



KENTUCKY JUDICIAL COMMISSION ON **MENTAL HEALTH**

Kentucky Court of Justice



National Alliance on Mental Illness

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NAMI is the National Alliance on Mental Illness.

We are the nation's largest grassroots mental health organization.

- NAMI is hierarchical alliance structured across three levels: NAMI National, NAMI State Organizations, NAMI Affiliates
- Every state has a dedicated NAMI State organization
- Within each state, local affiliate chapters are established to serve the unique needs of their communities.
- NAMI's network includes more than 650 state and local affiliates nationwide.

STRUCTURE



STRUCTURE

NAMI (National Level)

Headquarters: Arlington, VA

Leadership: CEO, Dan Gillison Jr.

Mission: Provide advocacy, education, support, and public awareness so all individuals and families affected by mental illness can build better lives.

Vision: A world where all people affected by mental illness live healthy, fulfilling lives supported by a caring community

Functions:

- Sets strategic direction for the entire organization.
- Provides materials, technical assistance, and branding support to state and affiliates.
- Develops evidence-based education and support programs.
- Establishes a public policy platform to influence federal decision-makers.
- Operates the NAMI HelpLine to connect callers to local resources.
- Organizes the annual NAMI National Convention, NAMIcon.

STRUCTURE

NAMI State Organizations (NAMI Kentucky)

Headquarters: Kentucky

Leadership: Executive Director, Beth Willcutt Litafik

Role: Serve as the state NAMI lead, bridging National and Affiliates.

Functions:

- Promote mental health education and awareness in their state.
- Advocate at state and local government levels for improved mental health care.
- Support affiliates with training, materials, financial resources, and conferences.
- Strengthen local affiliates to align with NAMI's principles and guidelines

Example: NAMI Kentucky hosts an annual Advocacy Day to inform and engage affiliates across Kentucky on important legislative priorities and mental health advocacy initiatives.

STRUCTURE

NAMI Affiliates (NAMI Lexington)

Headquarters: Lexington, KY

Leadership: Executive Directors, Phill and Kelly Gunning

Role: Deliver NAMI's programs directly to communities.

Functions:

- Host support groups, education sessions, and community events.
- Provide peer support and crisis intervention resources.
- Offer psychoeducation and training for individuals, families, and professionals.
- Organize fundraising and awareness events (e.g., NAMIWalks, Mental Illness Awareness Week)

Scope: Operate in all 50 U.S. states, Washington, D.C., and Puerto Rico

Governance & Leadership

- NAMI National is governed by a **Board of Directors** and senior executives, with leadership also including the NAMI Next Gen program and the NAMI Scientific Advisory Council.
- The structure ensures that national strategy is implemented locally while maintaining a unified mission and brand.
- NAMI Kentucky and NAMI Lexington each have their own Board of Directors.

Signature Programs

- NAMI Signature Programs are peerled support groups, educational courses, and presentations designed to provide information, hope, and community for individuals and families affected by mental health conditions.
- Program leaders undergo training and certification to ensure quality and consistency. Some programs require prior certification in another NAMI program or completion of online training with coaching.
- NAMI Signature Programs aim to increase understanding of mental health, reduce stigma, improve coping skills, and empower participants to advocate for themselves or their loved ones

Signature Programs

Support Groups

NAMI support groups are peer-led and offer participants the opportunity to share their experiences and gain support from other attendees.



Classes

NAMI offers a variety of peer-led education courses free of charge to participants. Each is designed to meet the needs of its target audience. Classes emphasize the importance of hope and community and provide insights into challenges related to mental illness. You must register with the hosting affiliate ahead of time in order to attend.



Signature Programs

Signature Programs

Presentations

NAMI presentations offer audiences the opportunity to hear stories of lived experience from people with mental health conditions. They create awareness, reduce stigma and increase empathy. These programs are part of NAMI's national effort to change attitudes and stereotypes about what mental health conditions are like and how we view the people who have them.



