

**NAMI monthly education programs and support groups will continue to use the ZOOM format until a return to in-person meetings is safe. Continue to pay close attention to and follow safety guidelines published by our local, state and national health organizations, and decide to schedule a Covid-19 vaccine injection as soon as you can. Continue watching for reminder messages about meeting schedules and other upcoming activities.**

## **FIRST TUESDAY NAMI EDUCATION PROGRAMS OFFERED THROUGH ZOOM AT 7 PM**

**TUESDAY, JANUARY 5 PROGRAM:** At the current time of publication, we have not received confirmation concerning our speaker for the January Education Meeting on January 5<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 PM on ZOOM (see ZOOM instructions below). Our goal is to have Andrea Clark from KDADS give a report on a program that may be of importance to us. If this program doesn't work out, we will continue with a discussion on the BRAINSTORMING E-zine that is found at the end of this newsletter and on the web site.

**TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 2 PROGRAM:** For the February Education Meeting we will have a gathering of our local Board of Directors to discuss what the future holds for NAMI Wichita, and how we are working to make things happen. We look forward to seeing you on February 2 at 7:00 PM on Zoom. See ZOOM instructions below.

## **NAMI EDUCATIONS MEETINGS AND CONNECTIONS RECOVERY SUPPORT**

**GROUP/FAMILY-FRIENDS SUPPORT GROUP: INSTRUCTIONS:** If you have not participated thus far but wish to join the groups, please contact David Larson either through email ([D.LARSON@NAMIWICHITA.ORG](mailto:D.LARSON@NAMIWICHITA.ORG)) or phone (316.461.5755), at least a couple of days before the meeting so he will know you will be online that night. Otherwise, he may not be able to authorize your joining the meeting.

Sign-in will go much more smoothly if you download ZOOM beforehand onto your computer or phone, for whichever device you are going to use to join the meeting. It can be downloaded from the app store on your phone or by going to <https://zoom.us> on your computer. Also, register with Zoom for a free ZOOM account. Keep a record of the user name (email address) and password you selected. Contact David with questions.

**How the ZOOM meetings work:** Because this meeting is for authorized attendees only, you will need to sign in using your email address and the password you chose earlier when you installed ZOOM. You will find the dates and links for the meetings below. Please make sure you are signing into the correct meeting for the correct date.

**They must be typed exactly as you see them! CASE IS IMPORTANT:**

**7 PM, January 5,** Education Meeting

<https://tinyurl.com/Jan2021ED>

**6 PM, January 19,** Ask the Doctor  
Hour and Support Groups

<https://tinyurl.com/Jan2021Sup>

**7 PM, February 2,** Education Meeting

<https://tinyurl.com/Feb2021ED>

**6 PM, February 16,** Ask the Doctor  
Hour and Support groups

<https://tinyurl.com/Feb2021Sup>

The evening of each support group meeting, David will convene both support groups at the same time for general announcements and instructions, and we'll then separate into the specific Connections and Family Support sections. Vicki Shook, Valerie Morley and Gerry Lichti will facilitate the Family Support Group, while David will do the same for Connections. Watch for email reminder messages with sign-on information several days before each meeting.

The Share and Care Support Group is a combined experience for both family members and adults living with mental illness. We benefit greatly from learning to know each other better.

**6:30 PM, January 26**, Share & Care  
<https://tinyurl.com/Jan2021SC>

**6:30 PM, February 23**, Share & Care  
<https://tinyurl.com/Feb2021SC>

### **Mark Your Calendars for these Upcoming Activities in 2021**

1. Annual **Awards Ceremony**, Election of Board Members and Holiday Reception – Postponed until our **April 6** Meeting. **Please see article immediately following.**

### **SCHEDULING CHANGES FOR OUR ANNUAL AWARDS CEREMONY, ELECTION OF 2021 BOARD MEMBERS AND THE HOLIDAY RECEPTION:**

The Board of NAMI Wichita, in its November meeting, decided to postpone our affiliate's Annual Awards Ceremony until **APRIL 6, 2021** because of the impossibility of meeting in person the first few months of 2021. That date is projected to be our first in-person meeting since last March and will be a fitting time to celebrate together. **The process of submitting nominations for the various award categories will stay open through February 14.** If you want a head start concerning award categories to consider, the link is <https://forms.gle/krcHXhYLKCQKLvTs7>. **The caveat, however, is that no one knows how quickly it will be safe to gather in larger groups. Thus, we'll plan for April 6 but will watch for updates!**

