

# FAMILY PERSPECTIVE

State of Georgia  
Crisis Intervention Team  
Training Program

# National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI)

- Dedicated to the eradication of mental illnesses and to the improvement of the quality of life of all whose lives are affected by these illnesses through:
  - Advocacy
  - Education
  - Research
  - Support

# National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI)

- 240,000 members nationwide
- 120 state and local affiliates
- The nation's largest grassroots organization dedicated to improving the lives of people with severe mental illnesses
- The American Institute of Philanthropy (AIP), the nation's leading charity watchdog, awarded NAMI an A+ for its cost-effective charitable spending and fund-raising practices.

# NAMI Georgia

- A family-based, grassroots, support and advocacy organization
- Comprised of parents, children, spouses, siblings, treatment professionals, and friends of persons with several mental illness
- Believe in recovery and work together to build a better life for their loved ones

# NAMI Georgia

- Provides education about mental illness and other brain disorders
  - These diseases are like any other disease such as heart disease, diabetes, or cancer.
  - These diseases are common and widespread.
  - An estimated 54 million Americans suffer from some form of a mental illness or other brain disorder in a given year.

# NAMI Georgia

- Advocates for certain standards of care that include access to:
  - Appropriate medication
  - Inpatient care
  - ACT programs
  - General medical care
  - Integrated services for dual diagnosis
  - Family psycho-education and support

# NAMI Georgia

- Advocates for certain standards of care that include access to: (cont'd)
  - Peer provided services and supports
  - Supported employment services
  - Affordable housing and supports
  - Jail diversion programs
  - A non-stigmatizing and non-discriminating environment

# Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) Program

- Involves collaboration among consumers, family members, treatment professionals, educators, law enforcement, and private citizens
- Provides community-based training for law enforcement officers, resulting in improved morale, professional development, and skill efficiencies
- Addresses the No. 1 reason cited by the Surgeon General's Report on Mental Illness that people do not accept or receive treatment, which is the stigma associated with mental illness

# Stigma

- Stigmatization of people with mental illness and other brain disorders is manifested by:
  - Bias
  - Distrust
  - Stereotyping
  - Fear
  - Embarrassment
  - Anger
  - Avoidance

# Stigma

- Contributes to:
  - Low self-esteem
  - Isolation
  - Hopelessness
- Reduces access to resources and opportunities
  - Schools
  - Housing
  - Jobs

# Stigma

- Leads the public to avoid living, socializing, or working with, renting to, or employing people with mental illness and other brain disorders
- Deters many from seeking and wanting to pay for the care of those with mental illness and other brain disorders
- Results in discrimination and abuse of those with mental illness and other brain disorders
- Deprives these individuals of their dignity
- Interferes with their full participation in society

# Family Experiences

- Families who have a loved one with a mental illness or other brain disorder often share similar experiences and may:
  - deny warning signs.
  - worry about what other people think.
  - wonder what caused the illness.
  - blame themselves.

# Family Experiences

- The person with the illness or disability often becomes the focus of family life.
- Other family members may feel ignored or resentful, and experience difficulty pursuing their own interests.
- Whenever possible, families should:
  - seek support from friends or other family members.
  - find a support group or self-help channel.
  - consider therapy as a possible option.

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