

THE NAMI MAINE VOICE

FALL 2009

FALL 2009 NEWSLETTER

Special points of interest:

- TABOR vote coming on November 3rd.
- Juvenile Justice Task Force
- Do you know your legislator?
- New videos available

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YOUR VOTE COUNTS ON QUESTION FOUR!

In 1992, Colorado enacted **TABOR**, the Taxpayers Bill of Rights. This legislation ties government spending to a pre-set limit. For example, TABOR rules, not town meeting votes, would determine local school budgets, local police department budgets, county jail budgets. **YOU will vote on TABOR in Maine on November 3rd.**

Here is information from the Bell Policy Center, an organization in Colorado that has tracked the impact of TABOR, on how Medicaid, mental health, and other government services have been affected. If you would like a full copy of the Bell Policy Center's study, go directly to their web site: www.thebell.org.

Mental Health:

- State funding for mental health services shrunk to an all time low. In 2001, Colorado ranked 31st nationally for publicly funded mental health care, spending \$64 per capita, 21% below the national average.
- Between 2001 and 2004, Colorado eliminated the following behavioral health programs: early intervention, mental health treatment for detained youth, early childhood mental health, and community mental health for non-Medicaid and uninsured people.
- Treatment for substance use was reduced

by more than 10%. Colorado ranks 49th in per capita spending on substance abuse treatment, but first in the nation for cocaine use, 4th in the nation for all illegal drugs.

- In 2003, all mental health services in state detention facilities were eliminated.

• Between 2001 and 2004, Colorado reduced the number of long term care beds for people with severe and persistent mental illness.

- Since 1991, there has been a 10 fold increase in the number of inmates with serious mental illness as the Department of Corrections has become the largest unfunded provider of mental health services.

Medicaid:

- In 2002, Colorado was ranked 31st in the nation for total Medicaid spending.

• Since 2002, Medicaid hospital reimbursement rates have been cut by 5%.

- The number of pediatricians who agree to accept Medicaid declined from 41% in 2000 to 24% in 2003.

• Colorado's national ranking for access to prenatal care dropped sharply from 23rd in the nation in 1990 to 48th in 2004.

- In 2002, Colorado was 50th in on-time child immunization rates; in 1995

Colorado was well above the national average in this category.

- In 2004, Colorado ranked 36th in the nation for the percentage of people without health insurance – 17.2% were uninsured; in 1990, 12.8% were uninsured. The percentage of low income children without insurance rose from 15% to 27%. During that same time, the national proportion of people lacking insurance declined 3%.

Judicial:

- Between 2003 and 2004, nearly 100 court employees were laid off and another 290 left vacant. They are now understaffed by 17% and caseloads grow by 7% per year.

• In 2005, the family violence grant program which provided legal services to uninsured victims of family violence was eliminated.

- In 2002, 23 staff positions and two probation programs were eliminated: the female offender program and the specialized drug offender program.

• Between 2003 and 2004, 50 probation officers were laid off and case loads increased dramatically. Case loads average 217, the national average is 130. At the same time, Colorado's adult probation population increased 77%.



“NAMI Maine sees medical homes as one of the ways to begin to address the multiple health care needs of people with psychiatric illness..”

EXPANDING PEER AND FAMILY SUPPORTS

For almost a year, NAMI Maine has been working with the Co-occurring Collaborative of Southern Maine (CCSME) and the Maine Primary Care Association (MePCA) to help primary care doctors in rural health centers and mental health service providers to expand how and when they refer their patients to peer and family supports. The effort has also involved helping each organization improve how it integrates care for mental health and physical health. The pilot sites for this project are: Shalom House and Kennebec Behavioral Health and the Livermore Falls and Canaan Maine rural health centers. We are also working with Togus to make peer and family supports more available to Maine’s veterans and their families. We have accomplished:

- Family to Family has been offered twice at Togus, providing help to 26 families. A blended (family and veteran) support group

meets at Togus the 2nd Wednesday of each month and is led by a Vietnam veteran and a counselor.

- The Livermore Falls Health Center now offers peer support to their patients and anyone else from the community who is living with mental illness. That group meets the 1st and 3rd Tuesday of the month. This group, and ones at the Penobscot Rural Health Center in Bangor are rare, as most medical practices do not have embedded peer support groups.
- Kennebec Behavioral Health CEO, Tom McAdam wrote to families served by KBH and those on waiting lists, inviting them to take *Out of the Shadows*, NAMI’s class for parents of children with behavioral health disorders. Eleven families took the class over five Saturdays. All 11 indicated they had improved their ability to

cope and now had others to help them. They felt less alone.

NAMI Maine sees medical homes (primary care practices that provide integrated care, both physical and psychiatric care in the same place, or through cooperative relationships) as one of the ways to begin to address the multiple health care needs of people with psychiatric illness. NAMI Maine also believes that medical homes are incomplete if they fail to include peer and natural support programs.