**NAMI KANSAS MONTHLY WORKSHOPS:** NAMI Kansas began the 2020-2021 NAMI Kansas Conversations on Mental Health monthly workshops as a replacement for the annual state conference. NAMI Kansas presents **FREE** monthly virtual (online) workshops on topics of interest to NAMI members on the **third Friday of each month through June 18, 2021, from 3:00 pm – 4:00 PM** via GoToWebinar. At [www.namikansas.org](http://www.namikansas.org), click the registration link for any workshop you would like to attend. Check back often for new offerings. Please note these offerings go into 2021!

**UPDATE ON ASK THE DOCTOR HOUR:** We have resumed our question time with Psychiatry residents from KU School of Medicine before our support group sessions at 6 PM on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of each month. Dr. Dannete Napier is scheduled for January and Dr. Christopher Dao for February.

**NEW MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT LINE:** COMCARE of Sedgwick County is offering a Support Line for individuals who may be experiencing an elevation in mental health symptoms. You may call **316-660-1111** from 7 AM to 7 PM Monday through Friday. You'll receive resources, coping skills ideas and encouragement to keep doing what you need to do to stay healthy, both emotionally and physically. **Residents who are experiencing a mental health crisis should call the Community Crisis Center at 316-660-7500 for assistance.**

## **NAMI WICHITA SYNAPSE**

A Publication for Family and Client Support,  
Advocacy Education and Research for Major Brain  
Disorders.

National Alliance on Mental Illness, Wichita  
Affiliate

NAMI Wichita  
P.O. Box 2435  
Wichita, KS 67201-2435  
Phone: (316) 686-1373  
E-mail: [info@namiwichita.org](mailto:info@namiwichita.org)  
Website: [www.namiwichita.org](http://www.namiwichita.org)

NAMI Wichita, KS, Inc. is a non-profit  
organization with 501 (c) 3 status, an affiliate of  
NAMI and NAMI Kansas

### **Officers and Board of Directors:**

**President: James Hook**  
**Vice President: Brittany Brest**  
**Secretary: Dan Smading**  
**Treasurer: Teresa Carter**  
**Members at Large: Nicole Cox, Esther  
Granados, David Larson, Laura Rosenbaum,  
Rommy Vargas and Bernestine Williams**

### **Other Volunteer Positions:**

**Family Support Group Facilitators: Gerry  
Lichti, Valerie Morley and Vicki Shook**  
**NAMI Connection Facilitators: Darla Carra-  
Denton, Eli Hess, David Larson and  
Columbine Schwanke**  
**NAMI Exhibit Coordinator: Treva Lichti**  
**NAMI In Our Own Voice Coordinator: Lynn  
Kohr**  
**NAMI Wichita Phone: Monthly Assignments  
Community Projects Coordinator: Gerry  
Lichti**  
**Program Committee: Laura Rosenbaum**  
**NAMI Kansas Affiliate Council  
Representatives: James Hook, David Larson  
and Nancy Ross**  
**NAMI Kansas Peer Leadership Council  
Representatives: Brittany Brest and Darla  
Carra-Denton**  
**NAMI Kansas Veterans' Council  
Representative: Tony Nutz**

### **Greetings from our President, James Hook:** Happy New Year, NAMI Wichita.

Last year was a time full of changes and trials for all of us in the NAMI family. We are continuing to monitor the changes and advancements in the fight against COVID-19 as the year progresses. At this time, we are continuing our current guidelines for meetings. This means the online meetings via ZOOM will continue. But don't despair, NAMI Wichita. We are planning to pick back up at our April Picnic! We are all hopeful that in-person meetings will continue once again. It has been a struggle for many in this time of isolation. So please keep an eye out as we will make announcements regarding all of this as time gets closer. Thank you to everyone for casting your ballots in this election.

