



BE AN ADVOCATE FOR MENTAL HEALTH

First Annual 5K and Mental Health Fair

Save the date! *On October 10th, 2015* NAMI Whatcom is hosting our first annual Stigma Stomp!

The Stigma Stomp is a mental health fair paired with a 5k Run/walk at *Bloedel Donovan Park*.

The stigma of mental illness encourages societal attitudes of fear, mistrust, and prejudice against those living with a mental illness. Perpetuated stigma causes those living with an illness to delay seeking help and support, oftentimes to the point of crisis.

The Stigma Stomp challenges Whatcom County to come together to reject the stigma of mental illness. Through connecting the community to health and wellness resources and encouraging community members to be physically active, we hope to ignite the conversation about mental health.

In 2014, NAMI Whatcom supported over 150 individuals in various support groups

and educated over 120 individuals in various signature classes and forums.

Each textbook used in a class hosted by NAMI Whatcom costs approximately \$35.00. Just Imagine, \$35.00 for each of the 120 students is over \$4,000.00 in print costs alone.

All funds raised at the stigma stomp will go toward continuing free education and support to the community!

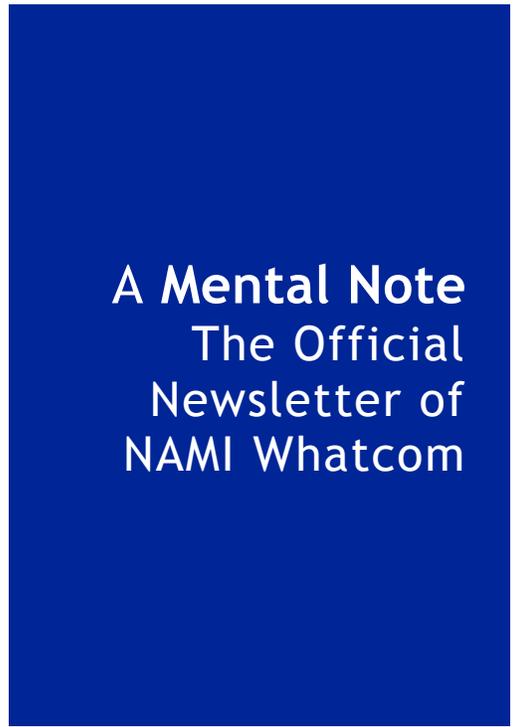
Early Bird Registrations for the race begin on May 1st (through August 31st). All early Bird Registrations include an event T-shirt. Register on our website!

Adults: \$26.00

Youth (Under 15): \$21.00

10 and under stomp free!

Get your stomping shoes ready! Together we can stomp out stigma!



IN THIS ISSUE



NAMI on Campus - WWU

Founding President, Mackenzie Butler, is excited to bring NAMI to Western Washington University's campus. Page 2



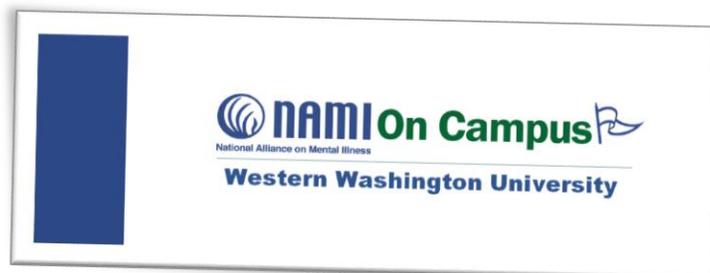
May is Mental Health Month

The goal of Mental Health Month is to bring attention to mental illness. Page 3

NAMI on Campus WWU

We are happy to announce the start of NAMI on Campus WWU! As a club, we strive to empower students to take part in fighting the stigma surrounding mental illness, to take control of their mental health and well-being, and to encourage a positive, successful, and fun college experience. We hope that this club will provide Western students with an opportunity to engage in the advocacy that is vital to a mentally healthy WWU and Whatcom County.

College-aged students are at an age when most mental illnesses develop, and yet they are one of the most underrepresented cohorts in mental health organizations. NAMI on Campus WWU is a way to connect young adults to the resources they might need to stay mentally healthy and to advocate for their peers!