In January, NAMI Maine will release a report describing Maine’s peer and family support programs, their impact on recovery, their costs and outcomes, and make recommendations about their use.

UP AND RUNNING ME

In August, NAMI Maine’s mentors and juvenile runners completed the Beach to Beacon mini-marathon in Cape Elizabeth. Volunteers from Unum, private law firms, police departments, and local running clubs mentor youth from the Long Creek Detention Center and others from the Kennebec-

Somerset area through Up and Running ME, NAMI Maine’s evidence-based juvenile mentoring program. Here are some things participants had to say: “To see all those other worldly marathoners running in the same race as us was awesome”.; “My son says that running is the only thing that

makes him happy. It’s his only stress release. Without running he would be walking the streets more. Now, his best friends are the kids he runs with;” “With these new shoes, I felt like a runner.” This program is helping kids improve their health and providing a strong link with pro-social activities.

2010 NAMI MAINE WALK—Sign up now and get an autographed poster

It's that wonderful time of year—the air is crisp, the storm windows are going up, planning starts for the big Thanksgiving feed — AND PEOPLE ARE SIGNING UP FOR THE 2010 NAMI MAINE WALK. Glenn Close is still on board to help and will be writing letters on our behalf this year.

We've already set the date for the KICK OFF LUNCH –March 10, 2010 at the Holiday Inn by the Bay, Portland.

Last year's walk was wonderful and well attended. Puppets! Celebrities! Hundreds of People! WBLM Radio! Face painting! Dogs!

The number of teams almost doubled from previous years and we met and surpassed our fundraising goal! Glenn Close and Mrs. Maine (shown in the picture) were primary contributors to all of the fun!

There are 240,000 Mainers affected by mental illness every year. It would be great if every one who is affected participated in our walk! Perhaps, we could have 240 teams, each representing

1,000 affected Mainers?

It's not too soon to sign up to lead your team again this year, to ask your employer to sponsor your team, to think about your t-shirt, or to put May 8 on your calendar.

Send an email to info@namimaine.org and let us know you are on board for this year!

We are cooking up some new ideas this year — and will keep you informed via this newsletter—and via emails to team leaders. If you sign up before January 1, 2010, you will receive a poster personally autographed by Glenn Close and a photo to go with it. If you watch Antique Roadshow, you know how these kinds of photos and autographs can rise in value over the years!

Last year's teams are listed here so that you will pick out the name of your team and sign up!

The ABC Team, Acadia Hospital, Amistad, Bangor Savings Bank, Bates College, Beautiful Spa Divas, Board Walkers, Bowdoin College, Bates College, Brunswick NAMI, Capitol

Area NAMI, Capitol Clubhouse, Catholic Charities, Circle of Friends, CIT Maine, Common Ties, CSI, ESM, Fetch Dog, Friends for Awareness, High Hopes Club House, Illuminating the Minds, Joe Hill, Kenny Team, Team Lilly, Maine Psychiatrists, Maine General, Maine Mental Health Partners, Maine Psychologists, MidCoast Hospital, MidMaine NAMI, MTCPO2, NAMI Bangor, NAMI Connections, NAMI New-Castle, NAMI Portland, NAMI Washington, NAMI York, NFI North, Nutty Nadeaus, Old Port Socialites, One Step at a Time, Patten Free Library, PenBay Medical Center, Provident Services Corporation, Rennia's Team, Rigpa Rovers, Riverview, Rumford Group Homes, Sanford NAMI, Shalom, Six Degrees, St. Mary's Hospital, Stigma Terminators, Susan and Family, Sweetser Peers, Team Independence, Team Triumph, The Peer Supporters, Team Tre-worgy, TriCounty Mental Health, Unisys, University of Maine, UNUM, Veggies, Volunteers of America, Walk Tall, Walkers from Waterville, Won't Faze us, Yes We Can, Youth Alternatives.



Glenn Close and Mrs. Maine at 2009 Walk

“If you watch Antiques Roadshow, you know how these kinds of photos and autographs can rise in value over time.”



“Do you know who your local legislators are? Find out. You will need to contact them soon.”

NEW VIDEOS AVAILABLE

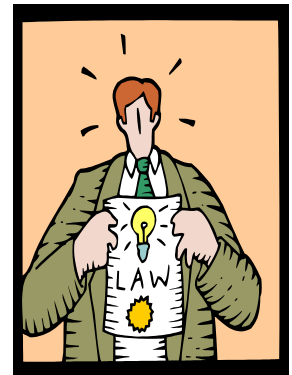
Two recent videos tell the story of mental illness. [Minds on the Edge](#), a Fred Friendly Seminar, is currently running on PBS stations and can be seen on their website. The show provides a discussion between a panel of experts, family members, judges, and others as they wrestle with the issues that confront people with mental illness in America — where to get help, how to get help, barriers to treatment, and the growing use of the correctional system as the safety net for people with mental illness.

