NAMI National Alliance on Mental Illness | Coastal Virginia

FALL 2026

YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULT NEWSLETTER

Upcoming Events:

- Sep 22nd: Youth Using AI for Mental Health Support: Research Presentation by Conner Smith
- Oct 17th: NAMIWalks at the VB Oceanfront Boardwalk
- 21st: Say It Out Loud presentation for TCC Portsmouth
- Nov 17th: Ending the Silence presentation- hybrid

You matter. You are not alone.

Are you interested in helping with our youth and young adult outreach?

Do you or your teen/young adult have the lived experience and want to share your story?

Do you want to bring a presentation to your school/church/group?

PLEASE FILL OUT THE INTEREST FORM BELOW

Youth and Young Adult Outreach Interest Form

NAMIWalks information

NAMI ON CAMPUS (NOC)

Nations | Alliance on Mental Illness

NAMI On Campus clubs are student-led, student-run mental health organizations on college and high school campuses.

- Raise mental health awareness with fairs, walks, activities, candlelit vigil, and more!
- Educate the campus with presentations, guest speakers, and student panels.
- Advocate for improved mental health services and policies on campus.
- Support peers with signature NAMI programs

Hickory High School NOC

Faculty advisor, Pam Perdue, and club officers planning the upcoming school year's plans

impressive fall semester plans below!

Upcoming Events at Hickory H.S.

- Sept 10: World Suicide Prevention Day (Passing out Suicide Prevention ribbons as kids come in the doors)
- October 5-9: Mental Illness Awareness Week (Mental Health Awareness Message on Hawk Morning News each day)
- October 8: Hickory Morning Hangout (Coffee and Donuts before school)
- October 14: **Bullying Prevention Table** in Cafeteria for students to sign Anti-Bullying Pledge and Blue Ribbons
- October 17: **NAMI Walks**
- November 13: World Kindness Day - handing out gratitude cards to kids and staff
- November 16-20: Pie-in-the-Face Fundraiser (voting every day in cafeteria)
- November 23: Kids can pay to pie the winners (table in cafeteria during lunch)
- November 24/25: **Pie the teacher event**
- December 10: Hickory Morning Hangout (Coffee and Donuts before school)
- December 1-22: Seasonal Affective Disorder Awareness Month (Christmas Cards for lost loved ones at a table in front of our bulletin board)

Together, we raise awareness, suppert each other, and create a healthier campus.

NAMI on Campus Information

Meet our Student Ambassadors 26/27 school year

Mary

As a NAMI student ambassador I am excited to make connections with people through mental health awareness. As well as educate my community about mental health, and reduce the stigma of mental health!

Layla

I'm so excited to serve as a Student Ambassador for NAMI Coastal and help raise awareness about the importance of mental health in my community. My passion for mental health comes from my goal of becoming a pediatric psychiatrist, and I'm looking forward to learning, advocating, and helping others feel supported along the way.

Kevin

The student ambassador role has shown me not only quality people but people who advocate for the wide spectrum of mental health, transforming my perspective on the importance of mental health advocacy. My name is Marcus Kevin Wiggins, and I'm proud to be a member of NAMI Coastal Virginia.

Conner

Hello, my name is Conner and I am a current senior at Landstown High School. I am an aspiring psychologist who is passionate about reducing the stigma around mental health and raising awareness for mental illnesses. This is my second year as a student ambassador and I'm excited to see what comes this year!

Audrey

Hi, my name is Audre and I am a Junior at Currituck County high school! I joined NAMI because I wanted to get more involved in my community while doing something impactful for others and myself. I'm excited to work with other people who care about mental health and find new ways to make a positive impact on my community!!

CRISIS TEXT LINE

TEXT **741741** FREE, 24/7

Exploring Mental Health Trends Among Boys and Men

A Crisis Line Report

Tracy Costigan, Lili Török, C. Zack Upton, Priya Gandhi, Margaret Meagher May 2026

24 page report can be found at the link below

1. **Anxiety and stress are the defining internal struggle.**
   Anxiety and stress came up in 39% of all conversations with boys and men; the most common issue by far. This challenge intensified with age: among men over 18, anxiety and stress came up in over 40% of conversations.
2. **The loneliness crisis is real, and it worsens with age.**
   Struggles with human connection, reflected by relationship stress and loneliness, were the most common external stressors that boys and men discussed. While younger boys struggled most with relationship stress and bullying, loneliness and isolation grew more prominent as men aged — rising from 18% of conversations with boys under 14 to over 27% among men over 65.
3. **Young boys face the greatest risk of personal harm.**
   Suicidal ideation and self-harm were most prevalent among the youngest texters. Nearly 1 in 3 boys under 14 discussed thoughts of suicide, and nearly 1 in 6 discussed self-harm — underscoreing the urgent need for early intervention and community-based support.
4. **Social connection and exercise are the most powerful coping resources.**
   Despite struggling with loneliness, boys and men most commonly turned to friends and social connections to cope; nearly as often as they reported feeling isolated. Exercise emerged as a remarkably consistent source of relief across all

Crisis Text Line Report

AI's Relationship with Student Mental Health

Discussion and Q&A

Do you know what questions students are asking AI chatbots? Do you know how it is impacting them? You will be surprised to learn what this student has discovered at his school through his year long research project.

IN-PERSON at the NAMI office or VIRTUAL

NAMI National Alliance on Mental Illness Coastal Virginia **Community Presentation**

September 22
6 to 7 pm

Register Now!

This program is *free* and open to the public, but **registration is required.**

Scan the QR code or click on the link below

Meet the Speaker

Conner is a high school senior who serves as a NAMI Coastal Virginia Student Ambassador and member of the VBPS Mental Health Task Force. He is passionate about raising awareness about the connections between mental health and the digital world.

