

#MIAW

**Mental Illness
Awareness Week**
Oct. 4–10, 2020

Guide for NAMI State Organizations and Affiliates



#MIAW

Oct. 4–10

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QUESTIONS?

Email marcom@nami.org and a member of the Marketing and Communications Team will respond.

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ABOUT MENTAL ILLNESS AWARENESS WEEK

Each year, millions of Americans face the reality of living with a mental health condition. However, mental illness affects everyone directly or indirectly through family, friends or coworkers. That is why each year, during the first week of October, NAMI and participants across the country raise awareness of mental illness, fight stigma and provide support through Mental Illness Awareness Week (MIAW).

We believe that mental health conditions are important to discuss year-round, but highlighting them during Mental Illness Awareness Week provides a dedicated time for mental health advocates across the country to come together as one unified voice. Since 1990, when Congress officially established the first full week of October as MIAW, advocates have worked together to sponsor activities, large or small, to educate the public about mental illness.

This guide is intended to help NAMI State Organizations and NAMI Affiliates coordinate their Mental Illness Awareness Week public awareness efforts with the national office for greater impact.

Learn more here: nami.org/miaw

MENTAL ILLNESS AWARENESS WEEK THEME OVERVIEW

Mental Illness Awareness Week occurs Sunday, Oct. 4 through Saturday, Oct. 10.

The theme of this year's MIAW is **“What People with Mental Illness Want You to Know.”** Each day throughout the week, we will be raising the voices of those with lived experience to talk about some of the conditions and symptoms that are most misunderstood. Below is the focus for each day of MIAW:

Day 1: MIAW Kickoff

Day 2: Borderline Personality Disorder

Day 3: Disassociation

Day 4: Anxiety

Day 5: Bipolar Disorder

Day 6: Psychosis

Day 7: General Mental Health (World Mental Health Day)

Throughout MIAW, NAMI will also continue to amplify its “You Are Not Alone” campaign, which builds awareness with digital tools and storytelling that make connection possible during a climate of physical distancing. The NAMI community is always here to help, reminding everyone that you are not alone.

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HOW TO ENGAGE ONLINE WITH MIAW

NAMI Blog

Each day during MIAW, NAMI will feature a blog and social media post addressing the theme “What People with Mental Illness Want You to Know.” Be sure to check out the NAMI Blog and look for posts on our social media. nami.org/Blogs/NAMI-Blog

NAMI.org Personal Stories

Each day during MIAW, we will feature personal stories from real people experiencing mental health conditions submitted to nami.org/yourstory. Personal stories are brief, informal snapshots of lived experience, making them unique from pieces published on the NAMI Blog. By reading about lived experience, we aim to make people feel less alone in their mental health journeys.

Please share the link with your networks, and they could be featured on nami.org/personal-stories and NAMI social media channels.

MIAW Video Series

We will feature videos from real people sharing their lived experience with some of the mental health conditions NAMI is focusing on during MIAW. Look for content to be uploaded to nami.org/miaw as we get closer to MIAW.

HOW TO ENGAGE WITH YOUR COMMUNITY

There are different ways to get the word out about MIAW and stay connected to your community, friends and family:

- **Participate in NAMIWalks Your Way**, a virtual event on Saturday, October 10th. This National Day of Hope has a local and national reach to elevate awareness of and raise funds for mental health and bring together and grow the NAMI community. Visit namiwalks.org for more information.
- **Host a Facebook or Instagram Live** with an expert or person with lived experience about how they’re managing physical distancing challenges while maintaining their mental health.
- **Vote4MentalHealth**, spotlighting the importance of Mental Illness Awareness Week is also a great opportunity to continue cross-promoting efforts to get out the vote in this November’s election. To help spread the message and for ways to get involved, including a sample social media toolkit with graphics, visit vote4mentalhealth.org/get-involved.

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SOCIAL MEDIA

Below are some sample social media posts you can use throughout the week. Amplify our social media posts by sharing, liking and retweeting. We will also feature videos with members of the NAMI community telling their personal stories that we invite you to share.

