



NAMI NEW JERSEY

WORKING WITH THE LATINO
COMMUNITY

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NAMI NJ en Español Program

NAMI NEW JERSEY
En Español Mission

NAMI NEW JERSEY EN ESPAÑOL
a program of NAMI NJ is
committed to improving the lives
of Latino families by reaching out
and offering education, support,
comfort and hope.

NAMI NEW JERSEY Goals

- To help community leaders, government officials and the public in general to understand the cultural background of Latino families afflicted by mental illness.
- To improve the lives of children, adolescents and adults of all ages.
- To empower Latino consumers, their family members and significant others through education on mental illness, support groups, the Family to Family educational program and information about the resources available to them.

Beginnings of NAMI NJ en Español.



Brief History:

In 1997 a NAMI Affiliate in Hudson County is established

In 1998 the group becomes bilingual

In 2000 the first Spanish-speaking support group forms in Hudson County under the name NAMI NJ Latino Outreach

In 2003 we expand to Passaic County

Beginnings-continued

In 2003 NAMI NJ collaborates with the New Jersey mental Health Institute (NJMHI) in developing a proposal to SAMSHA for the implementation of the Family-to-Family in Spanish Program in New Jersey. The grant was approved for two years and provided funding to train 18 teachers and offer 9 classes in 8 counties. The first class took place in April 17, 2004



Results

- Changes in life style and family relationship
- Changes in communication with their loved one and providers.
- Changes in understanding the mental health system

TELL ME HOW!

- The most important elements....DEDICATION

and.....

- UNDERSTANDING OF:
 - Latino culture
 - Individual needs
 - Family life style
 - Religious beliefs

Working with the system to help families.

- Develop understanding of your community resources and make personal contact with key people in your area:
 - Community activists in local government
 - **Your mayor**
 - Assembly and Council members
 - School superintendents
 - County mental health administrator
 - Crisis units coordinators
 - Local hospital inpatient director
 - Partial care programs directors

“New Jersey’s Outreach Strategies”

- Personal Touch
- Monthly reminders
- Accommodate support groups and Family to Family classes according to the following:
 - a. Best suited times
 - b. Most favorable day of the week
 - c. Access to public transportation



Best Practices to Approach Families

The Million Dollar Question

- Go out of your way to make personal contact:
 - Home visits
 - Visiting client at the hospital
- Listen carefully
- Do not rely on your providers, mental health clinics or hospital to refer families
- Do keep a sign-in sheet for any one who is interested.
- When reaching out to religious leaders in the local churches always request that you be allowed to give out material.

Best Practices to Approach Families

Continued

- Obtain commitment
- Contact your Spanish radio station and local newspaper
- *(los periodiquitos)*
- Participate in School and County Fair
- Plan activities to keep them together
- Lots of follow up
- Do not assume
- Do we need to take them by the hand?

NAMI NJ en Español now!

Sponsored by NAMI
NEW JERSEY

7 Self-help covering
seven different
counties are being
offered.

11 Family-to-Family in
Spanish classes
conducted since
January 2005.

14 New Family-to-Family
Educators trained.



NAMI NJ en Español Staff

- Betzaida Aponte, Regional Coordinator
Central and Southern Region
- Beatriz Amador, Regional Coordinator,
Northern Region

NAMI NJ en Español



**Trabajando para el bienestar de la
comunidad Latina**