



NAMI

Ray of Hope

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### NAMI Responds to the Tragedy of Hurricane Katrina

In the wake of the devastation of Hurricane Katrina, thousands of people are without shelter, food, water, electricity, and other basic provisions. Those affected include our NAMI family members, state and local leaders, and most critically, people with mental illnesses, whose access to treatment and medications may have been disrupted.

In addition, mental illness symptoms are often exacerbated in times of crisis, and many individuals, even those not directly affected by the hurricane, may need assistance in identifying and accessing available resources.

To aid victims of Hurricane Katrina with serious mental illnesses and their families, NAMI has established the NAMI Hurricane Katrina Relief Fund. To make donations to this fund, visit [www.nami.org/donate](http://www.nami.org/donate). **Please use the General Donation link and enter "For NAMI Hurricane Katrina Relief Fund" in the comment field.**

[More Details](#)

September 9, 2005



Hurricane Katrina left a path of destruction and flooding in its wake.

### Space is Still Available

There is still space available in each of our Peer to Peer classes, and our Family to Family class. For more information, please contact [Dennis Wolf](#) at 419-334-8021, or toll free at 888-582-8889

### Back-to-School Strategies for Parents of Children Living With Mental Illness

For children living with mental illness, going back to school is loaded with potential obstacles and stressors including changing routines, scholastic and social expectations, separation, and excitement. The start of the school year often triggers anxiety for parents of children with mental illnesses as well. New teachers and environments often mean new challenges, but they can also signal new opportunities for success.

The following are some suggested strategies to consider and adapt to help build a foundation for a successful school year for the child living with mental illness.

- 1) **Address any known problems in a straightforward manner as soon as possible.** Request a meeting in advance of the first day, if possible. Notify the school and teachers of any recent medication or treatment plans that are of significance. Communicate your support of the teacher's critical role with your child. Review any special education plans that were drafted the year before, if applicable. Provide information about your child's disorder and be a resource for information for the school and the teachers.
- 2) **Secure arrangements to take the child to school before the first day.** Do a walk through of the environment and meet teachers and office staff. Familiarity with his or her physical surroundings will help diminish first day anxieties.
- 3) **Support self-esteem.** Identify the child's strengths and hook the child in through existing interests. Keep on the lookout for a developing or possible friendship and encourage a sleep over, movie outing, or gaming day. Set small goals or suggest ideas first and then build to larger expectations, supporting and reinforcing along the way

[More Details](#)

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Questions or comments? e-mail us at [dewolf@namissw.org](mailto:dewolf@namissw.org) or call us at 888-582-8889