Young adults bring passion and creative ideas for mental health awareness that will strengthen our local community.

We look forward to sharing our activities and on-campus advocacy with you all in the months to come!

For meeting and club updates:

www.facebook.com/NAMionCampusWWU

IG: namioncampuswwu

Twitter: @namioncampuswwu

NAMI on Campus is currently recruiting officers! If you are or know a WWU student who has a passion for mental health, a vision for helping others and a desire to get more involved, NAMI on Campus WWU may be the perfect avenue.

Contact Mackenzie Directly

oncampuswwu@namiwhatcom.org

Exploring the Food-Mood Connection

Mental health is not all in our heads. Though often ignored, nutrition can be an incredibly effective way to treat mental illness, including schizophrenia and depression. A growing number of mental health professionals and “integrative psychiatrists” are starting to address mental health concerns with a more holistic perspective. Mental health and the biochemistry of brain and body are affected by the balance of over 40 essential nutrients. Exploring the “food-mood connection” and applying a whole-body approach to treatment means focusing not just on talk therapy or medications, but also on diet, nutritional supplements, and lifestyle changes. Many studies have proven that it is important to eat a variety of healthy foods, as they will each provide unique nutrients that affect our brains in different ways.

Unfortunately, there is a relative lack of research on the healing properties of vitamins and nutrition since there is little profit to be made from such findings. Nevertheless, check out the examples below and discover more information with a simple internet search for “mental health and nutrition.” Bon appétit!

Folic Acid and Vitamin B-12 are B vitamins that play an important role in metabolism and the production of blood cells. They are also related to dopamine and noradrenalin, chemicals that are deficient in people with depression. Increasing levels of these vitamins, by eating certain fish, shellfish, meat, and dairy products, may also increase the effectiveness of medicines that treat depression.

Omega-3 Fatty Acids help boost the integrity of cell walls in the brain and may affect the way the brain sends signals throughout the body. People with chronic schizophrenia have been shown to possess low levels of fatty acids in their brains and, in some cases, Omega-3 supplementation can reduce the incidence and severity of psychosis. You can find Omega-3’s in salmon, herring, pasture-raised meat and eggs, flax, walnuts, or fish oil supplements.



May is Mental Health Month



NAMI Hearts and Minds

Movement is good for your body, mind and spirit. There is strong scientific evidence that physical activity can lower the risk of: depressive symptoms, heart disease and early death etc. To promote physical health, NAMI Whatcom has a Hearts and Minds Walking group.

To get involved with this group email:
heartsandminds@namiwhatcom.org

FAST FACTS



1 in 4 Adults

Will experience mental health problems in 2015.



1 in 5 Teens

Will experience serious emotional disorders in 2015.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

WWW.NAMI.org

info@nami.org

1(800) 950 - 6264

Each year millions of Americans face the reality of living with a mental health condition. During the month of May, NAMI and the rest of the country are bringing awareness to mental illness. Each year we fight stigma, provide support, educate the public and advocate for equal care. Each year, the movement grows stronger.

In 2013, President Obama proclaimed May as National Mental Health Awareness Month and brought the issue of mental health to the forefront of our nation's thoughts.

We believe that mental health awareness is important to address year round, but highlighting during May provides a time for people to come together and display the passion and strength of those working to improve the lives of the tens of millions of Americans affected by mental illness.

Mental health is a big part of overall health. One in four adults experience mental health problems every year, which can contribute to onset of serious medical conditions such as major depression, bipolar disorder and schizophrenia.

Among children and teens, one in five experience serious emotional disorders every year. Approximately one-half of chronic mental illness begins by the age of 14 and three-quarters by age 24. Unfortunately; there is often a long delay between the beginning symptoms of mental illness and when help is received.

Mental Health Awareness Month is a time to educate about the signs and symptoms of mental illness and to re-iterate the importance of speaking about mental health with your doctor. Early identification and treatment can make a big difference for successful management of a condition for yourself or a loved one.

