



**NAMI Connection Outreach: 5 Suggestions for States & Affiliates**

1. **Reaching your NAMI** ~ include group information in every affiliate and state newsletter on a regular basis both in hard copy and on line.
2. **Reaching NAMI program participants** ~ announce your group meetings at every NAMI opportunity (P2P, F2F, IOOV, board meetings, educational meetings, special events). Be sure to place brochures on all group resource tables.
3. **Reaching Providers** ~ Send a mass mailing to all providers. It takes time to develop the list, but once you do it can be used for many NAMI mailings. Include along the pass cards with group info on them so they can be handed out.
4. **Reaching the Surrounding Community** ~ Locate the places that have local calendars that list support groups and/or health events (newspapers, local access TV stations, local area web calendars.), and ask to publicize your groups. Place posters in places that consumers go regularly clubhouses, social centers, grocery stores. In addition, have group information ready to mail out when people call and ask for information. (Note: some people do not want mail that has anything on it that indicates it has something to do with mental illness. Tell the person that you will send the group information and ask if that is okay with them.
5. **Reaching out through the media** ~ Use the Media toolkit. Located on the Connection Intranet (available to Connection Coordinators and Trainers by signing in on the www.nami.org website). Contact Laura Sweeney at lauras2@nami.org if you have difficulty getting access to the Connection Intranet.



**Spencer Hinckley, Programs Coordinator  
NAMI Utah**

**How long have you been with NAMI? How did you get involved?** I joined NAMI in December of 2007. As I was searching for a new job, I came across a listing for NAMI Utah. I had never heard of NAMI before, but as I read the mission statement and about the programs NAMI offers, I instantly wanted to be involved. Over the past year I have grown to appreciate more and more the great work that NAMI does. I started as a BRIDGES teacher (similar to Peer-to-Peer). I had never been involved in peer groups before and it was greatly beneficial to me. When I started teaching, I was amazed at what a difference the class and the NAMI peer-to-peer model worked. My favorite part about NAMI is seeing people first come to the groups and classes, and then over time, progress in their recovery until they want to give back and become leaders themselves.

**What are some innovative ways you've reached out to the community in promoting NAMI Connection?** As we've tried to expand the program we have done several things to reach out to the community and advertise the groups. As we've done with our other programs, we pass out Connection brochures, placing them at mental health centers and doctor's offices. I even had one person come to my group who found the pamphlet in a dentist's office! I don't know who placed it there, but it was meant to be—she was really struggling when she came to the group and we were able to support her. We have also posted our groups online at sites such as Craigslist. We need to get the word out! So many people come to NAMI saying, "I wish I would have heard about this years ago."

We are starting a program to go to mental health agencies and organizations and present at their

staff meetings about what NAMI offers. Connection will be a key part of these presentations. We routinely offer presentations to local medical school students and college students.

**What kind of positive changes have you seen due to the program?** My favorite

part about NAMI Connection is seeing how positively it influences people in their recovery; to see people who come to our groups in great need, and after several weeks, have progressed so much in their recovery that they want to give back by becoming a facilitator themselves.

**What is NAMI Utah's goal for NAMI Connection?** NAMI Utah's goal for Connection is to have a support group everyday of the week in Salt Lake City, and at least one group in every affiliate across the state (18 affiliates). Currently we have 5 groups in Salt Lake, with one in the works. Across the state there are an additional 5 groups. We are looking forward to our next state training in May to further expand the program.

As we were getting Connection going in Utah, I became more and more excited. This is what NAMI is about! I feel like Connection is taking NAMI to the next level in supporting the mental health community!



**Testimonials**

*The NAMI Connection facilitator training was great. I am so excited about working with NAMI!*

*This is a dream come true for me because I had been searching for a general support group for people with mental illness, and I understand how effective a support group can be.*

*I truly believe in the concept of NAMI Connection.*

*I am not alone! There is a place where people understand me, are there to help me, and I feel better about myself when I help someone else. I can get involved in NAMI Connection and make a difference!*



**Training Progress:**

- Facilitator Trainings: 78
- Total Facilitators Trained: 1399
- Total Support Groups: 292

**For more information on NAMI Connection:**

- Visit our website at [www.nami.org/connection](http://www.nami.org/connection)
- Call the HelpLine at 1(800) 950-NAMI (6264)
- Send an email to [connection@nami.org](mailto:connection@nami.org)



**Kate Farinholt, Executive Director  
NAMI Metropolitan-Baltimore, Maryland**

*Written by Tom Waldron*

Kate Farinholt first got involved with NAMI-Metropolitan Baltimore 15 years ago, first as volunteer seeking to find ways to support her sister, who has a mental illness, later as a board member, and for the past several years as Executive Director.

