

**NAMI Portage-Wood Counties
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From the Editor

As we move into February, we are headed towards Valentine's Day. Many associate this day with celebrating the love we have for a significant other, but I also think we can use this day to focus on the love we have for ourselves. We can celebrate it by treating ourselves to some self-compassion and self-care.

Self-love is vital and acceptable for your mental health journey and making yourself a priority is not selfish. Self-love means loving and prioritizing yourself. It means being kind to yourself and giving yourself a break from self-judgement. For instance, accepting your mistakes, which most of us have made at some point in our lives, giving yourself a chance to overcome the mistake and embracing your flaws creates a stronger relationship with yourself that helps you reflect on your personality, how you treat yourself and how you treat others.

My hope for you is that you find the space within yourself to practice some self-love, not just on February 14, but all year round, because you deserve it and are worth the effort. Sending love to you all!

—Andrea

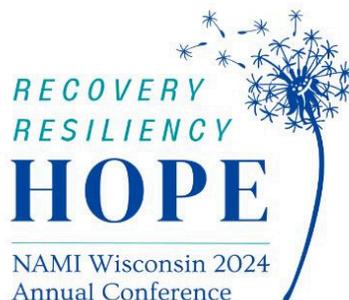


NAMI Wisconsin Annual Conference

NAMI Wisconsin's Annual Conference will take place **Friday, April 26 and Saturday, April 27 2024** right here in Central Wisconsin! The conference will be held at the **Central Wisconsin Convention & Expo Center** in Rothschild. The NAMI Wisconsin Annual Conference is an event organized by the Wisconsin chapter of the National Alliance on Mental Illness. It is a gathering that takes place once a year and aims to bring together individuals, families, professionals, and advocates from across the state who are interested in mental health and mental illness.

This year's NAMI Wisconsin Annual Conference theme is **Recovery, Resiliency and Hope**. The conference features two keynote speakers, over 30 workshops, exhibitors, and networking opportunities, all focused on raising awareness, providing education, and promoting support and recovery for individuals and families affected by mental illness.

To register, visit namiwisconsin.org. Early bird pricing is valid through February 2 and regular registration ends April 4. For more information or payment assistance opportunities, please reach out to us!





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 Portage-Wood Counties Needs You!

NAMI Portage-Wood Counties is a non-profit organization, totally managed by a 12-person board and a small group of volunteers. Our affiliate covers three major cities, surrounding areas and smaller counties nearby, that do not have their own affiliate. Mental health and mental wellness are receiving more attention as of late, and we strive to provide what we can for our community. We are looking for volunteers to help us bring education, support, and presentations to our communities. NAMI offers free educational training to our members who want to help make a difference in others' lives.

Perhaps you have a story to tell and share with others, maybe you have lived experience and would like to be trained as a support group facilitator or want to increase the knowledge on mental illness by becoming a teacher for one of our classes. We can also use volunteers to help at events, prepare items at home, help with resource tables and distribution of resources and advertising. If interested contact Lisa Piekarski at 715-572-5797 or NAMI Portage-Wood Counties at 715-544-9653. We would love to hear from you!

The Power of Volunteering

As we mention the need for volunteers to help make our NAMI affiliate successful and impactful in the community, it is important to share the power volunteering and how it may help create positive mental health for yourself while you support others. Research on happiness shows that when you focus on others and contribute to your community, you are likely to significantly enhance your sense of joy, happiness, and mental wellness. Volunteering helps you to expand your perspectives, connect with those outside of yourself and improve your sense of purpose. It also brings a wonderful opportunity to meet new people and form lasting friendships.

When you spend your time working with an organization that supports something you are passionate about, such as mental health and mental illness, we can truly create a supportive and understanding community while spreading awareness and advocating for these important things. NAMI's mission is to educate, advocate and support mental illness and when you become a part of that, you will be making a direct impact. If you are interested, please reach out to us for more information.

Here are some ways you can volunteer for NAMI Portage-Wood Counties. What would you be able to help us with?

- Write a paragraph how the Family to Family class or Support Group has helped you
- Help with one of our fund-raisers during the year (promoting, help at the resource table)
- Help folding, labeling or stamping our bi-monthly newsletter
- Distributing NAMI class advertising
- Co-teaching a NAMI class or co-leading a support group (free training is available)
- Share a poem or write a review of your favorite mental health book for our newsletter
- Be on a panel for our Crisis Intervention Partners or Crisis Intervention Team programs
- Become a mental health advocate on the local, state or national level
- Sit at a resource table for a community event (*Walk for Hope, Art in the Park, etc.*)

If you would like to help out at any of the above, *even just once*, please contact **Linda** at 715-572-7135, or email namiportagewoodcounties@gmail.com



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

Sammie • 715-203-3073

Marshfield

Fourth Tuesday of each month

Faith Lutheran Church

207 South Cherry Avenue

6:00–7:30 p.m.

Contact:

Suzanne • 715-712-2196 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

Social Media

In today’s world, the power and relevance that social media has is undeniable. This provides NAMI Portage and Wood Counties a big opportunity to reach those that need messaging and content about mental health and mental illness as they travel along on their mental health journey.

We have created social media pages on Facebook, Instagram and TikTok to help bring the community these things. Please give us a like, follow and share on all our platforms:

Facebook: @NAMIPortageandWoodCounties



Instagram: @nami_portagewoodcounties



TikTok: @nami_portagewoodcounties



Monthly Mental Health Speakers

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

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 a Monday night. We hope to meet you at one of this year’s speakers.

Upcoming Speakers:

February 19: Kaitlyn Nichols, CAP Services
Mental Health Advocate

March 18: Stephanie Werch, Stevens Point
School District Mental Health Navigator

“Laughter Yoga”

“Make it Okay”



Kaitlyn Nichols



Stephanie Werch



National Alliance on Mental Illness

Portage- Wood Counties

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

FIRST CLASS MAIL

Feb–March 2024 Newsletter

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.