

The Problem

Mental illness is a term used for a group of conditions that can cause disturbances in thinking, feeling, sensing, and relating to other people, which result in a diminished capacity for responding to the demands of life. Mental health conditions can affect people of any age, gender, race, religion, and social or economic background.

- Mental health conditions affect 20% of children and adolescents.
- One in two cases of mental illness begin by age 14.
- One in two children with a mental health condition don't receive treatment.
- About 18 million children are living with a mental health condition.
- 50% of children with a serious mental illness drop out of school. A large percentage of those who drop out end up in juvenile detention centers.

(from Final Report of the President's New Freedom Commission)



NAMI Mass

NAMI Mass is a state affiliate of the National Alliance on Mental Illness, a nonprofit grassroots education, support and advocacy organization dedicated to improving the lives of persons living with mental illness and their families.

NAMI Mass bridges the gap between research and clinical practice by disseminating the latest scientific findings, informing the public about mental health disorders and treatment, and working to reduce stigma.

Contact us or visit our website for more information about our helpline, support groups, peer programs, caregiver courses and more.

namimass.org

National Alliance on Mental Illness
of Massachusetts
The Schrafft Center
529 Main Street, Suite 1M17
Boston MA 02129
617.580.8541
Helpline: 800.370.9085



Allies for Student Mental Health



A Solution

Allies for Student Mental Health is a two-hour professional development program designed to help K-12 teachers, parents and school staff work as allies to identify and understand mental health conditions that can have significant impact on students' academic success and overall well-being.

The program addresses a range of mental health conditions with emphasis on:

- ADD/ADHD
- Anxiety
- Depression
- Oppositional Defiant Disorder
- Trauma

It provides practical, solutions-oriented information, including:

- Signs and symptoms
- Resources
- Classroom strategies and accommodations
- Strengthening alliance with families
- Understanding stigma and empathy



Presenters

The program is presented by a panel of engaging speakers with uniquely relevant expertise and perspectives:

- A **young adult** challenged by mental health issues as a student speaks about his/her experience in school.
- A **teacher** offers personal classroom experiences, pedagogical strategies, and resources/tools for educators.
- A **parent** shares the struggles and successes as his/her child progressed through the school system and tips for communicating with families.

Outcomes

- Improved ability to recognize signs and symptoms of common youth mental health conditions
- Awareness of resources, tools and strategies available to teachers, parents and staff
- Increased success for vulnerable students

Contact

For more information on the **Allies for Student Mental Health** program and to schedule a presentation, please contact:

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Reviews

"This program brings powerful personal stories that impact the way we think about our students who are struggling with mental health issues. Once educators have the resources and knowledge, we are better able to create a safe space for all students."

Assistant Superintendent

"The staff took away tools and resources that could easily be applied in classrooms when social or emotional concerns arise."

Principal

"These strategies work for all students. I feel like I have a better understanding of the impact of mental illness on the learning process."

Classroom Teacher

"All the presenters were so knowledgeable. It was truly beneficial for us as educators to learn more about mental health issues."

Classroom Teacher