



NAMI  
National Alliance on Mental Illness

# Stark County

**Building Hope For Recovery Through Education Support and Advocacy**

**The County's Voice on Mental Illness**

**January 2016**

## **WHEN FAMILIES AND FRIENDS CALL 911**

Family members and others may call 911 if they observe behavior they interpret as problematic. Families and friends of an individual with mental illness may call the police for many reasons. They may call for help finding an individual who has wandered off without their medications. They may anticipate a crisis, based on experience, well in advance of the legal criteria for an emergency petition. They may call for help because the psychiatric crisis meets the criteria for an emergency petition or there is a public safety issue for the individual or others. They may call because they have tried everything they know, they are not aware of other community or crisis services, and they think this is the only way to get treatment. Individuals with mental illness and their families are sometimes *told* to call 911 or the police when treatment providers are unavailable.

Families and friends who call police often become angry and frustrated. They do not understand that the officer has protocols to follow and may not believe the situation is criminal or meets criteria for an emergency evaluation. They may not know of available intermediate interventions that do not require police involvement. In many cases, calls for police can be reduced if family and friends receive support and education on how to recognize psychiatric symptoms, to effectively communicate with someone with disordered thinking or emotions, and how to access community resources to prevent and even de-escalate crises.

## **CALLING 911**

Call 911 if you are concerned for your or another's immediate safety. Otherwise, first call the individual's mental health provider or our local crisis hotline at 330-452-6000. When you call 911, an operator takes your information. They forward what they consider the **key** information to a police dispatcher, or directly to officers (or in some jurisdictions, in non-emergencies, to a mental health crisis team.) The person calling 911 should explain that the individual needs a psychiatric assessment and that you need assistance.

***Ask if an officer trained to deal with a mental illness crisis is available.***

Providing useful information to the 911 dispatcher, and ***then again to officers who arrive***, can ensure the safety of all involved. Recognize that calling 911 is merely the first step in getting help—all of your information may not have been received by officers who come to the scene

**If you have time, take a brief moment to organize your thoughts and jot down the key points in writing. This will help you be specific and brief.**

***Even when an officer has all available information, they may want the complainant on scene to provide it again.***

- your relationship to the individual
- the individual's current problematic behavior
- any mental health diagnosis or diagnoses
- additional relevant medical diagnoses
- whether the individual is in treatment
- prescription medication the individual is taking
- any history of alcohol or drug abuse
- any history of self-harm
- any history of violence toward others and any specific people or types
- Be sure to state if there is *no* history of violent acts.
- anything that may trigger or escalate the situation
- anything that could help de-escalate the situation
- Weapons access or weapons use history (knives, broken glass, etc.)
- age, height, and weight
- physical fitness, weight training or martial arts experience
- hospital preference (sometimes possible)

## WHEN POLICE COME TO THE SCENE

Expect two or more officers to respond. This is standard procedure to maintain safety for everyone. If possible, have someone known to the individual stay with him or her, while someone else meets directly with the police officers. Remember, the officers may not know exactly **who** is in crisis when they arrive, so, for their safety, the officers must assume *anyone* may be that individual. Ideally, when discussing the situation, do so away from the symptomatic individual (e.g., before officers enter the home, etc.) Ideally, when discussing the situation, do so away from the symptomatic individual (e.g., before officers enter the home, etc.)

Describe the crisis, repeating the information given to 911 and let the officers know of any changes since the call for help. Explain how the individual might react to multiple officers. When you speak with the officer(s) convey the message that the individual has a mental illness that may make communicating or interacting difficult. Explain specifically, if you can, what happened to precipitate your call, and what happens when the individual is in crisis. For instance, if an individual hears voices and cannot easily follow verbal instructions, they may appear to disregard the officer's orders. If this is the case, explain to the officer that delusional individuals may perceive the police officers as aliens or some other threat and may be unreasonably afraid and unable to comply with commands. Remember, the police officers are not mental health professionals and have to follow certain department directives and policies: They are first required to assess and then to protect the safety of everyone involved.

Once you state the facts clearly, stand back and allow the police to follow their procedures. Police officers have many responsibilities when responding to a 911 call. They must stabilize the situation, ensure everyone's safety, resolve the situation, and return to radio calls as quickly as possible. Their priorities include not only the care of the individual, but also you, themselves, and the community. Interference with their management of the scene usually hinders the officers' ability to control the situation and can even lead to arrest of the person causing interference.

The officer may be able to take persons to a hospital or crisis unit for evaluation instead of arrest. You can also offer to accompany the person or to meet the ambulance or police transport at the hospital or crisis unit.



MENTAL HEALTH  
AND RECOVERY  
SERVICES BOARD  
*of Stark County*

ENRICHING LIVES THROUGH WELLNESS AND RECOVERY

Thank you to the Mental Health  
& Recovery Services Board for  
assisting with this newsletter.