<https://namiky.org/>

Mental Health in Kentucky

Many Kentuckians struggle with their mental health.

It is more important than ever to build a stronger mental health system that provides the care, support, and services needed to help people build better lives.

813,000

adults in Kentucky have a mental health condition. That's more than **11x** the population of **Bowling Green**.



1 in 5 adults experience a mental illness each year.

More than **1 in 20 U.S. adults** experience a serious mental illness each year.

242,000

Kentucky adults have a serious mental illness.

1 in 6 of the more than **4,500 people** in Kentucky who are unhoused have a serious mental illness.



1 in 20 adults have serious thoughts of suicide each year.

185,000 Kentucky adults have serious thoughts of suicide each year.

823

lives were lost to suicide in Kentucky in 2022.



1 in 6 U.S. adolescents aged 12-17 experience a major depressive episode each year.

69,000 Kentucky adolescents experience a major depressive episode each year.

1 in 9 adolescents aged 12-17 have serious thoughts of suicide each year.

46,000 Kentucky adolescents have serious thoughts of suicide each year.



23%

of youth aged 0-17 in Kentucky have experienced **2+ adverse childhood experiences**, which are linked to mental illness and substance misuse in adulthood.

KENTUCKY is facing a mental health crisis.

Mental Health in Kentucky

More than **3,000,000**

people in Kentucky live in a community without enough mental health professionals.

The need to address access to mental health care in Kentucky is urgent.

4x

more likely for a Kentuckian to be forced out-of-network for mental health care than for primary care.

1 in 1,500

ratio for school psychologists to students in Kentucky's K-12 public schools. This is **worse** than the recommended ratio of one school psychologist for every 500 students.

30,073

calls were made to Kentucky's **988 Suicide & Crisis Line** call centers in 2023.

227,000

adults in Kentucky reported needing mental health treatment but not receiving it between 2018-2019. **Cost is a prevailing factor** in not receiving treatment.

KENTUCKY is facing a mental health crisis.

Kentuckians deserve to get the mental health care they need, when they need it.



NAMI Kentucky is part of NAMI, National Alliance on Mental Illness, the nation's largest grassroots mental health organization dedicated to building better lives for the millions of Americans affected by mental illness. Learn more at namiky.org. For data citations, visit nami.quorum.us/mhpolicystats/.

This fact sheet was compiled based on data available in March 2025.

Advocacy

- Local Advocacy Day
- NAMI National Hill Day



NAMI Kentucky Affiliates

NAMI Bowling Green

NAMI Lexington

NAMI Madison County KY

NAMI Buffalo Trace

NAMI Louisville

NAMI Morehead

NAMI Butler County KY

NAMI Murray KY

NAMI Danville

NAMI Northern Kentucky

NAMI Heartland

NAMI Owensboro

NAMI Winchester/Clark County

- **NAMI Lexington - March 4, 1985 (NAME CHANGE FROM BAMI)**
- **NAMI Lexington serves the marginalized and underserved population: individuals living with serious mental illness (SMI), co-occurring substance use disorder SUD, Opioid abuse and misuse, and intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) of Lexington-Fayette County. Our program participants are low-income individuals that are frequently homeless or precariously housed and frequently disconnected from benefits and services they are qualified for.**
- **NAMI Lexington has nearly 2 decades of experience working in close collaboration with the Lexington-Fayette Urban County Government (LFUCG) and the Kentucky Department for Behavioral Health, Developmental and Intellectual Disabilities (DBHDID)—the state agency responsible for overseeing mental health, substance use, and developmental disability services, New Vista, the local Community mental Health Center, and UK Healthcare / Eastern State Hospital.**

The NAMI Lex Center – Participation Station

Is a peer-operated center - a welcoming, safe space open to the public at no cost. It serves as the hub for our consumer-facing programs and is home to several dedicated staff members.

