# For Immediate Release [*Contact Name*]

# [*Date*] [*Phone*] and [*E-mail*]

# This Mental Health Month, NAMI [ Affiliate Name] Advocates for Better Access to Quality Mental Health Care by Coming Together for Mental Health

# [City, State] **— Over the last two years, the collective distress of the pandemic has shed light on the importance of mental health as an essential part of overall health. This May, for Mental Health **Awareness** Month, [Name], the [state organization/local affiliate] of** [NAMI](http://www.nami.org)**, the National Alliance on Mental Illness, is raising awareness and advocating for improved access to affordable, quality mental health care for everyone. More than ever, mental health cannot be ignored.**

By coming *Together for Mental Health*, we can amplify our message from a few voices to a harmonious chorus of advocates emphasizing the need for adequate mental health care funding, access to quality care and effective mental health crisis response in all communities. NAMI believes that accessing mental health care and treatment should be as easy as going to the doctor for a broken arm.

**As the mental health impact of the pandemic continues and affects more people, we have an opportunity to meet people where they are with systematic changes that reimagine crisis response systems to provide help.** On July 16, the new 988 mental health and suicide crisis number will launch nationwide. NAMI is working tirelessly at the local, state and federal levels, and calling for adequate funding for crisis response teams and services in every community. The goal is to provide a mental health response for a mental health crisis that treats people with dignity and respect.

NAMI [affiliate] knows that getting help during a crisis can save lives — and so can getting care before reaching a crisis point. We support a coordinated care approach that combines physical and mental health care services to identify symptoms earlier and connect people with care. Together, we can help create a mental health support system that doesn’t leave anyone behind and provides access to the right support at the right time.

“Over the last two years, NAMI [ Affiliate Name] has provided continuous support both virtually and in-person as our community endures grief, trauma, uncertainty and isolation, **said [*insert local spokesperson*]**. “We will continue as long as necessary to meet people where they are with resources and support groups to get through these challenging times. By joining ***Together for Mental Health,* we can build better communities where no one feels alone in their struggle.”**

Especially during difficult times, the NAMI community is here to help you. **[Name]** will **[insert short description of any affiliate event or anything specific to an activity during Mental Health Month including location, date and time or web address for more information].**