Keep Calm and Fight Stigma
Raise $100 for NAMI Fox Valley and Receive Awesome T-Shirt
By: Wendy Magas, Communications Director

You've most likely seen plenty “Keep Calm” T-Shirts and images floating around social media with various sayings and witticisms. Now NAMI Fox Valley has its own version, “Keep Calm and Fight Stigma,” which will be featured on this year’s Bowl-a-Thon T-shirt. But we believe our version is extra special! You’ll see that we’ve included in our design the green Mental Health Awareness Ribbon, the NAMI Grassroots symbol, the Iris, and of course, the NAMI logo. Every bowler who raises at least $100 will receive this T-shirt.

NAMI Fox Valley’s second-annual “Strike Out Stigma” Bowl-a-Thon is planned for Saturday, Oct. 4 at the Super Bowl in Appleton. Please join us as we raise funds for NAMI Fox Valley and awareness about mental illness.

A little background for you: The Iris is NAMI’s symbol of hope and courage. The NAMI grassroots emblem, meanwhile, is a reminder that NAMI grew from the ground up – from parents, consumers and family members coming together and demanding better treatment and services for people living with mental illness. Now more than 25 years later, NAMI has more than a 1,000 affiliates across the country!

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Join us to Strike Out Stigma
There’s no time to spare!

We are excited to hold our 2nd-annual Strike Out Stigma Bowl-a-Thon, planned for Saturday, October 4 at the Super Bowl Family Entertainment Center in Appleton.

Equal parts community outreach and fundraiser, the Bowl-a-Thon is an incredible way to show your support for individuals and families affected by mental illness. This fundraiser helps us achieve our mission as we work to support and empower those affected by mental illness through education, support, outreach and advocacy.

Please join us to help meet our $75,000 fundraising goal for this year. Be a Sponsor. Be a Team Captain. Provide an in-kind donation or contribution. Bowl with us!

NAMI Fox Valley and our dedicated corps of volunteers work tirelessly to raise awareness and provide essential education, advocacy and support group programs for people in our community living with mental illness and their loved ones.

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We are so proud to be that little Wisconsin affiliate that could! And we’re not so little anymore – we are fortunate to have a staff of a dozen talented employees, more than 300 volunteers, an amazing board of directors, a generous community, and supporters who believe in our mission and help us raise funds each fall to support our life-changing programs and services.

But of course the Bowl-a-Thon is about more than just raising money. We are also out to raise awareness, start conversations, and get people more comfortable talking about mental illness. And it’s also about being brave and calling out stigma when we see it and letting people know it’s not okay to blame or discriminate against someone for being sick or make fun of people with brain disorders.

My family and I were visiting Marquette, Mich. this past summer and my youngest son and I were taking a stroll downtown, visiting the various shops. We stopped by a trendy T-shirt shop, obviously targeted for teens and college students, and were perusing the many shirts with their snarky, sarcastic and silly sayings and graphics. We were having a few laughs when my son’s face suddenly dropped. He turned to me and pointed at one particular shirt. Then he paused and whispered, “Mom, that T-shirt is really mean. I think they are making fun of me and people with brain disorders.”

He was right. I could feel his sense of shame as he lowered his head and wondered out loud. “Why do people think having bipolar is funny? I wish they knew what my life was like and then they wouldn’t think it’s funny.”

My inner tiger mom and all her fury began to well up inside of me as my mind raced to compose a biting complaint that I would promptly share with the store manager. I mulled over my choice of words and my impulse was to march over to the guy standing behind the cash register, with hurtful T-shirt in hand, and angrily say, “If you substituted the word ‘bipolar’ with ‘cancer’ on this shirt, would you sell it? Of course you wouldn’t, moron, because having cancer isn’t ‘awesome.’ And neither is having bipolar disorder.”

I glanced at the guy at the register. He appeared to be only a few years older than my son. He most likely wasn’t the one who selected and purchased the inventory. So instead, I paused, took a few deep breaths, and told myself to calm down. I turned to my son and we huddled at the back of the store discussing what to do and say. We decided polite but brutal honesty was the better way to go. We practiced a few lines. And then I followed my son to the register.

He held up the T-shirt to the young man behind the counter. As my son awkwardly prepared to deliver his response, the clerk asked, “Will this be it for you today?” To which my son responded: “I don’t want to buy this shirt. I wanted to let you know that this shirt is really mean and it hurts my feelings because I have bipolar disorder and it’s not funny. Please stop selling these shirts.”

The clerk sheepishly apologized, his eyes cast downward, and he tucked the shirt behind the counter.

We left the shop and my son’s posture changed, as if pride had filled his chest like a deflated balloon being filled with helium.

“You just fought stigma and I’m proud of you,” I told my son.

“Thanks, Mom, for not yelling at the guy,” he responded. “That would have been really embarrassing.”
NAMI Fox Valley addresses the mental illness needs of our community, replaces stigma with understanding and helps thousands of families and individuals each year.