[When Medicine Got it Wrong](#) tells the story of fami-

lies who, in the 1960s and 1970s, were blamed for causing the mental illness of their children. Their journey from being blamed and not being able to obtain treatment to advocating for improved systems of care is well documented. These are great tools for educating people about mental illness and its impact in Maine.

Both videos run for an hour. *When Medicine Got it Wrong* can be ordered by calling 1-617-926-0491. *Minds on the Edge* can be ordered by calling 1-212-854-8995.

If any organization would like NAMI Maine to make a presentation to them about mental illness, please call 1-800-464-5767. We can incorporate these into any presentation.



DO YOU KNOW WHO YOUR LEGISLATORS ARE?

2010, will again be a year of state budget cuts. The news is full of discussion about the \$250,000,000 budget deficit. Cuts to community mental health over the last three years have been huge — hundreds of millions of dollars cut. For the first time in 8 or 9 years, NAMI Maine staff are fielding calls from families who are considering custody relinquishment only because

they cannot obtain mental health services for their children. Juvenile rates of incarceration have risen, so much so, that the Chief Justice and the First Lady established a special committee to review the causes and to identify some solutions (see article below). Yes, again this year, you will need to be heard. NAMI Maine has a list of legislators, by affiliate/support

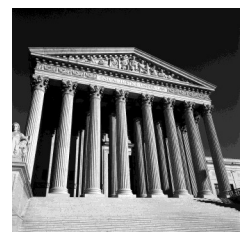
group location. You can find out the name of your legislators by calling NAMI Maine— or by calling the state legislature: 287-1540 for the Senate and 287-1400 for the House.

JUVENILE JUSTICE TASK FORCE

The Maine Children’s Cabinet, the Judicial Branch, and the University of Maine School of Law have joined together to address what they see as compelling needs for disconnected youth in Maine. Their statement about the juvenile justice task force they have created says: “Although the last decade has seen dramatic improvements in Maine’s juvenile corrections facilities, the State’s response

to juveniles in our communities is in urgent need of improvement. The future for disconnected youth, those who have dropped out of school, those who have lost connections with family and communities, is bleak.” NAMI Maine has been part of this task force and involved in helping to make recommendations. A summit, to review the recommendations and finalize a plan of action will be

held on December 4th. Our next newsletter will provide additional information about this important effort.



PLEASE TELL US HOW OR IF YOU ARE REFERRED FOR PEER AND FAMILY SUPPORT!

Maine’s Consent Decree requires all families to be told how to find support. All state contracts with mental health service providers require them to refer families to support. This is an important part of the Consent Decree and was included because so many families feel alone, don’t know where to get help, and are often primary care givers, but without needed resources to provide that care. Do providers in Maine make these referrals? Were you connected to a family support group? Did a mental health provider link you to NAMI or to one of Maine’s other family support groups? We want to

know. And, the NAMI Maine Website has a survey that will ask you how or if you were connected to family supports—along with some additional questions.

It is important to know if this important part of the Decree is being followed and to hear from you about the services you receive.

Of course, we also hope you will use the information on the website to help you find resources, chat with others on line, stay updated about the walk and about what is happening at NAMI Maine.

Please go to www.namimaine.org, and click on SPEAK OUT. Then, after you have taken the survey, please check out the rest of the website. Thanks so much.



“There are now more than 115 agencies statewide with one or more CIT officers and a total of 812 certified since 2002.”

CRIMINAL JUSTICE PROGRAM UPDATE

In the past three months, NAMI Maine held two 40 hour CIT classes and presented two sessions at the annual Mental Health/Criminal Justice Summit. There are now 115 CIT programs across Maine and over 800 trained CIT officers. CIT is more important than ever as families and people with mental illness struggle to get the help they need. Summit presentations

were designed to offer specific help: 77 attendees learned how to de-escalate a psychiatric crisis; 35 people learned how to advocate successfully when a person lands up in jail.

Last month we reported that NAMI Maine has a new handbook for families who have loved ones in the criminal justice system. It can be downloaded from our web-

site or ordered over the phone. NAMI’s CIT program has a new face book page. If you want to stay informed, and are a face book user, sign up!

NAMI MAINE’S RESPITE PROGRAM HAS OPENINGS

NAMI Maine provided over 2,000 hours of respite care to 10 Maine families last year. We can serve more families and we have several respite providers who would like to help families, but who have no family assigned to them at this point. NAMI’s respite program is designed to send a

worker to take a family member out, or to stay with a family member while the family goes out. It’s not a clinical program. It is designed for families who provide a significant amount of care to an adult with mental illness who just need some time off.

