



**NAMI Portage-Wood Counties
Officers and Board Members**

President:

Andrea Mora
Wisconsin Rapids
715-321-6672
namiportagewood
counties@gmail.com

Vice President:

Samantha Varga
Plover
715-347-6001

Treasurer:

Linda Froehlich
Stevens Point
(715) 572-7135
lfroehlich2301@gmail.com

Co-Secretaries:

Kristi Ahrens
Paula Wolf
Stevens Point

Board Members:

Marvin Lutz

Andrea Mora

Sam Varga

Linda Froehlich

Kathy Hartman

John Hartman

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Dixie Weber

From the Editor

When we move through December and into January, we are welcoming the transition from warm fall days to crisp, clear nights and a snow-white landscape. We welcome the hibernation of nature and the warmth of an evening fire as we spend more time indoors with our family and friends. We also welcome the spirit of the holidays and the joy and excitement of moving into a new year. And maybe most important of all, we welcome the opportunity to spread love and kindness to each other. Saying “Hi” to a bell ringer, holding the door open for a stranger at the gas station, donating to *Toys for Tots* or any of the other holiday giving opportunities we have in the community are ways we can do just this. Having a human connection to each other brings feelings of acceptance and understanding. It spreads the joy of the season and can warm the heart of anyone you touch. Let’s remember to love one another and be the love we want to see in this world. Happy Holidays to you and your loved ones.

—Andrea



Join Us at the NAMI Portage-Wood Counties Holiday Party!

Our annual NAMI Portage-Wood Counties Holiday Party will be held on Monday, December 18th from 6:00–8:00 p.m. at St. Paul’s Lutheran Church, 1919 Wyatt Avenue in Stevens Point. Come join us for a meal, games, singing, conversation and prizes!

This holiday event is free of charge, open to the public and guaranteed to be fun! Enter the church from the east parking lot, go all the way to the end of the hallway, turn left and follow your nose. We hope to see you there!

How to Handle Stress During the Holidays

The holidays are a time of excitement and joy, but this time of year can also come with its share of stress or depression. Maintaining a positive mindset and taking care of your mental health during the holidays is not always easy, but it is vital to enjoying the season. Here are 5 tips to help manage holiday stress:

- 1. Maintain your healthy habits.** Continue to eat well and get enough sleep. Exercise will also be helpful for overall health and stress management.
- 2. Manage your time .** Don’t over-commit. Give yourself room to breathe in between obligations. Prioritize your social gathering invites and don’t be afraid to decline if it will help manage your mental health.
- 3. Lower your expectations.** Don’t worry about late-arriving guests, slightly over-cooked sugar cookies or finding the perfect hostess gift. Instead, focus on spending time with family and friends.
- 4. Set aside differences.** Sometimes the holidays can rekindle negative feelings among siblings, in-laws, parents and children. Try to accept them as they are. If you need a break, go for a walk, find a quiet space, or call a friend.
- 5. Stay mindful.** Be present in the moment; feel grateful for a warm home, family, friends, money to buy food and your physical health. Enjoy your favorite holiday meal, listen to music, relax, and have fun.



What is NAMI?

The National Alliance on Mental Illness is the nation's largest grassroots mental health organization

It was started in 1979 in Madison, Wisconsin by two mothers who were looking for help with their sons. NAMI provides advocacy, education, support and public awareness for people whose lives are affected by mental illness. (www.nami.org).

The NAMI Wisconsin mission is to improve the quality of life and promote recovery for people with a mental health condition.

NAMI Portage-Wood Counties, our local affiliate, offers support groups for families or individuals led by trained facilitators.

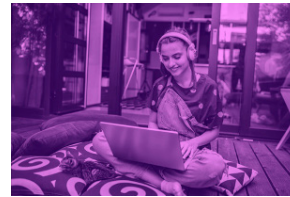
We also offer classes and events that are free to the public. These are funded through memberships, donations, fundraising and grants.

NAMI Teen & Young Adult Help Line

NAMI has created a teen and young adult helpline, a free nationwide peer-support service providing information, resource referrals and support to teen and young adults. The T&YA Specialists are young people who understand because they have been through it themselves. They are experienced and well trained and care about you. You can reach out by phone (**800-950-NAMI**), **text (62640)** or chat (on website), Monday through Friday, 10:00 a.m.–10:00 p.m. EST. Please visit nami.org for more information.



TEXT: Text **Friend** to **62640** to immediately connect with a Helpline Specialist trained to provide resources, information, and support.



CHAT: Click "Chat With Us" to connect with a Helpline Specialist at NAMI.org/help.



CALL: If you are a teen or young adult with questions about mental health, call **1-800-950-NAMI (6264)** to speak with a NAMI Helpline specialist now.

NAMI Portage-Wood Counties Needs Your Help!

NAMI Portage-Wood Counties along with **Suicide Prevention Portage County** offer a free **Mental Health & Wellness Speaker** on the third Monday of the month. It takes place from 6:00 p.m.–7:00 p.m. in Stevens Point at our new location, the MILC building, located at 3262 Church Street in Stevens Point. Call 715-544-9653 for more information

January—Sara Agena: *Eating Well for Mental Health*

PLEASE NOTE: There is no December speaker. The January speaker will be moved to the fourth Monday, January 22nd, 2024 due to Martin Luther King Jr. Day on the 15th. The time and location will remain the same.

Many who attend say this was their first experience with NAMI and the first time they felt like people understood them and what they were dealing with. Long lasting friendships have been made here on Monday night. We hope to meet you at one of this year's speakers.

NAMI Portage-Wood Counties Needs Your Help!

