

NAMI CA is currently advocating for and providing information, support, and resources to those who have been impacted by ongoing environmental crises and mental health conditions.

It has been a stressful couple of years for all. Families, youth and students, underserved communities, educators, medical and mental health professionals, and others are feeling the impacts of wildfires. Those navigating the transition back to school have been interrupted due to our ongoing COVID-19 crisis. Current reports state that, under such conditions, it has been more difficult to navigate the system to obtain necessary resources and access crisis care services.

In light of this, we have gathered information and resources below to help you through the challenges you may be facing, whether these involve weathering wildfires, finding housing, supporting youth and families transitioning back to school, or supporting others' mental health.

WILDFIRE INFORMATION AND RESOURCES:

We hope you are safe from the recent wildfires in California. Our thoughts are with those who are impacted. It is always heartbreaking to see so many of our communities suffering. We would like to thank our first responders for always getting so many to safety. We also want to stress the importance of attending to both the immediate and long-term mental health of all those impacted.

You are not alone. NAMI CA is a partner of the CalHOPE program to provide crisis support for communities impacted by wildfires. Call CalHOPE today at (833) 317-HOPE (4673) or visit CalHOPE Chat today to be connected to a crisis counselor.

Stay Informed: Trusted Information on California Fires

- The latest fires: [Map of current fires in California from CAL FIRE](#)
- The [California Office of Emergency Services \(Cal OES\)](#) has updates with a fire map, facts, and figures
- California Wildfire Response Resources: [Response.ca.gov](#)

Follow Your Fire Departments

- [California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection \(CAL FIRE\)](#)
- CAL FIRE on Social Media: [@CAL_Fire on Twitter](#); [CALFire on Facebook](#)
- [Find your local fire department](#)

Know Where to Go: Evacuation Centers and Housing

- [Info on evacuation centers and housing from California state](#)
- [California state evacuation guide](#)

Be Prepared: Wildfire Preparedness and Safety Advice

- [Cal FIRE preparedness guide](#)
- [Cal FIRE guide to preparing for wildfire](#)
- [Cal FIRE wildfire mobile app](#)
- [How to stay safe during a wildfire \(CDC\)](#)
- [Ready.gov emergency and disaster preparedness](#)
- [Cal OES preparedness guide](#)
- [Cal Fire emergency supply kit checklist](#)
- [Wildfire is Coming: Are You Ready? Brochure](#)

Take Steps to Maintain Mental Health

We also want to stress the importance of attending to both the immediate and long-term mental health of those affected by wildfires. Firefighters, their families, and all those directly impacted by fires have an increased risk of facing mental health challenges, from anxiety and depression to PTSD. However, there is help and hope.

- Find your [local NAMI affiliate](#) to ask about support if you have a mental health condition or a family member with one
- [List of mental health resources by county](#)
- [NAMI CA guide to managing stress](#)
- [Coping with a Disaster or Traumatic Event \(CDC\)](#)
- Call or text the [Disaster Distress Helpline](#) at 1-800-985-5990 (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration); English and Spanish available.
- Contact the National Suicide Prevention Line 1-800-273-TALK (8255) or text "NAMI" to 741741 if you or someone you know is considering suicide.



BACK TO SCHOOL: SUPPORTING YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH

How can we work together to support the needs of youth as we transition back to the classroom? NAMI CA partnered with the California Department of Education (CDE) for a [Town Hall Meeting: Supporting Youth Mental Health In the Transition Back to the Classroom](#) (August 13, 2021) for a discussion about supporting youth during this challenging time. Guest speaker Monica Nepomuceno (CDE) led our discussion on topics that included: CDE's mission and current work; the importance of and strategies for supporting the mental health needs of youth; how families and loved ones can support youth going back to school during the pandemic; and ways to advocate and get involved in policy changes for youth mental health.

We also discussed our NAMI on Campus: High School Program. Learn more out about the [NAMI On Campus: High School \(NCHS\)](#) program to support youth-led school clubs!

Take 30-Second Surveys to Share Your Experiences to Help Others

- If you have advice for students and parents, please answer NAMI CA's [30-Second Survey for back-to-school time](#). If you could offer one piece of advice to students or parents, what would it be? Is there something in particular you've done to make this time easier for your family? Tips on how to de-stress? How to support the needs of kids going to school remotely? How to maintain family balance? [Share your insights to help others](#).

Learn More in Our Youth Mental Health Guide

- Get tips and resources in our [youth mental health guide](#).

Blog on Helping Parents and Children During the COVID-19 Crisis

- Read our blog on how to communicate with children, support children, and manage stress and anxiety in our [family guide](#).

HELPING SUPPORT SOMEONE WITH A MENTAL HEALTH CONDITION: GUIDE FOR FAMILIES AND FRIENDS

When a friend or family member develops a mental health condition, it's important to know that you're not alone. Family members, friends, and caregivers often play a large role in helping and supporting the millions of people in the U.S. who experience mental health conditions each year. Many loved ones experience the same thoughts and questions you might be having now.

You may be trying to help a family member who doesn't have access to care or doesn't want help. Or you may want to learn how to support and encourage someone who has been hospitalized or experienced a similar mental health crisis.

When someone has a mental health condition, support from loved ones can make a big difference. However, it may be hard for us as family members or friends to know what approach is best. It's particularly difficult to balance showing support with caring for our own health and encouraging others to be responsible for their actions.

Here are some steps you can take to support your loved one with a mental health condition:

(For details on how to implement these steps, please visit the [supporting your loved one blog](#))

- Learn what you can about your loved one's mental health condition.
- Accept that an illness is influencing your family member's behavior.
- Take care of yourself.
- Show interest in your family member's treatment plan.
- Encourage your family member to follow the treatment plan.
- Strive for an atmosphere of cooperation within the family.
- Listen carefully.
- Resume "normal" activities and routines.
- Don't push too hard.
- Find support.
- Express your support out loud.
- Take steps to keep yourself and your family member safe.
- Be prepared for a crisis.
- Remember that support is not control.
- Don't give up.
- [Share your story](#).