**If you need assistance  
for mental health  
emergency call 911  
and request a CIT  
Officer**

## **CALENDAR OF EVENTS**

### **VOLUNTEER/EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES**

**MENTAL HEALTH AND RECOVERY SERVICES BOARD STARK COUNTY MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID**  
**DATES:** FEBRUARY 24 - 25  
**LOCATION:** CANTON, OH  
**REGISTRATION REQUIRED:** [WWW.STARKMHRBSB.ORG](http://WWW.STARKMHRBSB.ORG)

**MENTAL HEALTH AND RECOVERY SERVICES BOARD STARK COUNTY MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID YOUTH**  
**DATES:** MARCH 29 - 30  
**LOCATION:** CANTON, OH  
**REGISTRATION REQUIRED:**  
[WWW.STARKMHRBSB.ORG](http://WWW.STARKMHRBSB.ORG)

**OPTIONS AVAILABLE TO OFFICERS** Officers typically have 3 choices when deciding how to resolve situations involving persons with mental illness.

#### **OFFICER DISCRETION: Pre-booking Diversion or Encounters without Arrest**

**The first option:** if the individual's behavior does not meet the criteria for an emergency petition, and the criminal violation, if any, is minor, officers may have the discretion to resolve the situation informally. For example, if the officers have diffused the crisis to the point where the individual agrees to get treatment voluntarily, they may leave the scene without taking formal action. In some cases, the officers may provide referrals to mental health crisis or other community resources. But if the individual's behavior is too erratic or disturbing, the police may take the individual into custody to transport them to a hospital (or even to jail) to maintain safety.

**The second option:** if the behavior meets the criteria for emergency psychiatric evaluation, police have the authority to transport the individual to a designated mental health facility, usually an emergency department or general hospital

#### **ARREST**

**The third option:** if the individual's behavior is a significant violation of the law, police officers are required to arrest the individual, as they would anyone else who violates the law. To make a lawful arrest, police officers must have *probable cause* that there is a reasonable basis for believing that a person has committed a crime. This *probable cause* can result from observing a crime or through information provided by a reliable witness. A person may be arrested for apparent criminal behavior, as a result of investigation or because of an outstanding warrant relating to an offense, violation of a judge's order, failure to appear in court, or to pay a fine.

In some jurisdictions, officers may decide to issue a citation rather than arrest the individual, in which case the individual is released. The citation describes the charge and lists the court hearing date and place. Police are more likely to issue a citation if the individual has adequate identification, has a place to stay, and is not a flight risk. If the person does not show up at the hearing, an arrest warrant will be issued.

Any information obtained by police, even if obtained before a formal arrest, can be used against the person. If the individual is arrested and taken into custody, and the police want to question the individual about the crime, Miranda rights must be given to inform the individual of their constitutional rights.

The Miranda warning states that: the individual has the right to remain silent, anything said can and will be used against the individual in court, the individual has a right to consult with an attorney during interrogation, and if the individual is indigent, an attorney will be appointed to represent him.

After an arrest, the police can search the individual and any illegal items found (e.g., illegal drugs, drug paraphernalia, weapons or possible weapons) can be taken as evidence for additional charges

## **VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY TO HELP SUPPORT NAMI STARK COUNTY**

When opportunity knocks, you open the door. When an opportunity arrives to positively showcase mental illness and earn money at the same time, that is what is called a win, win scenario. As the head usher at the Canton Memorial Civic Center I have the opportunity to offer NAMI Stark County the wonderful chance to earn money for NAMI Stark County by ushering for all major events at the Civic Center, during the 2015/2016 season. For every volunteer hour you usher NAMI Stark County earns \$8.00. I normally have 10 to 22 ushers per event working 4 hours. We would work concerts, wrestling matches, children's shows, and the most consuming but a great money maker, The Charge Basketball team, which is part of the D league for the Cavaliers. Our dress for the Charge is beige pants and a yellow Charge polo provided by the Charge. For all other events we wear beige pants and white shirts.

