



National Alliance on Mental Illness

**nami**

**Dane County**

# **Education, Support, and Advocacy**

A Collaborative Approach to Disability Rights

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**May 28, 2026**

**City of Madison - Disability Rights Commission**

# Agenda

1. Welcome and Introduction
2. Who We Are: History, Mission, Vision
3. What We Do: Education, Support, Advocacy
4. Working Together: Opportunities to Enhance  
Community Wellbeing
5. Questions
6. Get in Touch

# Welcome & Introduction

**Jamie Mulry (she/her/hers)**  
Executive Director



**Visual Description:** A portrait of a woman with wavy, light brown hair and blue eyes, smiling at the camera. She is wearing a black dress and a necklace.

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# Who We Are: History, Mission, Vision

**NAMI Dane County is the founding chapter of the nation's largest grassroots mental health organization dedicated to improving the lives of people affected by mental illness.**

Founded in Madison, WI in 1977 by parents of adult children with severe and persistent mental illness (Schizophrenia, Bipolar)



**Visual Description:** A nostalgic, slightly grainy photograph captures three senior white women standing together at a local community gathering in 1980.

# Who We Are: History, Mission, Vision

The average life expectancy of an individual with Schizophrenia is approximately 64 years, which is roughly 10 to 20 years shorter than that of the general population.



**Visual Description:** A side-by-side comparison of a mother and her adult son, taken 37 years apart. The image on the left is a nostalgic and slightly grainy professional portrait of them from 1985 and the image on the right is a photo of them from 2022 standing next to one another, smiling, and wearing nametags at a local community event.

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# Who We Are: History, Mission, Vision

## Mission

The mission of NAMI Dane County is to provide education, support, and advocacy for people affected by mental illness.

## Vision

NAMI Dane County will be the thought and knowledge leader on mental illness, ensuring a stigma-free community where all people affected by mental illness find the help, hope, and support they need.



**Visual Description:** Two women sit across from one another in a brightly lit room engaged in conversation. On the left, a woman with medium-length brown hair has her back to the camera while sitting on a couch. On the right, a woman with glasses and medium-length brown hair sits in a chair facing the camera.

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# What We Do: Education, Support, Advocacy

## Education

1. Public Education and Enrichment classes for peers and families
2. Crisis Intervention Training for law enforcement, first responders, and community stakeholders
3. Community training and awareness events to enhance understanding and reduce stigma



**Visual Description:** A group consisting of a diverse mix of 13 adults of various ages and ethnicities standing on a sidewalk outside of a brick building. There are lush green bushes in the background. They are all smiling and some of them are holding certificates.

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# What We Do: Education, Support, Advocacy

## Support

1. Support Groups (Adult, Young Adult, Women, Families, LGBTQIA+) that connect individuals with shared experiences for emotional support
2. Peer Support and Parent Peer Support Specialists
3. Community Resource and Crisis Calls



**Visual Description:** A woman with medium-length black hair is sitting at a desk with a closed laptop, desk lamp, and plant on it. She is holding a phone to her ear with her left hand and writing on a piece of paper with her right hand.

# What We Do: Education, Support, Advocacy

## Advocacy

1. The Advocacy Committee guides action items on public policy and empowers voices through shared experiences and collective action.
2. Host Legislative Listening Sessions and forums with the community and elected officials.
3. Budget advocacy with the city, county, state, and federal government

**Visual Description:** A diverse group of adults of various ages and ethnicities stands smiling at the end of a long wooden table inside a Wisconsin State Capitol hearing room. They are all wearing white nametags, posing in front of floor-to-ceiling windows with red curtains and a ceremonial indoor flag set displaying the United States and Wisconsin flags.



# Working Together: Opportunities to Enhance Community Wellbeing

## Our Shared Goals

- 1. Equal Access:** Working to ensure that individuals with psychiatric disabilities have equal access to essential resources.
- 2. Community Education and Stigma Reduction:** Education and awareness that frame psychiatric disabilities as recognized disabilities, teaching communities about reasonable accommodations and legal rights.
- 3. Accessible Crisis and Support Systems:** Ensuring that crisis response, peer support networks, and clinical healthcare systems are physically, linguistically, and structurally accessible to all individuals with psychiatric disabilities.



**Visual Description:** Three police officers are standing together and holding a sign. On the left, a woman in a black police uniform with medium-length brown hair. In the middle, a man in a black police uniform with brown hair and a buzz cut who is holding a sign that says "NAMI Walks" on top and "Hope Starts With You" underneath. On the right, a woman in a black police uniform with short brown hair and glasses.

# Working Together: Opportunities to Enhance Community Wellbeing

## Equal Access

- 1. Workplace Accommodations:** Guidance to help employees secure reasonable accommodations (such as flexible scheduling or quiet workspaces) under Title I of the ADA.
- 2. Fair Housing:** Educating landlords who refuse to rent to individuals with psychiatric histories or who deny emotional support animals.
- 3. Supported Employment Initiatives:** Training employers on how to recruit, onboard, and retain neurodivergent staff and individuals with psychiatric histories.



**Visual Description:** A diverse group of adults of various ages and ethnicities facing away from the camera. All individuals are sitting down in classroom-style seating watching a presentation by a woman standing in the front of the room who is using a large digital screen to display a slide deck.

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# Working Together: Opportunities to Enhance Community Wellbeing

## Community Education and Stigma Reduction

1. **Know-Your-Rights Workshops:** Co-hosting workshops for individuals and families to teach them their educational rights (such as 504 plans or IEPs in schools) and healthcare rights.
2. **De-escalation Training:** Training public service workers, transit staff, and medical personnel on how to interact respectfully and safely with individuals experiencing psychiatric distress.



**Visual Description:** An elementary-aged boy with short brown hair, wearing a gray long-sleeved shirt, standing and posing in an office workspace. In the background, a large black office printer, wooden shelves stacked with small plastic storage bins, and a crowded bulletin board filled with colorful posters and miscellaneous fliers.

# Working Together: Opportunities to Enhance Community Wellbeing

## Accessible Crisis and Support Systems

- 1. Crisis Intervention Training:** Inviting Disability Rights subject matter experts to present at our 40 and 16-hour trainings for law enforcement, first responders, educators, healthcare workers, churches, for-profit businesses, and non-profit organizations.
- 2. Enhanced Referral Pathways:** Support specialists making it easier for individuals to access critical resources and services that address their unique needs.



**Visual Description:** A woman with mid-length brown hair wearing a long polka dot dress stands at the front of a room conducting a training session. In the foreground, an attendee with brown hair pulled back and wearing a white sweater sits at a table with her back to the camera. In the background, a large digital screen displaying a slide deck, a tall floor banner, and an indoor flag set displaying the American flag.

# Questions?



**Visual Description:** A close-up of five hands raised in the air from the forearm up.

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# Get in Touch!

**Jamie Mulry**

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