The Board has some exciting ideas coming your way this year. Stay strong, and please remember to reach out for help if you are struggling.

**NAMI Volunteer Coordinator: David  
Larson**

**NAMI on Campus-WSU Contact: To be  
determined**

**NAMI FaithNet Contact: Eli Hess**

***Ending the Silence* Presenters: Esther  
Granados, Kara Carter**

**KU Residents Liaison: To be determined**

**NAMI Wichita Synapse Newsletter Editor:  
Lynn Kohr**

**Brainstorming Editor: Lynn Kohr**

**Website Managers: Nicole Cox, Darla  
Carra-Denton and David Larson**

Views published in the [NAMI Wichita Synapse](#)  
are those of individual contributors and do not  
reflect local, state, or national NAMI positions.

### **NAMI Wichita also publishes a Resource Guidebook funded by an anonymous**

**donor.** We support the activities of law  
enforcement agencies, hospitals, COMCARE,  
the medical community, other non-profit  
organizations, families, caretakers, friends and  
clients of mental health services directed  
towards improving the lives of persons living  
with mental illnesses. Membership in NAMI  
Wichita includes persons living with mental  
illnesses, their family members, community  
friends, behavioral health professionals and  
students.

Newsletter Mailing List Guidelines: This  
newsletter is sent by email to any NAMI  
Wichita members/contacts for whom we have  
an active email address. Print copies are sent  
only to those members who have no email  
service.

Community Leaders and Behavioral Health  
Professionals receive complimentary  
newsletters and are invited to support NAMI  
Wichita's programs and activities by becoming  
members.

Dues include membership in local, state  
and national levels as well as quarterly receipt  
of the [Advocate](#), a magazine published by  
NAMI. **PLEASE SEE MEMBERSHIP FORM  
ON LAST PAGE OF THIS NEWSLETTER.**

**MENTAL HEALTH AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE COALITION REPORT:** This Coalition, involving members of all major mental health/substance abuse treatment agencies and related organizations plus critical county/city government offices, was formed to address critical needs locally in MI/SA treatment and to build on and expand new programs implemented in the past number of years (such as the Crisis Intervention Team Program, the Mental Health Court, the Mental Health Pod, and renovations in the Community Crisis Center). The city/county faces treatment space and professional personnel availability crises and needs to develop a long-term vision that can have community support from all stakeholders. The work of the Coalition builds on community research and strategic planning completed earlier and is now focused on specific outcomes guided by three sub-committees. Gerry Lichti, Nancy Ross and Belinda Hunt represent NAMI Wichita on the Coalition and each serves as a member of one of the sub-committees.

The Access to Care – Policy Committee met recently to confirm policy priorities and identified the following that will be pursued: 1) Telehealth Reimbursement Equity with in-person treatment; 2) Increase in Medicaid Rates for Behavioral Health; 3) Funding for Crisis Stabilization Centers; 4) Medicaid Expansion and 5) Student Loan Forgiveness. #1-3 focus on service provision areas that are intensely underfunded and overstressed by increasing requests for services, shortages in professional personnel available to provide the services and increasing numbers of uninsured persons. #4, Medicaid Expansion, is in the hands of the state legislature, and much of our advocacy work with our representatives and senators in the past several years has focused on how passage of this bill would bring significant revenue to the state to address the above-mentioned needs. #5 addresses a critical workforce dilemma faced by all service agencies in that the minimum number of professional service providers needed far exceeds those available. These include psychiatrists especially but the same is true for all other medical providers. The solution provides loans to cover educational costs repayable with a designated number of years of work in underserved areas.

Further updates will occur as advances in Coalition work are made.

## **TWO NEW WAYS OF SUPPORTING NAMI WICHITA FINANCIALLY:**

### **1) GIVE WITH BING**

The Bing search engine on your computer can give back to your favorite charity (NAMI Wichita in this case) when you sign up for a free Microsoft Rewards account and you use the search engine BING. Just search on setting up a Microsoft Rewards Account and sign up. Then search on "Turn Give Mode On" and follow the directions. You will have to search for NAMI Wichita when you change the charity choice. Now, all you have to do after the charity is changed, is start your searching with Bing. (Make sure you are signed into Microsoft Rewards).