We also encourage you to post relevant content on the following days with events that coincide with Mental Illness Awareness Week:

- Tuesday, Oct. 6: National Day of Prayer for Mental Illness Recovery and Understanding
- Thursday, Oct. 8: National Depression Screening Day
- Saturday, Oct. 10: World Mental Health Day
- Saturday, Oct. 10: NAMIWalks National Day of Hope

Sample Posts:

- There is a lack of understanding surrounding people experiencing mental illness. That's why @NAMICommunicate is sharing some of the most misunderstood aspects of mental illness each day during MIAW. #MentalIllnessAwarenessWeek #MIAW
- We can use our shared experiences to fuel empathy for those with chronic conditions and symptoms that affect daily life. #MentalIllnessAwarenessWeek #MIAW
- Mental health is a huge part of overall health and should be a priority for everyone, whether you have a mental health condition or not. #MentalIllnessAwarenessWeek #MIAW
- We've come a long way in fighting mental health stigma, but there's still more to do. Join us in raising awareness and providing education, information and support this #MentalIllnessAwarenessWeek #MIAW
- You are #NotAlone: 1 in 5 U.S. adults experience mental illness each year. #MentalIllnessAwarenessWeek #MIAW
- There is no health without mental health #MentalIllnessAwarenessWeek #MIAW
- Less than half of U.S. adults with mental illness get treatment. That must change. #MentalIllnessAwarenessWeek #MIAW
- (10/10) Today is World Mental Health Day. We all have mental health challenges and if you are struggling right now, know that You Are Not Alone. #MentalIllnessAwarenessWeek #MIAW
- Mental health can and should be a priority this election season. Visit NAMI's new election website, vote4mentalhealth.org, and pledge to #Vote4MentalHealth.

Hashtags to Use: [#MentalIllnessAwarenessWeek](#) [#MIAW](#)

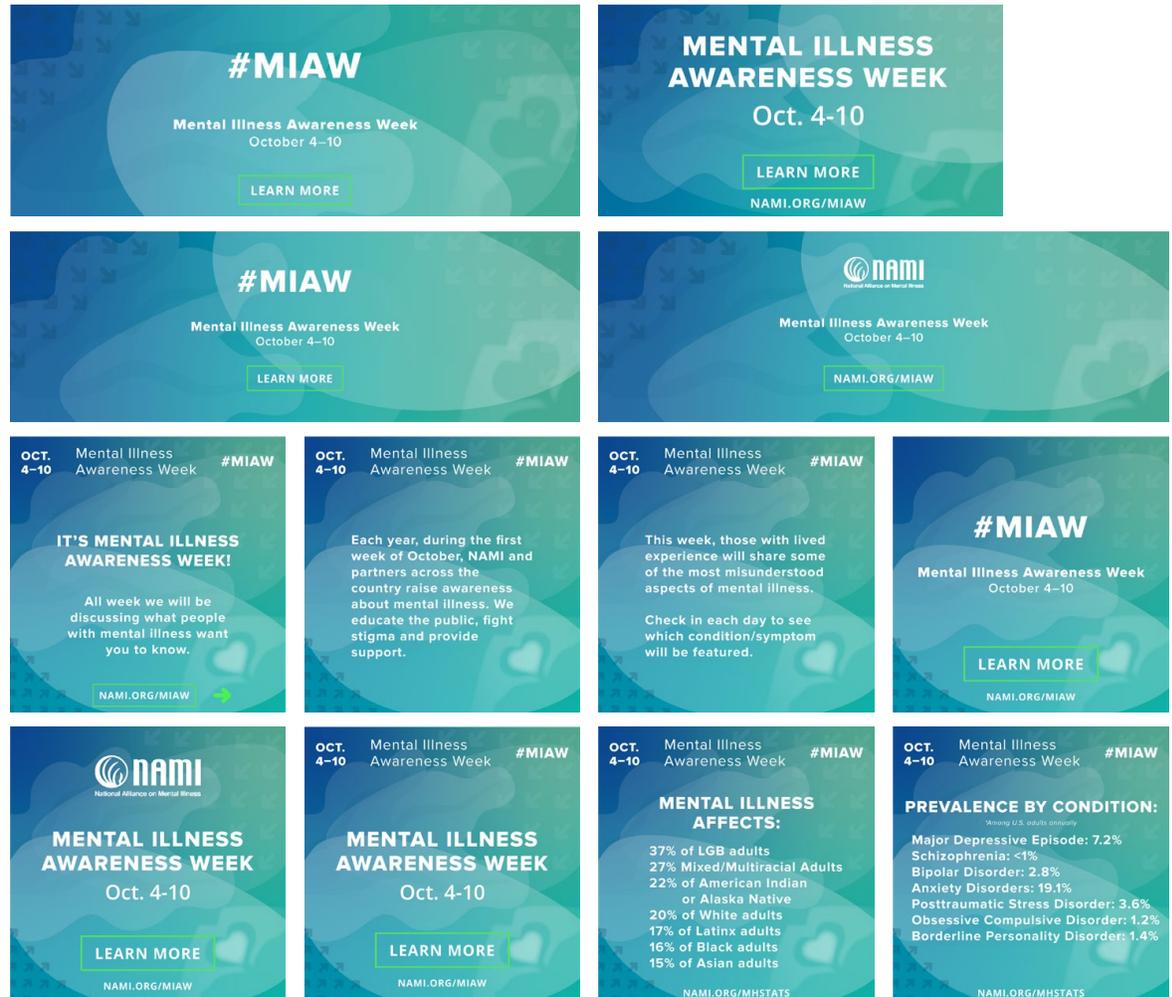
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SUGGESTED GRAPHICS FOR MENTAL ILLNESS AWARENESS WEEK