### **Civic Center Schedule**

**Date                      Time                      Event**

01/02/15	5:30 PM	Canton Charge
01/20/15	9:30 AM	Canton Charge
01/23/15	5:30 PM	Canton Charge
02/09/15	5:30 PM	Canton Charge
02/16/15	5:30 PM	Canton Charge
02/20/15	5:30 PM	Canton Charge
02/24/15	5:30 PM	Canton Charge
02/26/15	5:30 PM	Canton Charge
02/28/15	1:30 AM	Canton Charge
03/05/15	11:30 AM	Canton Charge
03/09/15	5:30 PM	Canton Charge
03/11/15	5:30 PM	Canton Charge
03/12/15	5:30 PM	Canton Charge
03/23/15	5:30 PM	Canton Charge

To volunteer, please email me at  
[ncoastnewf@aol.com](mailto:ncoastnewf@aol.com)  
or call me at 330-806-8575 Shirley

I look forward to working  
with all of you,  
Shirley Cavender

**If you still have concerns about the officers' handling of the situation, write down what happened as soon as possible. You may discuss these actions:**

- By requesting to speak with a supervisor or have one respond to your location
- By contacting the internal investigation unit of the department. Many have complaint forms that can be submitted online.
- By discussing your concerns with defense council

For agencies to investigate your concerns they only need basic information such as address, date, and time, they can easily obtain other need information from police department systems.



**SAVE THE DATE**

**2016 MOVING FORWARD  
FOR MENTAL HEALTH WALK  
OCTOBER 15, 2016**

## What to Do (and Not Do) When Family and Friends Believe Police Action Is Inappropriate

Officers are trained to gain control over an arrestee and to control the setting and any people nearby who might interfere. There are times when observers at a crisis scene may feel that the law enforcement officers have used inappropriate or excessive methods. The best thing observers can do, despite their concerns, is to stand back and to advise the individual calmly to co-operate with the officers, rather than further escalating the individual's behavior. Observers who appear to the police to be escalating a situation take the chance of being arrested themselves. After a situation is under control, most officers will listen to your description of an individual's special needs.

### WHAT POLICE CAN AND CANNOT DO

Police investigate when someone in the community makes a complaint or the officer sees aberrant behavior. Officers are trained to collect information from people to understand a situation. Police are not mental health professionals. ***They are public safety officers taught to control a scene.***

If an individual is not directly threatening another person or himself, it helps to give them time to calm down. But officers are usually trained to intervene quickly, resolve the safety issues, and to be available for the next call. In some jurisdictions, the pressure to resolve a call quickly is immense.

To ensure safety, officers are trained to take command of situations, typically using body language and voice to compel people to cooperate with stated instructions. However, when dealing with an individual with a mental illness, especially someone in a delusional or crisis state, such an approach may escalate the situation and make a crisis worse.

Depending on the severity of symptoms, an individual may find it difficult to follow directions, to respond quickly and accurately, or even to respond to their name. If officers on the scene have no special training in mental disorders, and there are no obvious signs of disturbed thinking, it can be easy for them to overlook the possibility that an individual has a mental illness. They may therefore interpret the individual's inappropriate behavior as lack of cooperation or even defiance. *J. Massaro, Working with People with Mental Illness Involved in the Criminal Justice System: What Mental Health Service Providers need to Know (2d ed.), Delmar, NY: Technical Assistance and Policy Analysis Center for Jail Diversion.*

When officers believe an individual is deliberately disobeying their instructions, they are trained to increase their compliance tactics. In situations involving someone whose mental illness is preventing him from following officers' instructions, the stage may be set for a confrontation. The individual may become irrationally fearful and may strike out in what they believe is self-defense. People with mental illness often have poor impulse control and have trouble controlling their anger or frustration. If the individual is also under the influence of alcohol or drugs, he will have less impulse control and be more likely to exhibit higher levels of aggression. *Massaro.*

Depending on symptom severity, it may also be difficult for the individual to understand his rights during the process of police investigation, questioning, or arrest. They may have difficulty explaining his behaviors or presenting his side of a given situation.

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330 833-3135 ext. 2170

**Mike Rembert, Newsletter Editor**

## **SPECIALIZED TRAINING AND TEAMS**

Officers who receive special training and their department's support can add mental illness crisis de-escalation tools to their other strategies. When officers are trained to recognize signs of mental illness and communicate effectively with people who may have a cognitive or emotional disturbance, they can often de-escalate crises entirely. If they know available mental health and crisis response resources, they can often divert people to available community resources which can prevent repeat calls for police.

These programs require specialized training about mental illness for police officers, and typically have a 24-hour crisis drop-off center with a no-refusal policy for individuals brought in by the police. Other models of pre-booking diversion involve collaboration between police and specially trained mental health service providers, who "co-respond" to calls involving a potential mental health crisis. Source: NAMI Maryland Connections

**NAMI Stark County** has participated twice yearly CIT (Crisis Intervention Team) training since 2004. This is a week-long intensive mental health response training conducted for police officers, probation officers and dispatchers that enables them to respond appropriately to crisis calls involving persons with mental illness (diverting them to Crisis Center/Emergency Rooms vs. Incarceration). Part of this training entails NAMI involvement: Panel Presentation: Participation in a 45 minute panel presentation which involves 3 or 4 family members who can tell their 'story'. Home Visits: The officers visit a NAMI Members home after their lunch in plain clothes and unmarked cars. The purpose of this exercise is to allow the officers to see and meet "real families" dealing with mental illness; to help put a "face" to mental illness, reduce any stigma they may have; help them understand mental illness can happen to anyone, and that it affects "normal" families. This portion of the training typically has a powerful impact on the officers as they come to realize that families dealing with mental illness "are just like them".