- KYStars
- WarmLine
- Wrap (Wellness Recovery Action Plan)
- Mental Health First Aid, QPR, CIT, CRIT
- Partnership with ESH



Mental Health Court

NAMI Lexington has operated the Fayette Mental Health Court since its creation in 2014. As a recommendation that emerged from the Mayor's Task Force on Homelessness and is directly funded by LFUCG through NAMI Lexington. The program initially began as an unfunded volunteer program of the court system and has since been funded by the Gray and Gorton Administrations. It's organized by the Lexington branch of the National Alliance on Mental Illness (known as NAMI Lexington), former District Court Judge Kim Wilkie, now presided over by Judge John Tackett and community members.



Mental Health Court

2025 was a landmark year for FMHC. Since the program's inception, FMHC has served a total of **623** individuals, including **105** graduates, **105** terminations, and **413** individuals who were evaluated and ultimately declined participation. In addition, mental health evaluations were completed for all clients referred to the court.

The program continues to demonstrate strong outcomes, with a lifetime recidivism rate of **17.7%** among participants. Notably, graduates who continue their engagement through the Alumni Continuing Care Program have achieved an even lower recidivism rate of just **7%**, highlighting the lasting impact of ongoing support and recovery-focused services.

Mental Health Court

2025

- 25 participants graduated
- \$2,926,750 is the estimated savings to the community of incarceration costs, based on the minimum sentencing guidelines for the graduates' charges x \$115/day
- 239,712 is the estimated savings to the community of policing and court costs, based on a national average expenditure of \$5,716/quarter after graduation
- \$3,166,462 is the total savings, combining these two figures
- 40 participants at peak enrollment
- 25 new participants started
- 14 participants terminated for program violations
- Almost 50% of participants entered program unhoused. At one year of participation, 97% were considered safely housed.
- 90% of participants enter program with co-occurring diagnoses of SMI and SUD.
- 60 % of those participants had maintained complete abstinence from mood- or mind-altering substances at one year of participation.

Each year, NAMI Lexington host our largest fundraising event — **NAMI Walks Lexington** — a community mental health awareness fun/run that features keynote speakers, live entertainment, complimentary food, giveaways, inflatables, and more. It's a powerful day of connection and purpose that consistently attracts generous support from local partners and helps fund our essential mental health programs.

NAMI Lexington has participated in this signature fundraiser since 2005, raising over \$100,000 during our most successful year





National Alliance on Mental Illness

Through the Years 1979–2024



During the 1970s, family support groups scattered around the nation were seeking answers and treatments for their loved ones affected by mental illness. One group in California transformed a small gathering of families into an organization called Parents of Adult Schizophrenics, a nonprofit association that eventually changed its name to the Alliance for the Mentally Ill of San Mateo.

This local coming together helped spur a national movement. What started as a wave of frustrated parents concerned for their children grew into a tsunami of organized trailblazers advocating for more research, greater support, and broader public awareness called the National Alliance on Mental Illness: the nation's largest grassroots mental health organization.

Follow our journey as we capture some of the many milestones in advocacy, research, education and awareness achieved over 45 years!



**Scan the QR
Code to view
additional milestones**

Through the Years 1979–1989

1979

- ▶ 284 individuals met in Wisconsin from 59 different family support groups in 29 states and Canada. A resolution was adopted to incorporate the National Alliance for the Mentally III (NAMI).

1980

- ▶ The Mental Health Systems Act of 1980, which provided grants to expand community mental health services, was signed into law.
- ▶ The first national office opened in Washington, D.C. — a one-room apartment.

1982

- ▶ NAMI was appointed to the National Mental Health Advisory Council.

1983

- ▶ Dr. E. Fuller Torrey published *Surviving Schizophrenia*. His appearance on “The Phil Donahue Show” resulted in NAMI’s two phone lines flooding.
- ▶ NAMI advocacy helped restore funding for the National Institute of Mental Health’s (NIMH) Community Support Program.