Download graphics and logo files to share on social media accounts as posts, cover images, website hero images or to add to existing messaging.

High-quality files (and additional graphics) can be downloaded from: nami.org/Get-Involved/Awareness-Events/Awareness-Resources



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FAST FACTS

These are only a few of the reasons why it's important to take part in promoting awareness for Mental Illness Awareness Week. Please use these facts and others, including the infographics on our website (nami.org/mhstats), to encourage discussions about mental health through social media or other forms of outreach.

- 1 in 5 U.S. adults experience mental illness each year
- 1 in 25 U.S. adults experience serious mental illness each year
- 1 in 6 U.S. youth aged 6-17 experience a mental health disorder each year
- Suicide is the 2nd leading cause of death among people aged 10-34
- 19.1% of U.S. adults experienced mental illness in 2018 (47.6 million people). This represents 1 in 5 adults.
- 4.6% of U.S. adults experienced serious mental illness in 2018 (11.4 million people). This represents 1 in 25 adults.
- 16.5% of U.S. youth aged 6-17 experienced a mental health disorder in 2016 (7.7 million people)
- 3.7% of U.S. adults experienced a co-occurring substance use disorder and mental illness in 2018 (9.2 million people)
- 43.3% of U.S. adults with mental illness received treatment in 2018
- 64.1% of U.S. adults with serious mental illness received treatment in 2018
- 50.6% of U.S. youth aged 6-17 with a mental health disorder received treatment in 2016
- The average delay between onset of mental illness symptoms and treatment is 11 years
- Mental illness affects:
 - 15% of Asian adults
 - 20% of White adults
 - 16% of Black adults
 - 17% of Latinx adults
 - 22% of American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 27% Mixed/Multiracial Adults
 - 37% of LGB adults
- Annual prevalence among U.S. adults, by condition:
 - Major Depressive Episode: 7.2% (17.7 million people)
 - Schizophrenia: <1% (estimated 1.5 million people)
 - Bipolar Disorder: 2.8% (estimated 7 million people)
 - Anxiety Disorders: 19.1% (estimated 48 million people)
 - Posttraumatic Stress Disorder: 3.6% (estimated 9 million people)
 - Obsessive Compulsive Disorder: 1.2% (estimated 3 million people)
 - Borderline Personality Disorder: 1.4% (estimated 3.5 million people)

For more statistics and detailed citations, visit nami.org/mhstats.

