On this day, we reflect back on the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., and look towards the day when Dr. King’s vision of freedom, equity, and justice will be fully actualized. Without the bold and assertive actions taken by the civil rights leaders in the 1950s and 1960s, we would not have essential human rights protections like prohibitions on various forms of discrimination and segregation. As mental health advocates, we have particular appreciation for leaders in the Civil Rights Movement addressing racialized trauma caused by Jim Crow Laws and other overtly racist policies and practices. Dr. King and his peers not only created a world of much greater opportunity and possibility, they also inspired generations of people around the world to advocate for broader social justice and human rights gains. We are forever grateful for and humbled by the profound and visionary advocacy of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

Part of honoring the legacy of Dr. King is reaffirming our commitment to freedom, equity, and justice. We must confront prejudice and discrimination in all forms. Racism is both a public health crisis and a mental health crisis. We should not and cannot accept that a person’s race can be a determining factor in their level of healthcare access and healthcare outcomes. We reject the system of mass incarceration that is disproportionately populated by Black Americans and Americans with mental health conditions. Lethal police violence continues to be a major concern, as discussed in our recent statement with NASW Texas regarding the killing of Patrick Warren Sr. by a Killeen, TX police officer.

The words of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. ring as true today as they did in the mid-20th century. We agree wholeheartedly that, “injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere”. Despite the many gains achieved over the years, we are committed to continuing the fight. Today is also a day to remember Congressman John Lewis, who was on the front lines of the Civil Rights Movement with Dr. King and who passed away last year. As advocates for a highly vulnerable, marginalized population, NAMI Texas takes Congressman Lewis’ words to heart – “Get in good trouble, necessary trouble.”

Upcoming Webinar
On February 1, 2021 at 6:00 pm CT, NAMI Texas will present the webinar, “If Not You, Then Who?”: Partnerships Between CIT Programs and NAMI Affiliates in Texas

Mental Illness affects 1 in 5 people in the U.S., and navigating the mental health system can be overwhelming for many of these individuals. Advocacy is critical to engaging individuals in care and ensuring that the systems in place provide the appropriate care. Advocacy is a cornerstone of NAMI and a vital part of what we can do to help. This seminar will educate NAMI leaders in Texas on Crisis intervention Team (CIT) fundamentals and specifically what law enforcement officers are taught in the training program. CIT is a team function and we will review why it must be a team service and the benefits of CIT. Most importantly we will discuss how NAMI affiliates can engage and support existing CIT in their own communities and how they can advocate for the development of CIT.

Register for Event Here

NAMI SMARTS for Advocacy

On Saturday, January 23rd, at 1 pm CT, we will be offering NAMI SMARTS for Advocacy, Module 3 (Meeting Your Policymaker).

NAMI SMARTS for Advocacy is a hands-on advocacy training program that helps people living with mental illness, friends and family transform their passion and lived experience into skillful grassroots advocacy.

The unique step-by-step, skill-building design of NAMI SMARTS is effective with a wide range of participants, including those who are new to advocacy as well as individuals with years of experience.

Module 3 provides training on using your personal story in meetings with policymakers. It is a great way to prepare for NAMI Texas Days of Action.
Upcoming Testimony Opportunities

Have a story to share about mental health insurance coverage? Testify here.

Have a story to share about the criminal legal system? Testify here.

Have recommendations about how the mental health system could be improved? Testify here.

Want to Support Our Work?

NAMI Texas is dedicated to improving the quality of life of all individuals living with mental illness and their families.

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NAMI TEXAS INC
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