### **2) AMAZON SMILE**

Amazon Smile will also give to a charity of your choice. Just click on this link and it should take you to the option of changing your searching and purchases with Amazon: <https://tinyurl.com/yblddwlh>.

If you have questions or need some technical assistance to connect with either of the above options, please contact David E Larson, Affiliate Development and Volunteer Coordinator of NAMI Wichita, [d.larson@namiwichita.org](mailto:d.larson@namiwichita.org), 316.461.5755.

**LAPSED MEMBERSHIP?! THAT'S NOT GOOD!:** You might have received an email recently if your NAMI membership indicates a lapsed status in the national database. If you have already sent in your membership dues to P.O. Box 2435, Wichita, KS 67201 please disregard this reminder. However, if you have not sent in your dues, you will want to do this as soon as possible so that you don't miss another issue of the national NAMI magazine, the ADVOCATE. You may renew your membership in a couple of ways. First you may go to [www.nami.org](http://www.nami.org) and click on RENEW on the upper right area of the screen. If you would like to write a check, please print out the membership form at the bottom of this newsletter, fill it out and mail the form with your check to the P.O. Box listed on the form. If you have any questions at all, please contact David Larson, Affiliate Development and Volunteer Coordinator of NAMI Wichita, at 316-461-5755 or at [d.larson@namiwichita.org](mailto:d.larson@namiwichita.org). Thank you for your consideration.

**NAMI Wichita Education Classes for Spring 2021:** All in-person classes are currently postponed until it is safe to gather in groups. In the meantime, Zoom will be used for any offered classes. Please check [www.namiwichita.org](http://www.namiwichita.org) and click on "Programs" for further details on each class. **ALL CLASSES ARE FREE FOR PARTICIPANTS.**

**A Family-to-Family class of 14 members was offered using Zoom and finished on December 7. Teachers were Victoria Jackson, Treva Lichti and Timothy Shook with David Larson providing technical assistance. F2F classes are now offered in an 8-week rather than a 12-week series. See reservation information for the Spring 2021 class below.**

**HOMEFRONT EDUCATION PROGRAM:** A series of six classes helps family members, partners and significant others understand and support military service members and veterans living with mental health conditions while maintaining their own wellbeing. Some aspects of the class are managed on-line. Registration for these classes is required by calling Tony at 316-558-1888 or Eli at 316-207-5136.

**Peer-to-Peer** is offered for adults living with mental illness. This series of 8 weekly classes focuses on helping persons understand their illness and gain skills to help establish and maintain wellness. Classes last two hours each. Check [namiwichita.org](http://namiwichita.org) for details. You may register interest in the class at 316-686-1373 or email [peer2peer@namiwichita.org](mailto:peer2peer@namiwichita.org).

**Family-to-Family** (**English** language) is offered for family members, caretakers of or support persons for adults with the lived experience of mental illness. The class is provided in two and a half hour sessions for 8 weeks. If you wish to place your name on a wait list for the Spring 2021 class, contact Treva at 316-617-1909 or [tlichti@cox.net](mailto:tlichti@cox.net).

**FAMILY-TO-FAMILY SPANISH LANGUAGE CLASS:** Class description is the same as for the class above. To express interest and for additional information, contact Rommy Vargas at 316-250-7231 or [rommyvargasb@yahoo.com](mailto:rommyvargasb@yahoo.com) or Alejandra Prendes at 316-299-8728 or [Tatiana\\_prendes@hotmail.com](mailto:Tatiana_prendes@hotmail.com).

**NAMI Basics** is offered for parents or caregivers of children and adolescents who experience mental health and behavioral disorders. This series of 6 weekly classes is offered in a two-and-a-half-hour format. To learn more about upcoming classes, contact Laura at [lauros@sbcglobal.net](mailto:lauros@sbcglobal.net).