1984

- ▶ The first-ever public service announcements, “Shattered Dreams” and “Scrapbook,” featuring NAMI members were aired nationally.
- ▶ NAMI hired its first paid Executive Director Laurie Flynn.

1985

- ▶ NAMI launched the National Alliance for Research on Schizophrenia and Depression.

1986

- ▶ NAMI added its 600th affiliate, completing a sweep of all 50 states, Puerto Rico, Canada, and Guam.

1988

- ▶ NAMI provided seed grant to support the first Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) in Memphis, Tennessee.

Through the Years 1990–1999

1990

- ▶ NAMI established the NAMI Helpline.
- ▶ Patty Duke starred in a movie about mental illness; her appearance on “The Oprah Winfrey Show” flooded NAMI phone lines.
- ▶ NAMI won inclusion of persons disabled by a mental illness in the Americans with Disabilities Act.
- ▶ NAMI successfully lobbied Congress to designate the first full week in October as Mental Illness Awareness Week.

1991

- ▶ NAMI advocated for increased funding for NIMH, helping to secure \$511 million — doubling the NIMH budget at the time.

1992

- ▶ NAMI marched on Capitol Hill with half a million petitions calling for mental health parity.

1996

- ▶ NAMI’s advocacy to enact the Mental Health Parity Act of 1996 was a success; it was signed into law and ended discriminatory annual and lifetime dollar limits for mental health care.
- ▶ Living with Schizophrenia launched; it was later modified and renamed NAMI In Our Own Voice.

1997-1998

- ▶ NAMI Family-to-Family, developed by Dr. Joyce Burland, launched as NAMI’s first family education program.
- ▶ NAMI Provider Education launched.

1999

- ▶ NAMI participated in the first White House Conference on Mental Health.
- ▶ NAMI was lauded in the first-ever “Mental Health: A Report of the Surgeon General.”
- ▶ NAMI Family Support Group launched.

Through the Years 2000–2009

2001-2003

- ▶ NAMI Peer-to-Peer launched.
- ▶ NAMI State Organizations and Affiliates hosted the first 12 NAMIWalks events.
- ▶ De Familia a Familia de NAMI (NAMI Family-to-Family in Spanish) launched.

2004

- ▶ NAMI's Multicultural Action Center held the third annual minority mental health care symposium, "African Americans: Facing Mental Illness & Experiencing Recovery."

2005

- ▶ Dr. Danny Weinberger received NAMI's First Scientific Research Award.
- ▶ NAMI National Board members spoke at the inaugural National CIT Conference in Columbus, Ohio, featuring the Memphis Police Department's groundbreaking CIT program.

2006

- ▶ NAMI released the first "Grading the States: A Report on America's Health Care System for Serious Mental Illnesses."

2007

- ▶ NAMI Connection was launched.
- ▶ Cast and crew of the Fox TV series "House" kicked off fundraising campaign benefiting NAMI.

2008

- ▶ With NAMI's advocacy, the U.S. House of Representatives established July as Bebe Moore Campbell National Minority Mental Health Awareness Month in the namesake of NAMI's national spokesperson and leading African American author.
- ▶ NAMI's long-time advocacy around parity results in the Paul Wellstone and Pete Domenici Mental Health Parity and Addictions Equity Act, establishing mental health parity, being signed into law.
- ▶ NAMI Basics education program launched.
- ▶ NAMI Smarts for Advocacy launched.





National Alliance on Mental Illness

Through the Years 2010–2019

2010

- ▶ PBS stations nationwide aired “When Medicine Got It Wrong,” a documentary about NAMI’s grassroots origins and founding as a national organization.
- ▶ De Persona a Persona de NAMI (NAMI Peer-to-Peer in Spanish) launched.

2011-2012

- ▶ Formal research on NAMI Family-to-Family and NAMI Basics found that both programs were effective in supporting family members/caregivers.
- ▶ Bases y Fundamentos de NAMI (NAMI Basics in Spanish) launched.

