The fundamentals of caring for you, your family and your child with mental illness

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NAMI Signature Programs

- Family to Family
- Peer to Peer
- Provider Education
- In Our Own Voice
- Parents and Teachers as Allies
- NAMI Connection (support groups)

Basic Principles of NAMI Educational Programs

- Recognition that mental illness is a continuing traumatic event for the individual and the family
- Families and individuals adjust to this traumatic experience in predictable stages over time
- If families and individuals know which stage they are in, they can determine what they need

Basic Principles of NAMI Educational Programs

- Family and individual strength, persistence and heroism in the face of overwhelming human challenges must be recognized and validated
- Recovery and reconstruction of personal priorities must be a goal of treatment for the individual and the family

Basic Principles of NAMI Educational Programs

- Family members and consumers make ideal teachers because of their lived experience
- Peer-directed education courses provide a dimension of emotional healing not available in any other setting

Techniques used in NAMI Family Education

- Model that a path of transformation is attainable
- Blame busters, "you can't know what no one has told you"
- Re-framing of the illness perspective
- Mental illness symptoms are real – not "just" bad behavior
**Techniques used in NAMI Family Education**
- Shift from intense personal focus to group focus
- Demonstrate family and individual strength
- Use information overload to break through long held stereotypes
- Provide an invitation to “let go” of hoping against hope

**Question:**
What should NAMI program for parents and other caregivers of children and adolescents with mental illness look like?

**Development Process**
- Young Family Advisory Committee
- Review of Existing Programs within NAMI State Organizations

**Goals**
- To provide caregivers the information they need to be effective
- To help caregivers cope with the traumatic impact mental illness has on the child and the family
- To provide tools to help caregivers make the best decisions regarding care
- To help caregivers take the best care possible of their families and themselves

**How does it look?**
- Core Program is 6 classes – 2.5 hours each
- Taught in consecutive 6 weekly sessions or two classes per week for 3 weeks
- Web-based component; “Ask the Doctor”
- Topic specific, stand alone modules (to be developed)

**Content**
- **Class 1** – Introduction: It’s not your fault, mental illnesses are brain disorders
- **Class 2** – The biology of mental illness; getting an accurate diagnosis
- **Class 3** – The latest research on the medical aspects of the illnesses & advances in treatment
Content
Class 4 – The impact of the child’s mental illness on the rest of the family; skills training
Class 5 – The systems involved with your child and the importance of record keeping
Class 6 – Advocacy, self-care, review, sharing and evaluation

Pilot Class Evaluation
Classes provided between Jan & May 2008
- Pre-post tests administered to 19 classes in Illinois, South Carolina & Utah
- 18 items; 9 knowledge specific and 9 self perception of caregiver
- Significant increases in knowledge
- Significant increases in self-perception items

Current Evaluation Process
- All classes taught in Tennessee and Mississippi between October 2008 and May 2009
- Pre-test, Post-test and 3-month follow up
  - Family Problem Solving & Communication Scale
  - The Parent Stress Survey
  - Family Empowerment Scale
  - Self-Care Inventory
  - Demographic Questionnaire

States Currently Offering Classes
- Arizona
- Arkansas
- California
- Connecticut
- Florida
- Illinois
- Indiana
- Louisiana
- Maryland
- Michigan
- Mississippi
- Montana
- New Jersey
- North Carolina
- South Carolina
- Tennessee
- Utah
- Wisconsin

The numbers
- 258 teachers trained in 2008
- 61 classes completed in 2008
- 484 graduates
- 30 classes currently underway in 13 states
NAMI Basics Education Program

For more information contact

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