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# Empowering Student Advocacy: Strategies for Growing NAMI On Campus Outreach

# What is NAMI ON CAMPUS?

National Alliance on Mental Illness

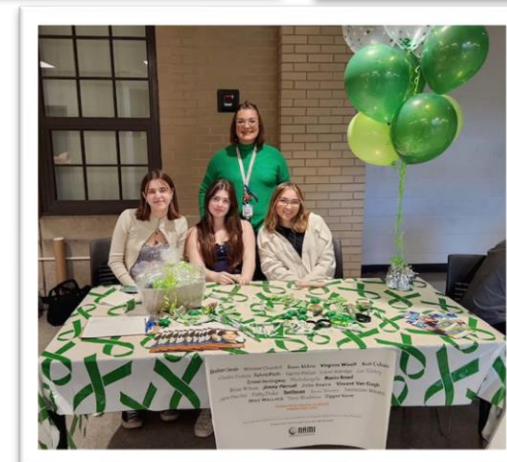


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## A Brief Overview of NAMI On Campus

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

- Raise mental health awareness with fairs, walks and candlelit vigils.
- 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 and training from NAMI State Organizations and Affiliates.



## Top Activities and Events Reported in December 2024



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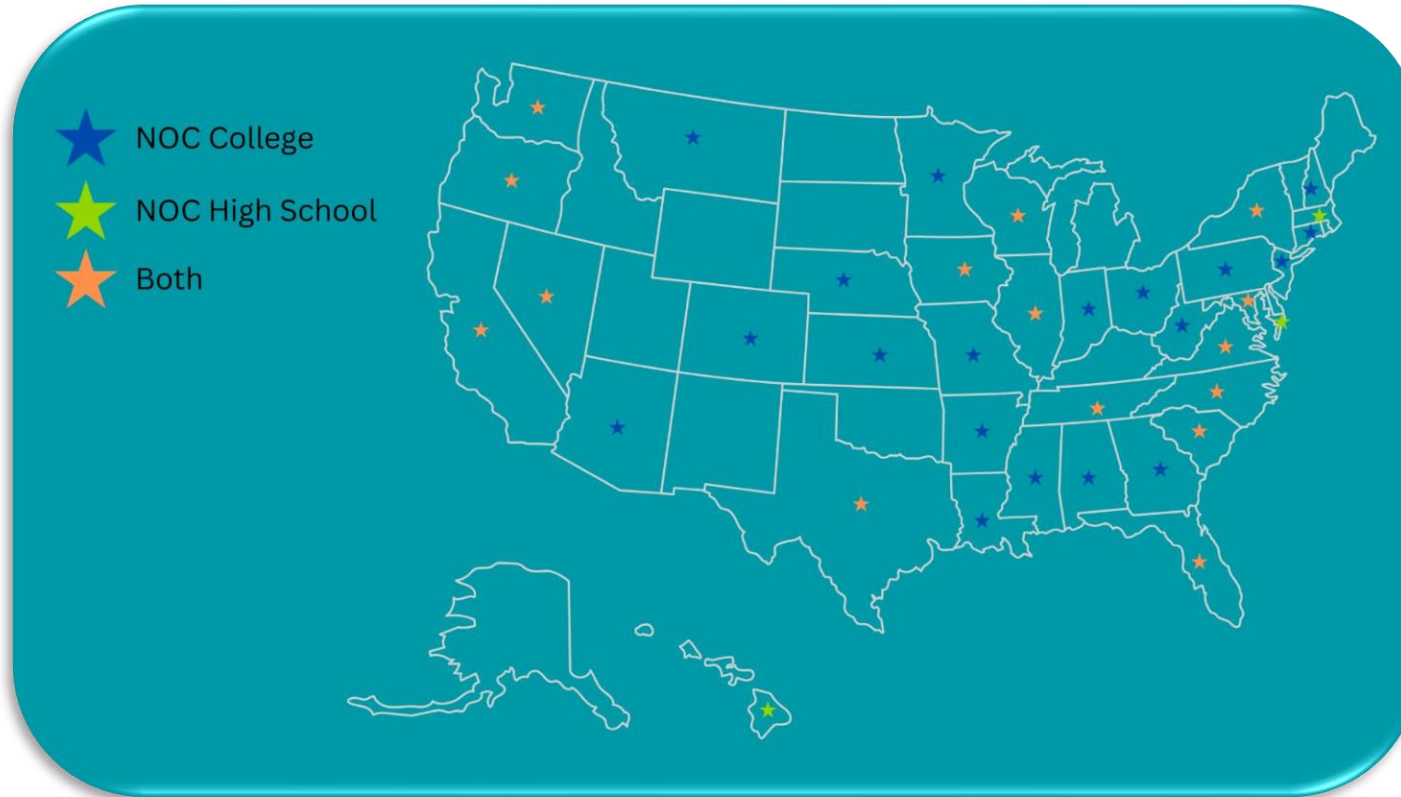
1. General Tabling
2. Crafting
3. Collaborating with other clubs, athletics, and/or organizations
4. Care Packages/Goodie Bags
5. Social Mixers
6. Walks
7. Movie Night
8. Games (ex: Trivia, Bingo, Jeopardy)
9. Physical Activities (ex: Sports, Yoga)
10. Positive Affirmations/Gratitude



## Our Current Reach Across the United States

As of April 2025, we are currently supporting over 380 NOC clubs.