Under her leadership, the organization has grown and is now a leading voice and resource in the Baltimore region for people with mental illness and their loved ones.

The NAMI Connection program has been a wonderful addition to the organization's roster of programs, including the NAMI Family to Family and Peer to Peer courses, family support groups and the "In Our Own Voice" initiative. Farinholt and Deneice Valentine, the Peer Education and Support Program Coordinator, have been especially pleased with the training and tools that are provided for Connection facilitators.

NAMI-Metropolitan Baltimore has promoted Connection through all of its regular outreach efforts. Speakers for affiliates, including In Our Own Voice consumers and our local Ambassadors (Family to Family graduates), mention it along with other programs, and all callers to the group's active "warm-line" are told about the program. Dozens of "adopt-a-site" volunteers also make sure that NAMI literature - including information about Connection - is available at key locations in the community.

Word about the Connection program has spread and mental health service providers are referring more people to NAMI to take part in the Connection support groups.

The Baltimore affiliate's Connection groups, offered each Saturday,

have drawn unexpectedly strong interest from the community. That has required the organization to bring in additional facilitators to handle the large number of participants, which Farinholt notes is a "nice problem" to have.

Over time, NAMI-Metropolitan Baltimore plans to find new locations for the Connection program - outside the affiliate's offices. "Our goal is to move our groups off-site to different locations in the community to better service consumers in the region," Farinholt says.

She is proud of her affiliate's focus on quality assurance, which includes regular "refreshers" for Connection facilitators and mentoring by experienced facilitators. "Fortunately we're big enough to be able to do that, and we think it's really important to do it," Farinholt says.

The addition of the Connection program has begun to re-shape how the larger mental health community views NAMI in Baltimore; today, more people view it as an organization that is providing helpful services to consumers - as well as to their families and loved ones.

"Today those in the community who know us are more likely to think of us as focused on both family and consumers," Farinholt says. "We have a long ways to go, but we're making progress."



*Deneice Valentine (L) and Kate Farinholt (R)*



**Chris Cox, NAMI Connection Facilitator  
NAMI Hampton/Newport News, Virginia**



*How long have you been with NAMI? How did you get involved? Are you involved with other programs?* I've been with NAMI since October 2007; my Psychiatrist suggested I get involved in volunteer work and actually mentioned NAMI so I went to a business meeting of our local affiliate and they asked me to be the Treasurer. I am a Peer-to-Peer Mentor and am currently involved with a class for Veterans being held at the VA Hospital in Hampton, Virginia.

*How did you get involved with Connection?* I saw an information bulletin about Connection and thought the concept of peers sharing with other peers at a regular meeting was a great idea, so I asked our Programs Coordinator, Cheryl DeHaven, for an application to become a facilitator and to my delight I was accepted as a trainee.

*What do you want others to know about the program?* That you will get as much out of the program as those you help. As you "connect" with others you really get the feel of community, one that has helped me stay healthy.

*What are some innovative ways you've reached out to the community in promoting NAMI Connection?* We have been fortunate to have a very active In Our Own Voice program both inside and outside of our local Behavioral Health Center. This program has generated a lot of interest in Connection and once people come they seem to stay. We also have great support from the Hampton/Newport News Community Service Board (CSB) with referrals. We were on the local TV station in an information spot and we have a feature in the local paper.

*What kind of positive changes have you seen due to the program?* I have personally seen the most change in the individuals that come to Connection and also the facilitators that I work with. We all seem more positive about the future. Also I have noticed many of our consumers want to do more and are looking forward to becoming facilitators themselves. It is just a matter of time before our movement advances.

*Anything else you want to say about the program...?* I would just like to thank those that support us here locally. There has never been a time that I didn't feel free to contact State or National NAMI for help with any situation that has come up.



**Are you interested in being a champion for NAMI Connection?**

In every community, NAMI is looking for Champions to help ensure that NAMI Connection becomes a successful and flourishing program.