## **JOIN NAMI TODAY**

**The NAMI Wichita mission is to provide education and support for persons living with mental illness and their families; to provide support for research on brain disorders; and to provide public education and advocacy to promote mental health systems change with the hope that persons with mental illness may achieve the highest possible quality of life.**

<input type="checkbox"/> HOUSEHOLD	\$60	Annual dues include membership at the local, state and national levels. <b>Make checks payable to NAMI Wichita.</b> All dues and donations are tax deductible.
<input type="checkbox"/> INDIVIDUAL	\$40	
<input type="checkbox"/> OPEN DOOR DUES*	\$ 5	
<input type="checkbox"/> GIFT/DONATION =	_____	

(Please complete **ALL** requested information.)

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

STREET \_\_\_\_\_

CITY/STATE \_\_\_\_\_

9-DIGIT ZIPCODE \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONE \_\_\_\_\_

E-MAIL \_\_\_\_\_

MAIL TO:

NAMI Wichita, KS

P.O. Box 2435

Wichita, KS 67201-2435

New Membership     Renewal Membership

I have served in the military.     An immediate family member has served in the military.

*\*No one will be denied membership for their inability to pay the full fee. The minimum payment is \$5.*

## **A new edition of *Brainstorming* follows:**



# BRAINSTORMING

Volume 6, Issue 1

January/February 2021



Brainstorming is an on-line publication of the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) - Wichita Affiliate. It is made up of articles encompassing the topic of mental illness. Information provided in this e-magazine is for informational purposes only, has not been researched or independently verified and is not intended as medical advice. Views published in Brainstorming are those of the individual authors and contributors and do not reflect and are not endorsed as local, state or national NAMI positions. To read the full articles, click on the "Read more" link following the introduction to each article. To submit articles and other material to be considered for inclusion in this e-magazine, contact Lynn Kohr at [l.kohr@namiwichita.org](mailto:l.kohr@namiwichita.org).

## Secrets for Changing Our Habits for Long-Lasting Results

Possibilities open up when we don't have to rely on motivation or willpower to claw our way through creating a change in our lives. Instead, we can hack our own daily, automatic, habitual mind to create a new routine and environment for success.

[Read more](#)

## Study Reveals Adults With Mental Disorders Are At Significantly Higher Risk of COVID-19 and Have Poorer Outcomes

A systematic study based on the health histories of over 61 million American adults has found that people with a recent diagnosis of a mental disorder have a significantly increased risk for COVID-19 infection and tend to have worse outcomes than people infected with COVID-19 who don't have a mental disorder.

[Read more](#)

## The Teen Brain: 7 Things to Know

Did you know that **big** and **important changes** are happening in the brain during adolescence? Here are **7 things to know about the teen brain**.

[Read more](#)

## **Seasonal Affective Disorder**

Many people go through short periods of time where they feel sad or not like their usual selves. Sometimes, these mood changes begin and end when the seasons change. People may start to feel “down” when the days get shorter in the fall and winter (also called “winter blues”) and begin to feel better in the spring, with longer daylight hours.

[Read more](#)

## **5 Strategies for When Bipolar Depression Returns**

To prepare for the possibility of a relapse of bipolar depression, it is important to consider a few ideas about mindset, control, and support.

While bipolar is often equated with mania, it’s bipolar depression that predominates for most people and can be a destructive force in our lives. When the despair finally lifts, it can feel like a joyous return to life. Yet, in the shadows lurks the fear of a return to this dreaded state, particularly since the potential for relapse is not uncommon with a bipolar diagnosis. While there are self-care strategies to help prevent recurrences—like identifying which stressors leave us vulnerable—there are also evidence-based options to help stabilize symptoms so that we may climb out of depression when the darkness does return.

[Read more](#)

## **How to talk to children about suicide: An age-by-age guide**

Parents may feel wary about talking about mental health and suicide with their children, but experts say it's important. Death by suicide has increased every year since 1999 in people age 10 to 74. Talking about it makes a huge difference.

"It can go a long way to feel supported by other people," Thea Gallagher, clinic director at the Center for Treatment and Study of Anxiety in the Perelman School of Medicine at the University of Pennsylvania, told TODAY Parents.

What's more, discussing suicide doesn't encourage it.

[Read more](#)