

Fighting Stigma in Schools: Testing the Effectiveness of NAMI's Ending the Silence Presentation in High Schools

NAMI Ending the Silence (ETS) is a 50-minute presentation for middle and high school students that helps raise awareness and change perceptions around mental health conditions. The presentation includes:

- Warning signs
- Facts and statistics
- How to get help for themselves or a friend

The goal of NAMI ETS is to create a generation of students who are well-positioned to end the silence and stigma surrounding mental illness.

Do NAMI ETS presentations result in improvements in knowledge, attitudes, and help-seeking preparedness related to mental health conditions? The purpose of the present research was to address this question.

METHODS

- 10 schools from 5 different areas of the United States
- Completion of a 12-item research questionnaire measuring knowledge and attitudes related to mental health conditions and help-seeking attitudes.
- For each school
 - Three classes received the ETS presentation and three comparable classes did not
 - The three ETS classes completed a 12-item research questionnaire before the ETS presentation, immediately after and 4-6 weeks following the presentation
 - The three non-ETS (Control) classes completed the same questionnaire on the same schedule as ETS classes

RESULTS

- 932 students: 530 from ETS classes, 402 from Control classes
 - 55% were female and 42% male
 - Less than half (47.5%) were White. 35% were Hispanic, 14% African-American, and 7% Asian
- Knowledge and attitudes changed for ETS classes but not for Control classes
 - Scores increased significantly following the ETS presentation and remained elevated over pre-ETS scores at the 4-6 week follow-up
 - Scores for the Control group students remained the same across all three administrations
 - The pattern (change for ETS classes, no change for Control classes) was similar for each of the 12 individual items and for each of the 10 schools

CONCLUSIONS

- NAMI Ending the Silence is effective in changing high school students' knowledge and attitudes toward mental health conditions and toward help-seeking
- The effect is a robust one, occurring across different presenters, across different study schools, and across the diverse populations within those schools

Fighting Stigma in Schools: Testing the Effectiveness of NAMI's Ending the Silence Presentation in Middle Schools

NAMI Ending the Silence (ETS) is a 50-minute presentation for middle and high school students that helps raise awareness and change perceptions around mental health conditions. The presentation includes:

- Warning signs
- Facts and statistics
- How to get help for themselves or a friend

The goal of NAMI ETS is to create a generation of students who are well-positioned to end the silence and stigma surrounding mental illness.

Do NAMI ETS presentations result in improvements in knowledge, attitudes, and help-seeking preparedness related to mental health conditions in middle school students?

METHODS

- 4 schools from 4 different areas of the United States
- Completion of a 12-item research questionnaire measuring knowledge and attitudes related to mental health conditions and help-seeking attitudes.
- For each school
 - Two classes received the ETS presentation and two comparable classes did not
 - The two ETS classes completed a 12-item research questionnaire before the ETS presentation, immediately after and 4-6 weeks following the presentation
 - The two non-ETS (Control) classes completed the same questionnaire on the same schedule as ETS classes

RESULTS

- 252 students: 119 from ETS classes, 133 from Control classes
 - 98% were ages 12-13
 - 50.4% were male and 48% female
 - Less than half (49%) were White. 31% were Hispanic, 5 % multiracial, 4% African-American, 3% Asian. 15% of respondents chose "Other" for race.
- Knowledge and attitudes changed for ETS classes but not for Control classes
 - Scores increased following the ETS presentation and remained elevated over pre-ETS scores at the 4-6-week follow-up
 - Scores for the Control group students remained the same across all three administrations
 - The pattern (change for ETS classes, no change for Control classes) was similar for each of the 12 individual items and for each of the 4 schools

CONCLUSIONS

- NAMI Ending the Silence is effective in changing middle school students' knowledge and attitudes toward mental health conditions and toward help-seeking
- The effect is a robust one, occurring across different presenters, across different study schools, and across the diverse populations within those schools