



nami news



The Nation's Voice on Mental Illness

For Immediate Release

June 2, 2004

**MEDIA ADVISORY:
Children & Psychiatric Medications
NAMI Report to be Released at Press Conference**

WHEN: Wednesday, June 9, 2004 at 9:00 AM

WHERE: National Press Club, Murrow Room
Washington, D.C.

WHAT: Press Conference on Children & Psychiatric Medications;
Release of NAMI Task Force Report

WHO: Ken Duckworth, M.D.
Medical director & child psychiatrist
NAMI (National Alliance for the Mentally Ill)

The report will provide important perspectives on the need for sound clinical practice and giving parents information to make decisions in the best interests of their children: *which goes to the heart of any news story* on children and psychiatric medications.

- **One in 10 children today have a mental illness severe enough to cause impairment, but the Surgeon General has warned that 80 percent never get the treatment they need.**
- **Psychiatric medications can be life-saving for many children, but require careful weighing of risks and benefits, close monitoring, and frequent evaluation.**
- **The Food & Drug Administration (FDA) currently has safety and efficacy issues under review concerning the use of antidepressants for children.**
- **State and local initiatives in some cases have sought to restrict communication between schools and parents about warning signs of mental illnesses.**

The report will address the need to protect rights of access to treatment, the patient-provider relationship, and promotion of partnerships for treatment. It includes policy recommendations, but warns policymakers against taking actions without sound scientific research. It also emphasizes that treatment decisions can only be made on an individualized basis.

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