list of specific mental health providers covered, or may only cover certain types of mental health providers. Your insurance company or Medicare or Medicaid can tell you what types of mental health providers it provides coverage for and what your benefit limits are. Some insurance plans, for instance, authorize more visits to a nurse, social worker or psychologist than to a psychiatrist, whose fees are usually higher.

### Ask mental health providers lots of questions

Once you've found a few mental health providers who seem like they may suit you, it's time to call and ask a few more questions. In some cases, a receptionist may be able to answer most of your questions. You may be able to directly ask some mental health providers questions on the phone, or they may ask you to come in for an initial session.

Here are some issues to consider asking mental health providers about, either on the phone or at your first appointment:

- Their education, training, licensure and years in practice. Licensing requirements can vary widely by state.
- Office hours, fees, length of sessions and which insurance providers they work with, or if they work with Medicare or Medicaid.
- Their treatment approach and philosophy, to make sure it suits your style and needs.
- Whether they specialize in certain disorders or age groups. Some, for instance, work only with adolescents. Others specialize in eating disorders or substance abuse.

Don't hesitate to ask lots of questions. Finding the right match is crucial to establishing a good relationship and making sure you're getting the best treatment.

### Evaluate progress with your mental health provider

Once you choose a mental health provider, make sure the match is working. If you don't feel comfortable after the first visit, talk about your concerns at your next session. Or consider finding a new mental health provider. As time goes by, think about how you feel and whether your needs are being met. Don't feel compelled to stay with a mental health provider if you're not comfortable.

Finding the right mental health provider can be hard work, and may require some trial and error. But it can also be rewarding. It may help you:

- Resolve short term problems such as stress or conflicts caused by a particular situations
- Work through long-standing personal issues
- Relieve disruptive or bothersome symptoms
- Overcome personal challenges
- Improve your relationships with others
- Ultimately enjoy your life more

## Freedom at a Cost

by Shelly Holmes

When you have a mental illness, and you live in a group home, your needs are provided for by your SSI (Supplemental Security Income), if you have it. If you don't then you apply for it, or work. You also attend a Psycho Social Rehabilitation (PSR) program (PSR) where you spend 6½ hours a day on Tuesdays and Fridays. On Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, you spend 9½ hours, 6½ in PSR and 3 in the community in a program called Community Integration. This is how you learn to go out and be a part of society.

While in PSR, the staff will take you to the doctor when you need to go, to physical therapy, and to the store. This means going to Wal-Mart once a week to buy groceries with other clients and staff. You spend time in PSR learning about your mental illness, how to cope with the illness, and how to deal with relationships with friends, family, co-workers, and church members. You also learn how to cook, clean and work on the computer. You go to rallies, learn to speak on the behalf of mental health, and how to take your medication.

You are able to graduate after you have reached all of your goals. You are able to pay your own bills, balance your own account, and handle your own money. Then staff at the group home helps you to find a place to live in the community.

As long as you are in the PSR program, the agency will continue to take you to your appointments. But once you have graduated, you are on your own. You have to find your own rides to your appointments, which is very difficult in a small community with no public transportation. There is only cab service to take you places if you have no family or friends to help you.

This is why so many in the community with mental illness falter. They go back to PSR where they are bored, tired of classes, aggravated, disappointed, and depressed. They feel like they have failed. They have nothing to occupy their lives such as work, family, free time, going to the store or library, or extra activities such as support groups. If you have these things, then you can stay out of PSR. Only then, can you stay free.

Graduating is a good thing to happen in your life, but the outside world is difficult to live in. If a person has no family or friends, and no means of transportation, and you're still receiving services from the mental health facility, then I believe that that facility should provide transportation at least for doctor appointments.

Remember to use your coping skills. Be strong and courageous. Don't be afraid. Never give up and you will be able to live in the free world to make your own choices. If not, you'll end up back in the hospital with no life of your own.

*(Please Note: The PSR program and community challenges described above is in Jerseyville, Illinois, but are similar to programs and challenges experienced by consumers elsewhere.)*

## Dr. Richard C. Todd Awarded Annual Exemplary Psychiatrist Award for 2009 by NAMI National!

It was with great pleasure that we learned that a wonderful champion for children and parents in our area was awarded the Annual Exemplary Psychiatrist Award for 2009 by NAMI National. Dr. Todd died last summer way too young but he will live in many people's hearts for a long time to come. My daughter, Vanessa and I had nominated him posthumously. This award was sent to his family. We would like to share what we said in our nomination of him:

