

Promoting NAMI on Campus

TIPS FOR NAMI STATE ORGANIZATIONS AND NAMI AFFILIATES

When no NAMI on Campus clubs exist at their local colleges, some NAMI State Organizations or NAMI Affiliates decide to work with the schools to start NAMI on Campus clubs. If you decide to do this, it is still important to find students who are willing to lead these efforts. NAMI on Campus clubs are student-run and student-led so it is essential that they play a leading role in the process of starting clubs.

However, as a NAMI State Organization and NAMI Affiliate you also play a key role. You are essential in promoting NAMI on Campus clubs to school administrators, faculty and staff and to students. As a NAMI State Organization and NAMI Affiliate you can meet with school leaders in your community to make the case for NAMI on Campus clubs and to promote the broad implementation of these clubs.

We have developed a [NAMI on Campus promotional brochure](#) for NAMI State Organizations and NAMI Affiliates to share with school administrators, faculty and staff and students. NAMI also released a national [survey report](#) on the lived experience of college students that helps make the case for NAMI on Campus clubs.

Here are some school leaders you may want to reach out to:

- **Natural Allies.** Reach out to college counselors, academic advisors and academic departments that focus on mental health like psychology, psychiatry, pre-med, nursing and others. These school leaders have access to students who might be interested in starting a club. They can send an email announcement to students or share promotional materials with them.
- **Dean of Student Affairs.** This Dean is responsible for creating a supportive environment for students and addressing student needs. Meet with the Dean and share NAMI on Campus promotional materials and NAMI's survey report. During your meeting, take the time to also learn more about the college and the school's needs, struggles and where you can help!
- **Student orientation organizers.** Ask the college to include information on NAMI in orientation material given to students so they know that NAMI is a community resource and can help them start a NAMI on Campus club. Consider a resource table at orientation with lots of information on mental illness and NAMI, including how to start a NAMI on Campus club. The Dean of Student Affairs should be able to help make this happen.

These school leaders may want to promote NAMI on Campus directly to students who may be interested in starting a club. You may also want to directly reach out to students to encourage them to start a NAMI on Campus club. There are many ways to reach students who may be interested in starting a club and to promote NAMI on Campus to them.

Here are a few ideas on how to reach students:

- **Present to psychology students.** Consider reaching out to students in psychology and mental health related departments. They are usually interested in real world experience and resume building and may jump at the chance to form a club. Once you have students committed to the idea, they can start the club, promote it and ultimately reach students living with mental health conditions.
- **Reach out to sororities and fraternities!** Most are required to complete volunteer hours and are more than happy to participate in various fundraising activities and other altruistic events. They often have

resources and funding available too. Try to get a sorority or fraternity to designate NAMI as their cause and support a NAMI on Campus club. Their contact information is available online so simply request a meeting to talk with them about NAMI and how they can help.

- **Contact the student newspaper.** This is a key way students get their news and is a great way for students to learn about NAMI on Campus. On the flip side, you can also learn a whole lot about what is happening at colleges and how to get involved by reading the student newspaper.
- **Get involved with campus events.** See what events are happening on campus and investigate ways you can get involved. For example, if the school hosts a health fair for students every year, see if you can get a table at the fair to promote NAMI on Campus. You may also want to offer to be a campus speaker to talk about mental health and the resources available to students or to serve on an advisory board.

The best way to reach students and work with school leaders at your local college to promote NAMI on Campus will vary so take these tips as general suggestions. Instead, focus more on getting to know your specific campus community and seeing where NAMI best fits. Offer to serve as a resource for students and think about creative ways to get the word out. Also, take time to meet with school leaders to learn about the mental health issues they are dealing with and how you can help.