According to our December reporting, there are over 3,000 students involved in NOC! And that's just from the 90 clubs that reported.



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# Club Structure

## Club Faculty Advisor:

A faculty member who can be committed to attending club meetings and events. This advisor should also be comfortable talking about mental health. This role cannot be held by a parent/guardian or any non-staff school member.

## Club Leaders:

A club should minimally have a president, secretary, and a treasurer to help support club meetings and other club related efforts (i.e. events, funding, getting club materials)

## Supporting NAMI Affiliate:

The supporting NAMI Affiliate role can be held by either the nearest local affiliate or NAMI State Organization depending on the capacity of the state. The supporting affiliate is in direct contact with the club for providing insight, materials, and general support.



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# How does one start a NOC club?

- 1 Connect with their local NAMI Affiliate
- 2 Designate a faculty advisor
- 3 Designate three club leaders (President, Secretary, and Treasurer)
- 4 Receive school approval to start a club
- 5 Complete the NOC Contact Form to formally register their club



# Field Support

Nothing about us, without us



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## NAMI National

- Provide support to all levels of the field
- Develops materials and guides
- Host webinars
- Approve club registration
- Keeps record of active NOC clubs

## NAMI State Org. (NSO)

- Provide support to Local NAMI Affiliates
- Supports National in communicating to their community
- Keeps an updated list of active NOC clubs within their state
- May provide direct support to clubs as needed

## NAMI Affiliates (NA)

- Provides support directly to NOC clubs
- Supports National and NSO in communicating to the NOC clubs
- Keeps an updated list of contacts for active clubs
- Engage clubs in local events and volunteer opportunities

## NOC Clubs

- Keeps regular communication with their partner affiliate for general updates
- Hosts regular meetings
- Works with NA to provide NAMI resources to their peers
- Engages in NAMI events and opportunities



## Field Presenters



### Emily Fagan

*Director of Youth and  
Young Adult  
Programming, NAMI  
Illinois*



### Lexie Taylor

*Youth and Advocacy Manager,  
NAMI Philadelphia*



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# NAMI Illinois 2024 Youth and Young Adult Expansion



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Growing Ending the Silence, NAMI On Campus, and other Youth and Young Adult Programming

- **Expansion goals**

- **Improve youth collaboration between NAMI Illinois and local affiliates as well as between local affiliates**
- **Engage local affiliates who were not yet doing youth programming**
- **Encourage local affiliates who were already successful at youth programming**



# NAMI on Campus Mini-Grants



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## Grant Deliverables

- **Grow number of NOC clubs statewide** by supporting collaboration with local high schools, colleges, and universities.
- **Empower and support current NOC clubs**, such as providing funding for student events, training, or growing student-initiated programming.
- **Develop leadership of NOC participants by engaging them in other YYA mental health projects**, such as recruiting personal speakers and presenters, volunteering or interning at NAMI affiliates, or pursuing mental health training and certifications.
- **Foster collaboration among NAMI affiliates, NAMI IL, and other stakeholders**, by sharing resources, hosting learning opportunities, encouraging NAMI On Campus meet-ups, and working together to grow the effectiveness of NAMI Youth/Young Adult programs statewide.
- **Utilize and share NAMI National resources**, including the Mental Health College Guide, NAMI.org Youth & Young Adult resource page, Say It Out Loud and Next Gen postcard images, and Teen Young Adult helpline.

## Performance Measures

- Names of high schools/colleges/universities contacted regarding potential NOC clubs, including school name, date and type of contact, and relevant meeting details.
- School names and contact information for new NAMI On Campus Clubs, including faculty advisor and student leader contacts.
- Updated contact information for any current NAMI On Campus clubs, including faculty advisor and student leader contacts.
- Number of posts and engagements on social media using the assets that were shared with you
- Number of events held on campuses, including an estimate of how many students were reached.
- Number of youth and young adult outreach events held outside of a campus, including an estimate of how many were reached
- Photos, videos, written testimonials, or quotations from young adult participants or campus contacts. You can also share inspiring moments you encountered as an affiliate.