*Building Hope for Recovery through Education, Support and Advocacy*

## Support Groups

For those impacted by mental illness, Family Members and Natural Supports

### Canton Support Group

Sunday Evenings @ 7:00 pm

Family Members or Peers

St. Michael's Catholic Church

3430 St Michael Dr. N.W., Canton, OH 44718  
(Corner of Whipple & Fulton)  
Lower level parking lot: Look for sign on door

Refuge of Hope

Monday Evening @ 5:00 pm

Peers

405 Third Street, N.E., Canton, Ohio 44702

FaithNet Program Sundays, 5:30 pm

Discuss Mental Health from Biblical Perspective

Wendy's 3320 Whipple Ave., N.W.  
Canton, OH 44718

Alliance Open Support Group

1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday Evenings @ 7:00 pm

Family Members or Peers

Science Hill Community Church  
12316 Beeson St. N.E., Alliance, Oh 44601

Post Peer to Peer Program Recovery Groups

For Graduates of Peer to Peer Education Program

NAMI Connection

Thursday Afternoon @ 2:00 pm

Adults with Mental Illness Only

Coleman Behavioral Health  
400 W. Tuscarawas St., Suite 200  
Canton, OH 44702

North Canton Family Support Group

1st & 3rd Wednesday Evenings @ 6:00pm

Family Members Only

Holy Trinity Lutheran Church  
2551 55th St. N.E., Canton, OH 44721

DRA Dual Recovery Anonymous

Wednesday @ 11:30 am

*For dealing with both mental illness and substance issues*  
Holy Trinity Lutheran Church  
2551 55th St. N.E., Canton, OH 44721

DRA: Dual Recovery Anonymous

Friday @ 11:00 am

*For dealing with both mental illness and substance issues*  
Hunter House  
1114 Gonder Ave. S.E., Canton, Oh 44707

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The Support groups below are for current psychiatric In-patients and /or their loved ones

Monday Evenings @ 6:00 pm

Aultman Hospital

Psychiatric Unit, 6th Floor

Tuesday @10:00 am

Crisis Intervention & Recovery Center

Crisis Stabilization Unit

Wednesday/Thursday

Heartland Behavioral Healthcare

HBH Family Involvement Program  
330 833-3135 Extension 2170

For more information please contact NAMI Stark County at 330-455-6264 or [namistark@namistarkcounty.org](mailto:namistark@namistarkcounty.org)

# 2016 Education Schedule

## **FREE Education Programs – Call 330 455-6264 to register** **PRE-REGISTRATION IS NEEDED by calling for our FREE NAMI Educational Programs**



**Family-to-Family** 12-week course is for family members and friends of adults with serious mental illness. It is taught by trained NAMI family members.

- Thursday February 4, 2:00 pm to 4:30 pm, Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, 2551 55th St NE, Canton, OH 44721
- Wednesday June 15, 6:00 pm to 8:30 pm, Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, 2551 55th St NE, Canton, OH 44721
- Wednesday September 7, 6:00 pm to 8:30 pm, Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, 2551 55th St NE, Canton, OH 44721
- Monday September 12, 6:00 pm to 8:30 pm, Science Hill Community Church, 12316 Beeson St., N.E., Alliance, OH 44601



**Peer-to-Peer** 10-week course is for adults who have been diagnosed with a mental illness.

- Wednesday January 13, 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm, Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, 2551 55th St NE, Canton, OH 44721
- Thursday February 4, 11:30 am to 1:30 pm, Hunter House 1114 Gonder Ave, S.E, Canton, OH 44710
- Monday March 7, 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm, Science Hill Community Church, 12316 Beeson St., N.E., Alliance, OH 44601
- Wednesday June 1, 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm, Mercy Health Center of Jackson, 7337 Caritas Cir NW (corner of Wales and Fulton) ,Massillon, OH 44646
- Thursday July 7, 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm, Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, 2551 55th St NE, Canton, OH 44721
- Thursday July 7, 11:30 am to 1:30 pm, Hunter House 1114 Gonder Ave, S.E, Canton, OH 44710
- Wednesday October 5, 5:30 pm to 7:30 pm, Make A Way, 227 Third Street SE, Massillon, OH 44648



**Basics** 6 week course is for parents of children with emotional/mental/neurobiological disorders

- Wednesday February 17, 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm, TBD
- Wednesday April 13, 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm, TBD
- Wednesday September 14, 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm, TBD