**Champions can:**

- Work with facilitators and local affiliates to distribute NAMI Connection marketing materials to agencies, mental health centers, and other local locations
- Identify sites for NAMI Connection support groups, such as churches, club-houses, drop-in centers, and hospitals.
- Identify and recruit potential champions and support group facilitators.

**Who can become a champion?** Champions are consumers, family members, peer support specialists, mental health professionals, former affiliate board members; anyone who is interested in making NAMI Connection succeed in their local area.

If you or someone you know is interested in becoming a champion, contact your state office or email [connection@nami.org](mailto:connection@nami.org) for more information on how to help!

**NAMI Connection Program Awards**

Beginning in 2009, the NAMI Connection program will be presenting awards for outstanding efforts in the areas of data, outreach, group building and facilitating. This year's awardees will be honored at the NAMI National Convention taking place in San Francisco, July 5-9<sup>th</sup>.

Many of these awards will be determined by nomination; please take a look at the award descriptions and criteria below, and submit your nominations no later than May 15, 2009. Each award category has its own nominating criteria and instructions. If you would like a copy of the nomination forms, please email [connection@nami.org](mailto:connection@nami.org)

NAMI Connection Data Reporting Award

This award is given to NAMI Connection groups meeting weekly that have reported data 95% of the time over any six month period in an award year. (25 weeks reported in a 26 week period)

NAMI Connection Program Expansion Award (determined by nomination)

This award is given to a local NAMI Connection Leader (Champion, Affiliate Leader, Trainer or Facilitator) who has gone the extra mile to increase the number of NAMI Connection groups in their local community.

NAMI Connection Outstanding Facilitator (determined by nomination)

This award is given to a NAMI Connection Facilitators who have demonstrated their commitment to the NAMI Connection program, by facilitating a group for two or more years.

NAMI Connection Outstanding Outreach Award (determined by nomination)

This award is given to a NAMI State or Local Affiliate that has demonstrated outstanding achievement in persistent and creative outreach to diverse populations and the community at large to bring the NAMI Connection program to various populations within their community.

**Upcoming Facilitator Trainings:**

- CA (Brea): April 3-5
- KS (Topeka): April 17-19
- OK (Oklahoma City): April 17-19
- VT (Burlington): May 1-3
- NJ (Piscataway): May 1-3
- AL (Montgomery): June 5-7
- WI (Milwaukee): July 31-Aug. 2
- NY (Syracuse): July 31-August 2
- RI (Warwick): August 21-23
- NJ (TBA): Sept. 11-13
- AK (Anchorage): October 2-4
- NH (Concord): October 16-18

For the most up-to-date listing of upcoming trainings, check out the latest news section of the NAMI Connection website.



**Monthly Facilitator Calls**

NAMI Connection Field Managers hold a monthly teleconference call for the **facilitators, affiliate leaders, and state coordinators** in each state covering a wide variety of topics. Please contact the field manager\* for your state for more information.

CA, IL, MI, MN, SD, UT, WI

- Anna Goodwin, 1 (866) 446-8433 or [agoodwin@nami.org](mailto:agoodwin@nami.org)

AL, NC, NV, OK, RI, VT

- Deanna Green, 1 (888) 221-0273 or [dgreen@nami.org](mailto:dgreen@nami.org)

AK, CO, KS, MA, NH, NJ, NY

- Harriet Kronick, 1 (877) 400-2092 or [hkronick@nami.org](mailto:hkronick@nami.org)

HI, MT, OR, WA, WY

- Beth Gould, 1 (866) 461-4569 or [bgould@nami.org](mailto:bgould@nami.org)

AR, CT, DE, FL, GA, LA, IN, IA, KY, MD, ME, MS, MO, NE, NM, OH, PA, SC, TX, VA

- Gretchen Anglin, 1 (800) 985-2958 or [gmeyer@nami.org](mailto:gmeyer@nami.org)

\*Please note that your state may now have a different field manager.

**NAMI Connection is now on YouTube!**

The NAMI Connection outreach video can now be found on YouTube.

Just go to NAMI's YouTube channel at <http://www.youtube.com/user/NAMIvideo> to see our full length outreach video, along with six brief testimonials from NAMI Connection program participants. The video and testimonials can also be viewed on the NAMI Connection website under the "media" tab.

The NAMI Connection team is excited to be part of this online outreach effort!