

NAMI Basics Education Program found to be Effective in 2008 Pilot Study

Parents and other caregivers of children and adolescents with mental illness show multiple gains from their participation in NAMI Basics, NAMI's newest signature education program. Based on questionnaires completed by class members in Illinois, South Carolina and Utah before and after taking the six NAMI Basics classes, the study showed participants had benefited from the course in all areas being measured.

Parents and care givers indicated that:

- They knew more about the illnesses themselves
- They knew more about the treatment strategies available to them
- They were better able to advocate for their children with the mental health, school and other systems involved in their children's care.

Developed in 2007, NAMI Basics is taught by two trained parent teachers using a detailed curriculum. Participants in the pilot classes also reported believing that they had achieved the major goals of the program, which include:

- To give parents/caregivers the fundamental information they need to be effective as a caregiver
- To help parents/caregivers cope with the traumatic impact that mental illness has on the child living with the illness and the entire family.
- To provide tools for parents/caregivers to use even after completing the program that will assist them in making the best decisions possible for the care of their child.
- To help the parent/caregiver take the best care possible of the entire family, and to practice self care as an essential priority.

The pilot evaluation was conducted by Missouri State University by Dr. Paul Deal. NAMI sincerely appreciates the parents and caregivers who participated in the pilot study and salutes the many teachers who took on the additional tasks of helping with this evaluation project.