Dr. Todd, who died this past summer, had been my daughter's psychiatrist since she was 13 years old. He was an amazing doctor. He was always willing to go that extra mile in helping. Since Washington University (Barnes Hospital) didn't have a Child & Adolescent in-patient unit, Dr. Todd gave me his personal pager number when my daughter went into the hospital so that continuity of care would be given. I would give his pager number to the attending psychiatrist and they would talk about treatment options rather than to start from square one again. Our family learned so much about childhood/adolescent bipolar disorder as he taught the student doctors about our daughter's illness. When regular public education wasn't working, Dr. Todd recommended a private day school for her. He not only recommended it though; he followed up with letters to various agencies to make sure she got into this type of school. She later graduated. In our daughter's words...*"Dr. Todd worked with me, He kept me alive in times I did not want to be alive. He got me into a high school that was for kids with emotional problems. If it wasn't for that, I would not have been able to graduate from high school. Because of him, I now am doing much better and am in college getting good grades. Dr. Todd gave me the knowledge that I can do better and that I deserve to be better. He helped me learn that life comes after the illness. He helped me learn that I cannot only live but live well with my illness. Dr. Todd saved my life and I know I could never thank him enough for all he did for me and my family."*

If you know of a doctor that has helped you as Dr. Todd has helped our family, don't neglect to thank them. You never know how long they will be in your life.

The Roennigke Family



**PLEASE** notify Pam, NAMI Madison County Office Coordinator, if you are moving or already have moved. Call her at the office at (618)798-9788 or send her an e-mail at [namimadisoncty@sbcglobal.net](mailto:namimadisoncty@sbcglobal.net) with your new home address, phone number and e-mail address.

## The Karla Smith Foundation

The Karla Smith Foundation has expanded its support group for survivors of suicide into Madison County. The new group meets on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Monday of each month from 7:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. at Copper Creek Christian Church, 2184 Vadalabene Dr., Maryville, IL. This is in addition to the support groups currently being held from 7:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday of each month at Peace Chapel, 10101 W. Main Street, Belleville. The meetings are open to family and friends of someone who has died by suicide.

Survivor meetings follow the successful LOSS program (Loving Outreach to Survivors of Suicide) founded by Rev. Charles Rubey and sponsored by Catholic Charities of Chicago. "The purpose of the LOSS program is to provide a healthy and nurturing, non-judgmental forum to process the various feelings that result when a death by suicide occurs. We provide a safe environment in which survivors can tell their stories, talk about their feelings, express their sadness, ask their questions, and receive support and acceptance from others who have made the same journey."

The Karla Smith Foundation was formed by the parents and brother of Karla Smith, who ended her life by suicide in January 2003. The mission of the Karla Smith Foundation is to provide hope for a balanced life to family and friends of anyone with a mental illness or who lost a loved one to suicide.

For additional information, call 1-888-KSF-HOPE, e-mail [KSF@KarlaSmithFoundation.org](mailto:KSF@KarlaSmithFoundation.org) or visit our website, [www.KarlaSmithFoundation.org](http://www.KarlaSmithFoundation.org).

### Lessons Learned from The Prince and The Pauper

by Heidi Moore

Recently Shelly and I read the book, The Prince and the Pauper by American novelist Mark Twain. In the story, set in sixteenth century England, Edward Prince of Wales changes places, and identity, with poor, penniless Tom Canty of Offal Court. What sets out to be just a one day "make-over" becomes a week long adventure as Tom discovers that living like royalty is not at all where he wants to be, and Edward finds that living like a pauper is not where he wants to be either. At the story's end, Edward and Tom change places once again, each one resuming his old identity with dramatic results. Tom is able to escape a life of poverty and abuse, and Edward makes the necessary changes in England's laws for the good of the people of his country.

What does Mark Twain's novel, The Prince and the Pauper, have to do with mental health? Have you ever wanted, when your illness was at its worst, to change places with someone else, even for a day? Have you ever wished you didn't have this illness to fight? You try and try so hard, but your illness only gets you down. Someone else's life would be great, you muse. At least, it would be better than this!

Don't be ashamed of who you are. That's the lesson that Tom and Edward learn in the book. Also, don't be afraid to look outside yourself, especially if you need

help. Sometimes, "living like the peasantry" is what is needed for you to get a clear understanding of who you are as a person and what you're fighting against mentally. Read all that you can. Learn all that you can. Never stop fighting this thing called mental illness. Don't ever let it get the best of you.

