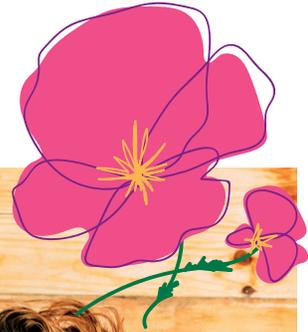




Santa Cruz County



Empowering Peers

With your help, 19 part-time Peer Leaders, with lived experience of a mental health condition, are now employed by NAMI-SCC to lead our peer programs!



In the last 6 months, 200 adults joined our peer support groups in English and Spanish and found a caring community, resources, and a pathway to recovery.



NAMI Peer Ambassadors now visit peers at local inpatient programs 2x/monthly to share experiences, resources, and hope.

Supporting Families

This winter, 38 families participated in multi-week classes in English and Spanish. They connected with other families and learned how to better support themselves and their child or family member with a mental health condition.



In the last 6 months, 1,894 families have found a supportive community and essential tools to build well-being.

Your giving helped to make this possible!



Tackling the Youth Mental Health Crisis

This school year, NAMI's Ending The Silence (ETS) is expanding to serve more youth and families! Traditionally presented in middle and high schools, ETS is now being presented more widely in partnership with local community organizations such as churches and nonprofits.

Families of elementary-aged youth will now also have the chance to learn about signs and symptoms of mental health conditions, through NAMI-SCC's new ETS for Parents at elementary schools. These needed expansions are possible because of you and other supporters like you!



What will teens do differently as a result of participating in Ending the Silence?

"If I have problems with my mental health in the future, I will push myself to seek help."

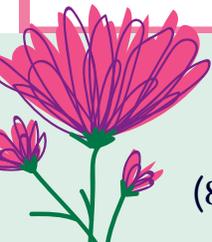
"Open up to others, and be open to those who need help."

"I won't be silent about it anymore."

Hope. Inclusion. Empowerment. Compassion. Fairness

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“I find a level of support that I am unable to find elsewhere through the empathy and wisdom shared by this group of people who deeply understand this experience.”

- Parent in NAMI's Parent/Caregiver of Youth Support Group

Living in the Present

More than anything, Sonia deeply loves and wants the best for her two teenaged daughters and her 2-year-old grandson. Sonia’s daughter, Ariana, had been diagnosed with PTSD and, at one point, struggled with thoughts of suicide. Sonia found it difficult to support Ariana, as she also struggled with PTSD and anxiety. Even though she had a psychiatrist, Sonia still didn't feel she had the right tools to understand her family's mental health needs. **She recalls, “I was in despair and frustrated with not having any support.”**

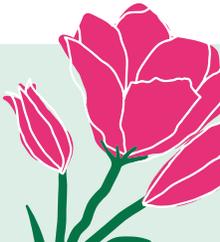
Sonia no longer wanted to live in the past. She knew that it was important for her to help herself in order to be there for her family. It was time to move forward, out of stigma and isolation. Soon she found NAMI-SCC's support groups and classes for Spanish-speakers. **“What encouraged me to join NAMI was knowing that it was a confidential and safe space to talk about my mental health challenges and learn how to help my daughter.”**

Since joining, Sonia has learned critical tools like how to implement self-care into her life. She reflects, **“Before NAMI, you're just living in the past, in your problem. With NAMI, you're living in the present, you're living beyond your problem, and you have hope.”**

Sonia has also learned how to be present, and dedicate time to deeply listen when her daughter is having anxiety. As a result, Sonia says that, “we became more like friends.”

Your generosity helps families like Sonia’s build the knowledge and skills they need to heal and thrive. Because of your generosity, families get the support they need to move from a place of isolation, confusion and despair to a place of empowerment, healing and hope.

Sonia now helps others as a peer volunteer at NAMI-SCC. Her message for anyone suffering with a mental health condition is, **"let NAMI enter your home and your hearts. Let NAMI hug you because it feels beautiful- it feels like the warmth of a home."**



Help more individuals and families get the support they need. Make a life changing gift TODAY at www.namisc.org/donate

Questions? Contact Danu Schoeck at danu@namisc.org / (831) 200-4037