For example, major depression is a mood disorder that is more serious than "feeling blue" or temporary sadness. Some people may experience it only once, but more than half have at least one additional episode over their lifetimes. Be alert to any combinations of the following symptoms:

- Depressed mood (sadness)
- Poor concentration
- Insomnia
- Fatigue
- Disturbance of appetite

- Feelings of guilt
- Thoughts of suicide

Bipolar disorder involves cycles of both depression and mania. It is different from the "ups and downs" that most people experience, involving dramatic shifts in mood, energy and ability to think clearly. Symptoms also are not the same in everyone; some people may experience intense "highs," while others primarily experience depression. Mania involves combinations of the following symptoms:

- Euphoria
- Surges of energy
- Reduced need for sleep
- Grandiosity
- Talkativeness
- Extreme irritability
- Agitation
- Pleasure-seeking
- Increased risk-taking behavior

Anyone who experiences symptoms of mental illness should see a doctor for a focused discussion about mental health concerns and assessment of potentially related physical conditions. The next step may be referral to mental health specialist. A range of treatment options exist. Education and connecting with others who have walked the same path or are facing similar issues also can play an important role.

For the month of May, we challenge you to start a conversation with your loved ones and your doctor. Talk about signs and symptoms of mental illness and create plans to make mental health a priority. Help end the silence and stigma around mental illness that prevents those who desperately need help from getting help. This is a month to make a difference in Whatcom County.

One resource is the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) which offers information through its website www.nami.org and Helpline 1-800-950-NAMI (6264).

NAMI Whatcom offers free education classes and support groups to individuals and families affected by mental illness. Find out more information at:

www.NAMIWhatcom.org

or by calling our support line at:

(360) 671 - 4950.

Education Forums

Mental Illness and the Criminal Justice System



When: Wednesday, May 27th, 2015
6:30 – 8:30 PM

Where: BPL, Lecture Room

Speakers:

- Anne Deacon, Whatcom County Health Department
- Commissioner Pete Smiley
- Chief Wendy Jones
- Denise Seibert, Executive Director of Sun House

Talk with the Author of

Parenting Your
Anxious Child with Mindfulness
and Acceptance

a powerful new approach to
overcoming fear, panic, and worry using
acceptance and commitment therapy

When: Saturday, June 6, 2015
10 AM – 12 PM

Where: BPL, Lecture Room

Speaker: Dr. Christopher McCurry

Education Classes

Family to Family



When: Beginning June 2nd, 2015
Tues/Thurs Until July 9th
6:30 PM - 8:30PM

Where: Fairhaven Branch Library
*Preregistration Required!

Peer to Peer



When: Beginning Sept. 28th, 2015
Mondays Until November 30th
6:00 PM - 8:00PM

Where: Fairhaven Branch Library
*Preregistration Required!

Other Upcoming Events

'Coming Back from Mental Illness and a Criminal History'

What: A Resource Fair by NSMHA

When: Friday, May 29th, 2015
10:00 AM – 2:00 PM

Where: St. Lukes Community Health
Education Center
3333 Squalicum Parkway

Ongoing Support Groups

Family Support Group

When: 2nd and 4th Wednesdays
6:30 - 8:00PM

Where: Health Support Center
1212 Indian St.

Connections Recovery Support

When: 1st, 3rd, 4th and 5th Tuesdays
6:30 - 8:00PM

Where: Health Support Center
1212 Indian St.

Suicide Survivors Support Group

When: 2nd and 4th Mondays
6:30 - 8:00PM

Where: Health Support Center
1212 Indian St.

DBSA

(Depression Bipolar Support Alliance)

When: 2nd Tuesday of Each Month
7:00 - 9:00PM

Where: Health Support Center

Other Upcoming Events

First Annual Stigma Stomp

What: A Health Fair and 5k!

When: Saturday, Oct. 10th, 2015
10:00 AM – 2:00 PM

Where: Bloedel Donovan Park

More Information on our website:
WWW.NAMIWhatcom.org

Join the NAMI Movement: Become a Volunteer!



NAMI of Whatcom County would like to thank all of our current volunteers! So many tirelessly commit time to helping others. Through educating, supporting, coordinating, fundraising and many other ways, it is volunteers who keep our affiliate thriving.

Volunteers are an integral part of NAMI Whatcom. Their work allows us to continue providing signature NAMI programs and services to Whatcom County and beyond. Without volunteers, we would not be able to maintain or expand our services to meet community needs. Thank you!