291 Independence Blvd., Suite 225
Virginia Beach, VA 23462
namicoastalvirginia.org
(757) 499-2041

AI Presentation registration link

Join NAMI Coastal Virginia for our Family & Friends seminar!

Do you want to learn more about your loved one's mental health condition from individuals who have personal experience with mental health conditions in their families?

- Diagnoses
- Recovery
- Communication Strategies
- Treatment
- Crisis Preparation
- NAMI Resources
- Support

Thursday, September 17, 2026
6:30pm - 8:30pm

Join us either in-person or virtually.
Light snacks provided.

Register using QR code or the link below.
See you there!

Family & Friends Seminar link

LATEST NEWS

News | Articles | August 28, 2026

An Update on the Harms of Social Media on Teen Mental Health: Meta Settles for $18 Billion

Author(s) Leah Kuntz full article linked below

Meta faces an $18B teen-safety settlement, adding time limits, night and school modes, parental controls, and tighter age checks across Instagram and Facebook.

- **Time limits:** Meta will implement a default 2-hour daily time limit that teens can only turn off with a parent's permission. This limit is cumulative across Facebook and Instagram, and time spent scrolling on both apps counts toward the total, including if the teen has multiple accounts.
- **Night mode:** Meta will implement a default block from midnight and 6 AM. Teens will not be able to post or view their Feed, Stories, Explore, or Reels, during those hours.
- **School mode:** Notifications will be muted by default between 8 AM and 3 PM. During those hours, teens will no longer receive push notifications, except for direct messages and alerts about their account security or safety.
- **Regular usage prompts:** Teens will receive prompts after 15 minutes of continuous screen time on Facebook or Instagram. They will also receive prompts when their total daily usage hits both 60 minutes and 90 minutes. These prompts are designed to encourage "intentional use."
- **Disabled filters:** Teens will be unable to use extreme makeup filters, in addition to the pre-existing block on teens using cosmetic surgery filters.
- **Age assurance measures:** Meta will invest in stronger technology to catch accounts that may belong to individuals under the age of 13, and to identify accounts that may be between the ages of 13 and 17, to ensure those accounts are placed in experiences designed for teens.
- **Age-appropriate restrictions:** By default, teens are placed into 13+ content settings, which are inspired by movie ratings criteria and parent feedback. This means teens are prevented from following or interacting with accounts that are age inappropriate.
- **Restricting unwanted contact from strangers:** Teens will continue to be defaulted into private accounts on Instagram and private default settings on Facebook, which restricts potentially unwanted contact from strangers.

Psychiatric Times article on Meta

Middle School resource

Every student deserves to learn about mental health, wellness, and strategies to maintain their well-being.

That's why ***FLARE by NAMI*** was created and made accessible to all.

FREE tools. No barriers. See the link below.

- **No Cost. Ready to Teach.** Every FLARE by NAMI lesson is available for free, including everything you need to teach it with confidence.
- **Preview and plan before signing up.** View lesson subjects and details to ensure you have what you need before you even enter your email.
- **Drag-and-drop builder for easy customization** Choose what you will teach your students from 23 ready-to-use lessons.
- **Designed for middle school students.** The National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) worked with experts to create age-appropriate lesson plans.

High school resources

How Teens Can Ask For Help

A video (linked below) on who to reach out to and ways to put your thoughts and feelings into words to receive help for a mental health condition

College resources

NAMI Connection
National Alliance on Mental Illness RECOVERY SUPPORT GROUP
3rd Tuesday of the month, 7:30 pm-9:00 pm
Online

This specific NAMI Connection Recovery Support Group is a free, peer-led support group for **young adults, ages 18-36**, who has experienced symptoms of a mental health condition. You will gain insight from hearing the challenges and successes of others, and the groups are led by trained leaders who've been there.

Mental health is no different than physical health. There are healthy habits that can help us maintain our emotional well-being, and there are signs we need to pay attention to so we can get professional help if we need it.

Prioritizing taking care of yourself and knowing how to reach out when you need support will help improve your college experience in multiple ways, including your ability to study and do well academically.

College guide linked below

Flare by NAMI

How to Ask for Help Video

College Guide

Young Adult Support Group

THE ALEXA PROJECT

The Alexa Project recognizes all who live with mental illness and their courageous journeys.
This initiative honors Alexa, who in the face of stigma, spoke out courageously about her journey with bi-polar disorder.

If you would like to take the pledge for #TheAlexaProject send your video to:

namicoastalvideo@gmail.com

The Alexa Project: Breaking the Stigma Podcast and Stigma Free Pledge

SUICIDE WARNING SIGNS FOR YOUTH

You Are Not Alone

It's time to take action if you notice these signs in family or friends:

1. Talking about or making plans for suicide.
2. Expressing hopelessness about the future.
3. Displaying severe/overwhelming emotional pain or distress.
4. Showing worrisome changes in behavior, particularly in combination with the warning signs above, including significant:
   - Withdrawal from or changing social connections/situations.
   - Changes in sleep (increased or decreased).
   - Anger or hostility that seems out of character or out of context.
   - Recent increased agitation or irritability.

If you or someone you know is struggling or in crisis, help is available.
Text or **call 988** or chat **988lifeline.org**, *or reach out to a mental health professional.*

988 SUICIDE & CRISIS LIFELINE

PEP24-988-09

Our Contact Information
"{{Organization Name}}"
"{{Organization Address}}"
"{{Organization Phone}}"
"{{Organization Website}}"

NAMI National Alliance on Mental Illness Coastal Virginia

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