



Ending the Silence



NAMI Ending the Silence (ETS) is a prevention and early intervention program that engages youth in a discussion about mental health. This 50-minute in-school presentation is designed for middle and high school age youth.

How Does the Program Work?

- Presented in freshman/sophomore health, science or psychology classes, youth groups, clubs and after-school programs.
- Delivered by a trained two-person team, one of whom is a young adult living in recovery with mental illness.
- Includes presenter stories, educational slides, videos and discussion.
- NAMI Ending the Silence reduces stigma through:
 - Education—provides accurate information about mental illness to promote understanding and dispel myths.
 - Personal contact—puts a human face to mental illness and provides hope that recovery is possible.

How is this Program Unique?

- Offered to schools and students at no cost.
- Provides students the opportunity to learn about mental illness directly from family members and individuals living with mental illness.
- Provides opportunity for students to ask questions directly of a “real life” young person with mental illness and a family member.
- By engaging in a discussion about mental illness among their peers, students dealing with mental health issues may realize they’re not alone.

How Does NAMI Ending the Silence Benefit Students?

- Students learn early warning signs of mental illness.
- Students receive resources and tools to help themselves, friends or family members who may be experiencing symptoms of mental illness.
- Contact with an individual living well with mental illness dispels myths, instills a message of hope and recovery and encourages students to reduce the stigma associated with mental illness.

Key Messages of NAMI Ending the Silence

- Mental illness is a medical illness like any other physical illness.
- Mental illness is not anyone’s fault or something to be ashamed of.
- There are specific, observable early warning signs of mental illness. You can help yourself and your friends by being aware of these signs and making sure treatment is sought as soon as possible.
- Although it may feel like it sometimes, you are never alone and there are many resources you can turn to for support and information.
- Recovery is possible and there is hope.