# Grant Outcomes

- **Nearly 80,000 individuals were reached through social media and live outreach efforts.**
- **Affiliates grew the number of NAMI On Campus Clubs in Illinois by over 2.5x during the grant period.**



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- **Growth has steadily continued after the grant period – we now have over 20 high school and college clubs throughout the state and are continuously growing.**



# What can NAMI Illinois do to support clubs?

- **NAMI Illinois registers all clubs and offers an initial meeting with students, faculty advisors, and affiliate liaisons**
- **NAMI Illinois directly supports one club**
- **Forwards relevant news to clubs and local affiliates, such as scholarships, fundraising opportunities, webinars, educational events, etc.**
- **Hosts quarterly webinars**



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- **Includes clubs in advocacy events or state conference**
- **Opportunities for advisor collaboration**
- **Opportunities for affiliate collaboration**
- **Directly funding NOCs**

 **NAMI ON CAMPUS**

# What Works?

- **ETS and NOC in partnership**
- **Finding interested students – having them advocate**
- **Helping independent mental wellness clubs turn into NOCs**



Thursday  
**WEAR GREEN**  
support mental health awareness  
ALL WEARING GREEN ELIGIBLE TO WIN RANDOM PRIZES ON CAMPUS!



# NAMI Philadelphia

## Current Clubs: How they came to be



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### College/Higher Ed Clubs (4)

- Drexel University
- University of Pennsylvania Perelman School of Medicine
- Temple University
- St. Joseph's University



### High School Clubs (3)

- Cheltenham High School
- Academy at Palumbo
- The BridgeWay School

*\*note: all of our clubs came to be in different way, there is no right or wrong way!*

## College Vs. High School NAMI On Campus Clubs



*NAMI On Campus at St. Joseph's University – photo opp for SJU Hawk News article*

### College

- More heavily student-ran
  - Easier communication
  - Students usually start these clubs and are eager to get it up and running
- Have more events, like to do more social events
- Easier to dissolve as a club if they cannot find successors

### High School

- More assistance from faculty advisor (usually a school counselor!)
- Teachers & school staff are very busy, so it can be harder to reach them
- Slower to get off the ground and find interested students
- More likely to have NAMI Philadelphia come in to do ETS & other programming



## TIPS WE SHARE WITH NOC CLUBS

- Host events with food & merch (especially for freshmen/younger students)
- Create a social media role & post often (use Canva!-free for nonprofits)
- Hold themed events & offer merch/prizes
- Collaborate with other orgs (e.g., GSA, Active Minds, psychology clubs)
- Track interests (emails/socials) – follow up personally
- Offer volunteer hours or diversity credits for events
- Go beyond elevator speeches – build real connections
- Highlight NAMI benefits & member successes
- Use QR codes & Linktree for sign-ups, forms, events
- Repost on personal socials to boost visibility



*NAMI On Campus at Drexel University*

# Tips & Other Lessons Learned



*NAMI On Campus at St. Joseph's University President Dominic Rossi sharing his mental health testimony at NOC St. Joe's event*



- **Clubs that seek funding are the most successful!!!!**
  - Whether through NAMI or through their school
- **Leading students must have their heart in it for their club to thrive**
  - The best clubs are the ones that come to you!
- **Hold monthly meetings with club leaders**
  - Helps with sustainment & accountability
- **Make appreciation efforts**
  - ex. A dinner, stipend, giving them merch, acknowledging them on your NSO/ NA social media
- **Keep them engaged at your NSO/NA**
  - **Include them at your NAMIWalk**
    - Have a table for them!
    - Fundraising incentives - tablecloth example
  - **Offer volunteer efforts**
    - Presenting, storytelling, etc.



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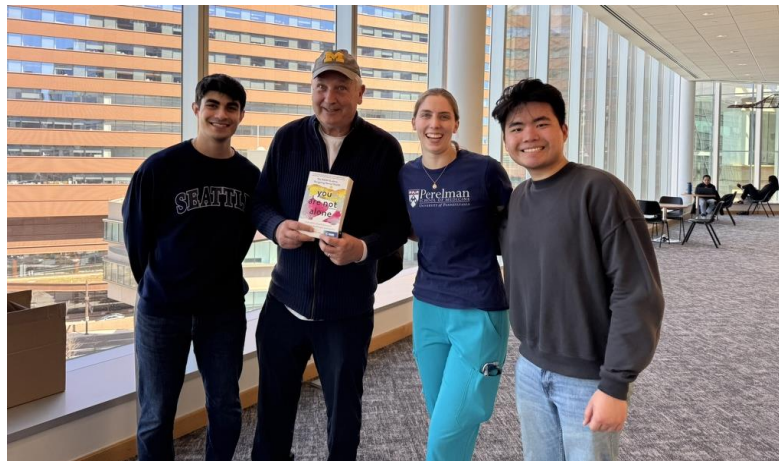


*NAMI On Campus at the University of Pennsylvania Perelman School of Medicine at the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention (AFSP) Walk*

# Philadelphia NOC Clubs Gallery



Philadelphia NAMI On Campus clubs at NAMIWalks Philly 2024



NAMI On Campus at the University of Pennsylvania Perelman School of Medicine – Book Tour event with NAMI Chief Medical Officer Dr. Ken Duckworth



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NAMI On Campus at Temple University



**THANK YOU!**