2013

- ▶ NAMI participated in the White House Interagency Task Force Meeting on Military and Veterans Mental Health.
- ▶ NAMI was awarded PR News’ Platinum Award for “You Are Not Alone” public education campaign on mental illness.
- ▶ NAMI Ending the Silence was adopted from NAMI DuPage County, Illinois, and launched.

2014

- ▶ NAMI volunteers taught NAMI Homefront for the first time.

2015

- ▶ NAMI launched the StigmaFree campaign, celebrated in part by the green lighting of the Empire State Building to signify hope.
- ▶ NAMI successfully advocated for SAMHSA-funded First Episode Psychosis program funding in the Community Mental Health Block Grant to be more than doubled to \$50 million.

2016

- ▶ NAMI launched “StigmaFree Company,” a campaign that unites corporate social responsibility and employee engagement initiatives to promote mental health awareness in the workplace.

2018

- ▶ Retail business group Hudson’s Bay Company, including divisions Saks Fifth Avenue, Lord + Taylor and Saks OFF 5TH, named NAMI a “best in class” mental health charity.
- ▶ NAMI Family & Friends seminar launched.
- ▶ NAMI takes part in its first lawsuit, fighting against the expansion of Short-Term Limited Duration Insurance, also called “junk insurance,” that isn’t required to cover mental health.
- ▶ NAMI launches the #Vote4MentalHealth campaign.

2019

- ▶ “CBS This Morning” ran a special live event, “Stop the Stigma: A Conversation About Mental Health,” featuring NAMI experts.
- ▶ NAMI launched Basics OnDemand online, making the course available 24/7.



National Alliance on Mental Illness

Through the Years 2020–2024

2020

- ▶ NAMI worked with partners and Foundation for National Institute of Health (FNIH), to launch Accelerating Medicines Partnership (for Schizophrenia, accelerating public-private partnerships in research.
- ▶ NAMI's HelpLine and programming went virtual to reach people during COVID.
- ▶ NAMI successfully advocated for the bipartisan passage of the National Suicide Hotline Designation Act in October, which creates the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline.

2021

- ▶ NAMI launched the #ReimagineCrisis campaign and partnership, recruiting dozens of multi-sector organizations committed to improving community crisis response.

2022

- ▶ *You Are Not Alone*, NAMI's first book and a USA Today bestseller, hits bookshelves.
- ▶ NAMI's HelpLine launched text function.
- ▶ Philanthropist MacKenzie Scott made pivotal \$30 million investment in NAMI; NAMI invested one-third in the NAMI Alliance.
- ▶ NAMI started a new initiative, NAMI Next Gen, recruiting 10 young adult advisors annually to inform NAMI's operations and activities.
- ▶ NAMI advocated for 5x funding growth for the new 988 Lifeline, bringing funding to \$501.6 million.

2023

- ▶ President Biden announced efforts to strengthen mental health parity requirements; NAMI advocate introduced President Biden at the White House and NAMI advocates contributed 60 percent of all comments on the new proposal.
- ▶ NAMI took over leading the Community Health Equity Alliance (CHEA), an initiative to improve mental health care for Black/African Ancestry adults.
- ▶ NAMI launched StigmaFree Workplace Advisory Council, bringing leading employers together to drive NAMI's workplace mental health efforts.
- ▶ NAMI's HelpLine launched its Teen and Young Adult line, with young adult volunteers providing specialized support.
- ▶ NAMI partnered with Girl Scouts on Mental Wellness Patch Program.
- ▶ NAMIWalks recognized as top 30 Peer-to-Peer national fundraising organization for four consecutive years from 2020–2023.

2024

- ▶ NAMI partnered with newly-launched happy coffee™, with happy giving NAMI an equity stake in the company.
- ▶ NAMI to release its second book, *You Are Not Alone: A Guide for Parents and Caregivers* (Sept. 2024).



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