Like Tom and Edward, we all can learn from each other. We can learn from each other's failures and each other's mistakes. It's nice, along the way, to have a friend or two, especially when the times get rough, or when the depression and loneliness begin to set in. In the story, Edward finds no greater friend and protector than his pal Miles Hendon of Hendon Hall. Miles not only saves Edward's life, but he also takes blows meant for Edward when Edward and Miles are accused falsely in a public trial. While friends of ours may never have to take physical blows for us, they do take mental blows for us leaving us unscathed and undamaged. They know when we are getting sick, and they know when we are not performing at our best. They are with us through the worst, and through the best. You have no greater friend than the friend who would come alongside you in your recovery and in your illness and protect you with their arms tight around you never letting you go. Keep hold of such friends. They are hard to find and few indeed.

In the end, we are who we are. Even if we were able to change lives with someone else, we would not be happy. Edward is frightened and abused as Tom, and Tom is pampered and lonely as Edward. We have a medical illness. We cannot get rid of it; we must only accept that we have it and move on through the various stages of recovery. It's a tough road to follow. It's a tough life to live. Would you trade?

Come walk with me at the 6th Annual Walk for Mental Health & Picnic on September 26, 2009

The NAMI Madison County office is already receiving donations from sponsors for the Saturday, September 26, 2009 Walk for Mental Health. Now is the time for all of us to organize our Walk teams, compose our letters to family and friends, sign up to solicit at our local Shop N Save store or plan for another way for our Walk team to raise money.

NAMI members have offered to solicit at Shop N Save stores in Alton, Edwardsville, Granite City and Collinsville. Shop N Save allows for three solicitations each year for each of its stores, and we must request the days and stores we want at least two weeks in advance. There is no guarantee that our requests will be honored. Many charities solicit at Shop N Save! Please notify the NAMI office – 618-798-9788 – as soon as possible regarding the Shop N Save store, day/time you and your Walk team would like to work. And mark your calendar – NAMI Madison County Walk for Mental Health, Saturday, September 26th!





## “Recovery College” Launched at CCC

A new initiative is under way at Community Counseling Center (CCC). Recovery College, or “ReCo” as it’s known here, is a concept to help adults along their recovery journey in a supportive and meaningful way.

“It’s another way of thinking about what we do,” says Becky Heck, the program manager for CCC’s community support services. “There is a curriculum, just like in college, with course outlines, class sign up sessions, and classes that meet regularly. Really, everyone we serve is learning about himself or herself. We’re just using a very appropriate concept to help them with that learning process.”

Weekly classes cover areas such as “Coping with Bi-polar Disorder,” “Food and Mood” and Photo Therapy. Consumers pick the classes that interest them the most and that help them to build the skills that they need. There are “lab” opportunities in the community for consumers to practice learned skills. For example, “labs” could include making the most of a grocery budget, using public transportation, and learning to look for a job. The focus in all of the courses is on developing skills and self-reliance, and using available community resources and natural supports.

The “ReCo Café” is open to both staff and consumers. It serves breakfast items, flavored coffees, and has daily lunch specials. The Café is organized and staffed by consumers of the Recovery College. It provides a way to develop valuable skills that can help in strengthening relationships and may lead to gainful employment.

The Recovery College is a new idea that makes sense for many CCC consumers, as they make their way into stable and hopeful lives.

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## National Catholic Partnership on Disability (NCPD) Awareness Workshop

**What you will learn:** This workshop will introduce the issue of severe and persistent mental illness to Catholic diocesan personnel, pastoral leaders, and parishioners. It will provide them with tools and resources to further the welcome, support, and involvement of individuals with mental illness and their families in the life of the faith community. Participants will be given practical ideas, ready and easy to use in their parishes.

**Fees:** The major cost of the workshop is provided by a grant from a generous benefactor to the NCPD Council on Mental Illness. A nominal fee of \$10.00 will help cover the expense for a light continental breakfast, lunch, and materials.

**The mission of the NCPD Council on Mental Illness:** Following Jesus who embraced all, we assist the Catholic Community in reaching out to and accompanying our brothers and sisters with mental illness and their families, assuring their rightful place in the Church and society.

## Locations/contact information for workshops:

1. Chicago, IL: Tuesday, July 21,  
Contact: Connie Rakitan  
(708) 383-9276/[cmr1551@comcast.net](mailto:cmr1551@comcast.net)  
Registration deadline: July 6
2. Portland, OR: Friday, July 24, 2009  
Contact: Dorothy Coughlin  
(503) 233-8399/[dcoughlin@archdpdx.org](mailto:dcoughlin@archdpdx.org)  
Registration deadline: July 6

You may register online at [www.ncpd.org](http://www.ncpd.org). If you have questions, call or e-mail the contact person at the workshop location you plan to attend.