When you volunteer for NAMI Whatcom you contribute to our effort to provide services and compassion for people living with mental illness and their families.

We look for several ideals in potential volunteers, including: patience, compassion, a willingness to learn, desire for helping others find hope, basic office skills, experience with mental illness and a passion for upholding NAMI Whatcom's mission of support, education, advocacy and research.

We are excited and eager to expand services and look to other areas to offer additional trainings to our volunteers – so as to meet their needs and the needs in our community.

If you are interested in becoming involved with NAMI Whatcom, please contact the NAMI Office.

NAMI Whatcom is an organization fueled almost entirely by the tireless efforts of selfless volunteers with a passion for improving the lives of many.

Available Positions

Education and Support Programs

- Family to Family Co-Teachers
- Family Support Group Facilitators
- Peer to Peer Co-Teacher
- Connection Support facilitators
- BASICS Co-Teachers

Other Positions

- Education Coordinator
- Community Outreach Internship
- Office Support Volunteers
- Various Development Team Members
- Stigma Stomp Volunteers

Contact Us

NAMI Whatcom County
Health Support Center
1212 Indian St.
PO Box 5571
Bellingham, WA 98227

WWW.NAMIWhatcom.org
nami@healthsupportcenter.org

(360) 671 – 4950

Like us on Facebook!

Local Resources

24 Hour Crisis Line
1.800.584.3578

National Suicide Prevention Hotline
1.800.273.8255

WA Recovery Help Line
1.866.789.1511

WA Warm Line
1.877.500.9276

ACCESS Line
1.888.693.7200

Rainbow Recovery Center
360.752.2577

Mobile Outreach Team
360.410.7937

Stigma Stomp

Interested in Stomping?

Interested in Sponsoring?

Interested in Volunteering?

Interested in Tabling?

Find out more information about how to get involved on our website:

WWW.NAMIWhatcom.org/stigma-stomp.html

Or Email Juliann at:

officecoordinator@namiwhatcom.org

Easy Ways to Support Us!

Donations: If you want to ensure that all of your donations go directly to NAMI Whatcom programs and services, mail donations with a check made out to NAMI Whatcom County: **NAMI of Whatcom County, P.O. Box 5571, Bellingham WA 98227.**

Or donate to us directly on our website:
namiwhatcom.org/donations

Fred Meyer's Community Rewards Program. If you shop at Fred Meyer, consider linking your Rewards Card to the Health Support Center.

Good Search is a Yahoo-powered search engine that donates a penny to a non-profit of your choice each time you complete a search. Sign up now and choose NAMI Whatcom.

Good Shop: Go through the Good Shop website to pick the merchant you are looking for. Thousands participate and give differing percentages of each sale back to NAMI Whatcom.

Razoo.com: Donate or fundraise online via Razoo.com and choose NAMI Whatcom as the beneficiary.

Amazon Smile: Amazon Smile is a simple and automatic way for you to support your favorite charitable organization every time you shop, at no cost to you. When you shop at smile.amazon.com, you'll find the exact same low prices, vast selection and convenient shopping experience as Amazon.com, with the added bonus that Amazon will donate a portion of the purchase price to NAMI of Whatcom County!

Become a Member of NAMI:

The \$35 membership fee is split three ways: \$10 goes to NAMI National, \$10 to NAMI WA, and \$15 stays at NAMI Whatcom. NAMI Whatcom would be nothing without the support of its dedicated members.

Join NAMI Whatcom Today!

Membership Application

Date: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

_____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Please check the appropriate box:

Dues:

Basic \$35.00

Limited Income \$3.00

Donations:

\$ _____

\$50.00

\$100.00

\$500.00

\$1,000.00

In memoriam for _____

Optional Information: I am a

Spouse

Sibling

Person living with a diagnosis

Child of Ill Parent

Parent of School-Age Child

Parent of Adult child

Professional

Friend

Other _____

Please Make Checks Payable to:

NAMI of Whatcom County

P.O. Box 5571

Bellingham, WA 98227

ALSO INCLUDES: Membership in the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) and in NAMI Washington.

NAMI of Whatcom County is a 501(c) (3) non-profit. All donations and memberships are tax deductible to the extent of the law.