To apply for respite ser-

vices you need to be a family member of an adult with mental illness. You must be spending a fair amount of time with that person to help them with their recovery. If you would like a break — please contact us at 1-800-464-5767 and apply for respite care.



2009 NEWSLETTER

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Advocating for healthy minds.



NAMI Maine has been providing answers about mental illness to Maine people since 1984. All services are designed to improve the lives of people with mental illness and their families by providing support, education, and advocacy.

WWW.NAMIMAINE.ORG

NAMI MAINE IS WORKING WITH SCHOOLS ACROSS THE STATE

NAMI Maine's 2006 strategic plan called for additional involvement in schools. Our affiliates and other members asked us to make sure we were reaching out to teachers and to students. Since that time, Carrie Horne, Director of Training and Children's Programs, has greatly expanded our work with schools by implementing TeenScreen. Multiple grants and a commitment from the State's federal block grant have funded TeenScreen, a universal screening for mental illness, substance abuse, and suicidality. NAMI Maine is now working closely with nine specific schools. Soon, also with private grants, we hope to implement TeenScreen in some of Maine's primary care offices

The Institute of Medicine recently recommended that all children be routinely screened for mental health. Our goal is to improve the emotional health of Maine children by making sure that they are screened. Young people are routinely screened for hearing and vision, but not for mental health, despite the fact that suicide is the second leading cause of death for young Mainers. Around 10% of the youth that we screen are found to be having suicidal thoughts and we are able to speak to their parents and assure immediate access to help.

A grant obtained in collaboration with the Department of Education has expanded our involvement in helping schools to

ensure that students with mental illness or emotional disorders receive the treatment and help they need in a timely and efficient manner. Ron Tagliente, who has a long career working in children's mental health in Maine, has joined the NAMI staff to work with Lewiston's and Auburn's Safe Schools/Healthy Students grant and to expand attention to the behavioral health needs of students. For more information call Carrie Horne at 1-800-464-5767.



NAMI Maine Runs on Volunteers



Hundreds of volunteers all across Maine donate their time to reduce stigma, help families understand and cope, help people find and maintain recovery, speak to legislators and policy makers, and a million other things. The volunteers listed below, run local support groups that are open to the public.

Auburn Families	Middle School	1st and 3rd Tues.	Amy 777-3786	5:15-6:15 pm
Augusta Families	NAMI Maine	2nd& 4th Wed.	Jim 581-8802	6:30-8:00 pm
Augusta Peers	Maine General	Every Wed.	Karin 441-7476	5:15-6:45 pm
Bangor Families	Acadia	Every Tues.	Nancy 223-5686	6:30-8:00 pm
Brunswick Families	Curtis Memorial Library	4th Wed.	Tracie 798-5891	7:00-9:00 pm
Ellsworth Peers	Meadowview Community Building	Every Thurs.	Rema 479-6780	6:00-7:30 pm
Harrington Peers	Harrington Clinic	Every Tues.	Mara 483-9759	6:00-7:00 pm
Houlton Families	Houlton Regional Hospital	2nd or 3rd Thurs.	Phil 532-6000	7:00-9:00 pm
Livermore Falls	Western Maine Family Health	1st and 3rd Tues.	Fran 622-5767	6:30-8:00 pm
Machias Families	Kay Parker Bldg.	1st Mon.	Joanne 483-6040	6:30-8:00pm
Machias Peers	Kay Parker Bldg.	1st Mon.	Richard 733-2982	6:30-8:00 pm
Newcastle Peers	Hodgdon Green	3rd Wed.	Sara 881-9877	6:00-7:00 pm
Portland Families	Maine Medical Dana Center	2nd&4th Mon.	Jennifer 838-5733	7:00-8:30 pm
Portland Families	Spring Harbor	3rd Mon.	Alyce 899-0465	7:00-8:30 pm
Rockport Blended	PenBay Medical	4th Tues.	Anne 594-2015	7:00-8:00 pm
Sanford Families	N. Congregational Church	1st & 3rd Thurs.	Dick 457-5458	7:00-9:00 pm
Waterville Families	Pleasant St. United Methodist	2nd Wed.	Diane 873-4105	6:30-8:00 pm
York Blended	Eliot United Methodist	2nd Wed.	Kim 363-3429	7:00-9:00 pm
York Peers	Eliot United Methodist	Every Tuesday	Sue 363-2458	1:00-2:30 pm
Togus Blended – Vets and Families	Togus VA	2nd Wed.	Carol 622-5767	6:00-7:30 pm
Riverview Blended	Riverview Psyc. Ctr.	2nd Sat.	Jodie 242-9871	Noon -1:30 pm