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## Website Launched to Support Partnerships Between State VR Agencies and Employment Networks

The Partnership Plus Online Toolkit is designed to assist State Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) agencies in taking advantage of the new service delivery option under the NEW Ticket to Work program. Under the new Ticket regulations, the Ticket of a beneficiary whom a State VR agency served under the traditional Cost Reimbursement program (available only to VR agencies) still has value after the VR case is closed. As a result, an EN that gets the Ticket assignment after VR closes a Cost Reimbursement case can qualify for Milestone and Outcome payments as the beneficiary attains specific levels of work or earnings.

The Toolkit, located at <http://partnershipplus.cessi.net/>, is designed to assist State VR agencies in:

1. Assessing and choosing among agency options for serving beneficiaries with disabilities.
2. Identifying potential partners and developing partnerships with ENs.
3. Maximizing program income received from SSA.
4. Communicating effectively with beneficiaries, partners, potential partners, and other interested stakeholders.
5. Creating systems and processes associated with both the Ticket program and the Cost Reimbursement program.

Partnership Plus offers many benefits to all involved. It has the potential to be a win-win-win situation for beneficiaries, VR agencies and ENs. To learn more about Partnership Plus and the benefits to beneficiaries, ENs and VR agencies, check out the Toolkit at: <http://partnershipplus.cessi.net/>

**Other Key Tools for VR Agencies:** To learn more about the traditional Cost Reimbursement program and how State VR agencies work with Social Security beneficiaries with disabilities, visit SSA’s Work Site to access the most up-to-date version of the VR Providers Handbook: [www.socialsecurity.gov/work/documents/VRProviderHandbook.doc](http://www.socialsecurity.gov/work/documents/VRProviderHandbook.doc).

For more information on the Ticket to Work Program, please visit:

- [www.ssa.gov/work](http://www.ssa.gov/work) - SSA’s Work Site
- [www.yourtickettowork.com](http://www.yourtickettowork.com) - MAXIMUS, Ticket Operations Manager
- [www.cessi.net/ttw](http://www.cessi.net/ttw) - CESSI, Ticket Recruitment and Outreach Manager



**NAMI Family Support Group Locations**

**GRANITE CITY**

- ◆ **First Tuesday of each month**, NAMI Family Support Group at Chestnut Clubhouse, 2054 Edison, Granite City, IL 62040, 7:00 - 8:30 PM.

**ALTON**

- ◆ **First Tuesday of each month**, NAMI Family Support Group at Saint Clare's Hospital, 915 East 5th Street in the Heritage Room, Alton, IL 62002, 7:00 - 8:30PM.

**LITCHFIELD**

- ◆ **Third Tuesday of each month**, a support meeting for **Family Members and Consumers** at The Christian Church of Litchfield, 131 Yaeger Lake Trail, Litchfield, IL 62056, 7:00 - 8:30PM.

**EDWARDSVILLE**

- ◆ **Fourth Tuesday of each month**, NAMI Family Support Group at First Baptist Church, 534 St. Louis St., Edwardsville, IL 62025, use church parking lot entrance, 7:00 - 8:30PM.

**BELLEVILLE**

- ◆ **Third Thursday of each month**, a support group for **Family Members and Consumers** at the PSOP Bldg, 204 N. Church St, Belleville, IL, 7:00PM - 8:30PM.

**NOTE...**For questions regarding NAMI meetings and inclement weather policies, please call the NAMI Madison County Office at 618-798-9788.

**NAMI Madison County  
Gateway Regional Medical Center  
2100 Madison Ave, 4th Floor  
Granite City, IL 62040**

**RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED**

**TO:**



**NAMI Connection Locations for Consumers**

**GRANITE CITY**

- ◆ **First Tuesday of each month**, NAMI Connection Group at Chestnut Clubhouse, 2054 Edison, Granite City, IL 62040, 7:00 - 8:30 PM.

**MARYVILLE**

- ◆ **Every Thursday**, NAMI Connection Group at First Baptist Church, 7110 State Route 162, 2nd Fl., Room 244, Maryville, IL 62062. Contact Diane Pisko - 618-667-8781 for more information. 6:30 - 8:00PM.

**JERSEYVILLE**

- ◆ **Every Thursday**, NAMI Connection Group at the Church of the Nazarene, 285 Maple Summit Road, Jerseyville, IL 62052, 3:30 - 5:00PM.



**NAMI Board Meetings**



- **Second Tuesday of each month** in **GRANITE CITY** at Gateway Regional Medical Center in the Conference Room through the Cafeteria on the Lower Level, 7:00PM.
- The Board welcomes all members and advocates!!