Coming in 2024 there will be many volunteer opportunities for you to get involved with NAMI Portage & Wood Counties. Perhaps you have a **story to share** with others. Maybe you have **lived experience** and would like to be trained as a support group facilitator. You might want to increase the knowledge on mental illness by **becoming a teacher** for one of our classes. Or perhaps you would be interested in **helping at one of our resource tables** for the community events we attend.

When you volunteer with us, you are making a big impact in mental health support, education, and advocacy. NAMI Portage-Wood Counties is a non-profit organization, managed totally by our twelve-person board and our dedicated volunteers.

If you are interested in volunteering, we would love to talk with you! Contact **Lisa Piekarski** at 715-572-5797 or **NAMI Portage-Wood Counties** at 715-544-9653.



Join a support group and take care of you!

SUPPORT GROUP for PEERS

(those living with a mental health condition)

Stevens Point

First Thursday of each month

St. Paul Lutheran Church

1919 Wyatt Avenue

6:15–7:45 p.m.

Contact:

Linda • 715-572-7135 or if you need transportation

Wisconsin Rapids

Third Wednesday of each month

United Methodist Church

441 Garfield Avenue

6:15–7:45 p.m.

Contact:

Andrea • 715-321-6672 or

Lisa • 715-630-8227

Marshfield

Fourth Tuesday of each month

Faith Lutheran Church

207 South Cherry Avenue

6:00–7:30 p.m.

Contact:

Andrea • 715-321-6672 or

Dixie • 715-897-1108

SUPPORT GROUPS for FAMILY AND FRIENDS

(those with a loved one living with a mental health condition)

Stevens Point

First Monday of each month

NAMI Family Support Group

St. Paul Lutheran Church

1919 Wyatt Avenue

(Door 3, lower level)

6:30–8:00 p.m.

Contact:

Kathy • 715-254-5452 or

Marvin • 715-592-4522

Wisconsin Rapids

Second Monday of each month

NAMI Family Support Group

United Methodist Church

441 Garfield Avenue

6:00–7:30 p.m.

Contact:

Helen • 715-213-6678

Kathy • 715-254-5452

NAMI Portage-Wood Counties Offers Support

Are you living with mental illness and would like additional support from others living with mental illness? Do you have a family member or friend who lives with mental illness? Did you know that NAMI Portage-Wood Counties offers free monthly support groups to help cope and connect with others who will understand and be a listening ear?

The **Peer Support Groups** are for those living with their own mental health condition and the **Family Support Groups** are for those who have a family member living with mental health condition.

NAMI Peer Support Groups

These groups are led by two trained facilitators who have lived experience with a mental illness.

Stevens Point

First Thursday of the month from 6:15–7:45 p.m.

St. Paul Lutheran School, 1919 Wyatt Avenue. Use Door 3, off the east parking lot and follow the signs downstairs. An elevator is available.

Contact: **Linda at 715-572-7135** for more information.

Wisconsin Rapids

Third Wednesday of each month from 6:15–7:45 p.m.

United Methodist Church, 441 Garfield Avenue. Use the parking lot off Garfield and enter using the door facing the parking lot.

Contact: **Andrea 715-321-6672** or **Lisa 715-630-8227** for more information.

Marshfield

Fourth Tuesday of each month from 6:00–7:30 p.m.

Faith Lutheran Church, 207 S. Cherry Avenue. Doors will be unlocked starting at 5:30 p.m. and locked at 6:30 p.m. Contact: **Dixie 715-897-1108** or **Andrea 715-321-6672** for more information.

NAMI Family Support Groups

These groups are led by two trained facilitators who have loved ones experiencing a mental health condition.

Stevens Point

First Monday of each month from 6:30–8:00 p.m. **NOTE: We WILL meet on January 1st.**

St. Paul Lutheran School, 1919 Wyatt Avenue. Please use door 3, off the parking lot and follow the signs downstairs. An elevator is available. Contact: **Kathy 715-254-5452** or **Marvin 715-592-4522** for more information.

Wisconsin Rapids

Second Monday of each month 6:00–7:30 p.m.

United Methodist Church, 441 Garfield Avenue. Please use the East parking lot and enter the rear of the building.

Contact: **Kathy 715-254-5452** or **Helen 715-213-6678** for more information.



National Alliance on Mental Illness

Portage- Wood Counties

P.O. Box 21
Stevens Point, WI 54481
715-544-9653

FIRST CLASS MAIL

Dec 23–Jan 24 Newsletter

**Join Us at the NAMI Portage-Wood
Counties Holiday Party!**
Monday December 18th, 6:00–8:00 pm
Free Food, Singing, Games and Prizes
Details Inside!

Check out our website namiportagewoodcounties.org
Facebook NAMI Portage-Wood Counties, like us on Facebook and see our inspirational posts.
Call NAMI Portage-Wood Counties 715-544-9653

Your Membership Helps Support NAMI Portage-Wood Counties

Membership includes regular mailings from NAMI Portage-Wood Counties, NAMI Wisconsin, and NAMI National. Donations and membership fees are tax deductible.

Make checks payable to NAMI Portage-Wood Counties. Mail with this form to:
Linda Froehlich, Treasurer, 4309 Heffron Street, Stevens Point, WI 54481 (715) 572-7135

Date: _____

Name: _____ Organization, if applicable _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip code _____

Telephone Number: (____) _____ *E-mail Address: _____

*The NAMI Portage-Wood Counties newsletter is sent by e-mail. Check here if you would prefer to receive a hard copy

Please select your type of membership:

Household Membership \$60 Names in household: _____

Full Membership \$40 Open Door Membership \$5 Donation Only \$ _____

Please accept my \$ _____ donation in addition to my membership.