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MENTAL ILLNESS AWARENESS WEEK TEMPLATE PRESS RELEASE

Word doc is available for download at: nami.org/extranet/miaw

[Insert logo]

For Immediate Release

Date: October 5, 2020

Contact:

Email:

Phone:

During Mental Illness Awareness Week, Join NAMI [State or City] to Learn More About Mental Health Conditions to Reduce Stigma

Each year, millions of Americans face the reality of living with a mental health condition. In honor of Mental Illness Awareness Week (MIAW) on Oct. 4-10, 2020, the [National Alliance on Mental Illness \(NAMI\)](#) and participants across the country are raising awareness about mental illness. The theme of this year's MIAW is "What People with Mental Illness Want You to Know." Each day throughout the week, we will be raising the voices of those with lived experience to talk about some of the conditions and symptoms that are most misunderstood to help people understand the complexities of mental illness and eliminate stigma.

Since 1990, when Congress officially established the first full week of October as MIAW, advocates have worked together to sponsor activities to educate the public about mental illness. We believe that mental health conditions are important to discuss year-round but highlighting them during MIAW provides a dedicated time for mental health advocates across the country to come together as one unified voice. This year, NAMI is calling on everyone to become informed and listen to the voices of people with lived experiences to increase acceptance and compassion in our communities, so no one feels alone in their struggle.

One in five adults experience mental illness every year. Although many people today understand that mental illness is a medical condition, there are still many stigmatizing misconceptions and stereotypes at large. By amplifying the voices of people with lived experience, NAMI hopes to reduce misunderstanding and discrimination. As a leading voice, NAMI [State or City] is helping to increase empathy and compassion for people with mental illness with this year's [MIAW campaign](#).

[Insert information on local event if applicable: NAMI [State or Affiliate] is sponsoring a _____ for Mental Illness Awareness Week on [date, time] at [location].

Speakers will include:

- List with title

[If there is a series of activities, they can be indicated with separate bullets for each date]

[Insert information on local event if applicable]

"Every year during Mental Illness Awareness Week, we work to educate, raise awareness and advocate for better access to mental health care." said [name, title] of NAMI [location]. "During this difficult time and despite the collective crisis on multiple fronts, our hope is for NAMI to bring people together and provide support and resources. The NAMI community is always here to help. We are calling on everyone to join us to create a community that cares so no one feels alone in their struggle."

NAMI offers information about mental illness conditions, symptoms and treatment at www.nami.org or through the HelpLine at 800-950-NAMI (6264). Learn more about Mental Illness Awareness Week at www.nami.org/miaw. #MentalIllnessAwarenessWeek #MIAW

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MENTAL ILLNESS AWARENESS WEEK PROCLAMATION SAMPLE

Encourage public officials to go on the record in support of mental health and a stigma-free community.

Below, please find a sample proclamation that designates the first full week in October as Mental Illness Awareness Week. An official signing of a proclamation is a perfect occasion for a socially distanced and safe news event, photo opportunity or other activity. Word doc is available for download at: nami.org/extranet/miaw

If you have any questions about these materials or how to use them, please don't hesitate to reach out directly to Fredric Miggins: fmiggins@nami.org

Model Gubernatorial or Mayoral Proclamation for Mental Illness Awareness Week

Whereas mental health is a key component of overall health; and

Whereas one in five adults experiences a mental health condition in any given year; and

Whereas the COVID-19 pandemic has increased the number of people experiencing anxiety and depression;

Whereas approximately one-half of chronic mental illness begins by the age of 14 and three-quarters by age 24; and

Whereas suicide is the 10th leading cause of death in the United States and the 2nd leading cause among young adults, and 90% of people who die by suicide had shown symptoms of a mental health condition, according to interviews with family, friends, and medical professionals; and

Whereas long delays — sometimes decades — often occur between the time symptoms first appear and when individuals get help; and

Whereas early identification and treatment can make a difference in successful management of mental illness and recovery; and

Whereas it is important to maintain mental health and learn the symptoms of mental illness in order to get help when it is needed; and

Whereas, every citizen and community can make a difference in ending stigma that for too long has surrounded mental illness and discouraged people from getting help; and

Whereas public education and civic activities can encourage mental health and help improve the lives of individuals and families affected by mental illness.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, I **(Name)**, **(Title)** of **(State/City)** do hereby proclaim October 4 through October 10, 2020, as Mental Illness Awareness Week in **(State/City)** to shine a light on mental illness and eliminate stigma, provide support, educate the public and advocate for equal care.