Join the Bowl-a-Thon! Here’s how:

- Contact Kelly or Wendy at (920) 954-1550 to let us know you'd like to join the Bowl-a-Thon! Or email us at kelly@namifoxvalley.org or wendy@namifoxvalley.org. We will answer any questions and send you a Team Captain folder with materials and instructions to help build a team. Or feel free to join as an individual bowler.

- Online registration is easy! Create your own team and/or fundraising page at our First Giving Bowl-a-Thon Fundraising site. Just visit our website, www.namifoxvalley.org and click on the “Join Our 2014 Bowl-a-Thon” icon on the upper right hand corner of the page.

- There is no registration fee for the Bowl-a-Thon. All participants are encouraged to collect donations from family members, friends, co-workers and business associates in support of their participation in the event.

- All funds collected by bowlers will be used to support NAMI Fox Valley’s programs here in the Fox Valley. The funds support our agency’s education, advocacy, support and outreach programs for people living with mental illness, their loved ones, in addition to our community education programs.

- All bowlers who raise $100 or more will receive a Bowl-a-Thon event T-shirt!

- Companies, organizations and friends are encouraged to organize teams of bowlers made up of employees, organization members, relatives and friends to take part in the Bowl-a-Thon.

Get ready to bowl: Choose from three bowling shifts

The Bowl-a-Thon will take place from 10:30 a.m. - 6 p.m., Saturday, Oct. 4 at the Super Bowl Family Entertainment Center, 2222 E. Northland Ave., Appleton. Teams of bowlers can choose from 2-hour time slots throughout the day to bowl.

Choose a bowling time that is convenient for you and your teammates!

- 11 a.m. - 1 p.m.
- 1:30 - 3:30 p.m.
- 3:30 - 5:30 p.m.

We ask that bowlers and team captains arrive a half-hour prior to their bowling shift to turn in their pledge forms and donations. We hope to see you there! Give us a call if you have any questions.

Get your free flu shot at the Bowl-a-Thon!

Walgreens will be generously donating 50 free flu shots during the Bowl-a-Thon on Saturday, Oct. 4 at the Super Bowl. A licensed pharmacist will be on site during the event to administer the shots. Thank you, Walgreens, for being a generous sponsor of the Bowl-a-Thon and supporting both mental and physical well-being!
NAMI FV’s NEW Hope Peer Specialist Training underway

NAMI Fox Valley is proud to offer its NEW Hope Peer Specialist Training Program, which prepares participants to become Wisconsin Certified Peer Specialists. A Certified Peer Specialist is someone who is living well with mental illness and has received extensive training and state certification, through a state-approved Peer Specialist training program, to serve as a support person for others living with mental illness by offering encouragement, guidance and resources to support recovery.

NAMI Fox Valley’s NEW Hope Peer Specialist Training Program received state approval in June, and we began our first course using the new model in July.

“We have 15 amazing students taking the class,” said Paula Verrett, NAMI Fox Valley’s Recovery Specialist who is teaching the course along with Karen Iverson Riggers and Ann Jadin from our agency. “Peer specialists can play such a valuable role in recovery and can make all the difference for someone. I like to refer to peer specialists as the ‘pay it forward’ professional, because it allows you to pay it forward and share hope and inspiration with others.”

The new training program was modeled after a nationally-renowned peer specialist training program developed by the University of Kansas. NAMI Fox Valley was given permission to use the model and adapt it to reflect Wisconsin’s mental health system, Paula said.

Students attend classes at NAMI Fox Valley twice a week for 10 weeks. Following their classroom instruction, students will then each complete a 100-hour internship, where they apply their new skill set. Internship sites may include homeless and warming shelters; county mental health programs; mental health service providers; emergency rooms; and inpatient psychiatric units, for example. Following their internships, the students must pass a state exam to become certified.

“Peer specialists serve as a different kind of resource and support because they have experienced mental illness themselves and they know what it’s like to struggle and they know what it’s like to succeed,” Paula added “They’ve navigated the system and they can share that experience and provide a sense of hope that recovery is possible.”

Karen, the agency’s outgoing development director who is transitioning to her new role as director of the agency’s new Peer Run Respite Center, said she expects the internships will lead to paid employment opportunities.

“Peer specialists bring great value to any mental health recovery team because of the genuine compassion, credibility and connection that they offer to those who are struggling to get better,” Karen said.

Karen envisions that the staff at NAMI FV’s Peer Run Respite Center will be certified peer specialists.

“We won’t require that people be Certified Peer Specialists to be hired, but our goal is to have everyone who works there to become certified,” she said.

NAMI Fox Valley now enrolling for fall NEW Hope Peer Specialist Training program

Are you an adult living in recovery from mental illness? Are you interested in becoming a state-certified Peer Specialist? NAMI Fox Valley is now accepting applicants for its fall New Hope Peer Specialist Training program which begins Nov. 10. Class will be held 1 – 3:30 p.m. Mondays and 1 – 4:30 p.m. Wednesdays from Nov. 10 through Feb. 25. NAMI Fox Valley then assists students in securing a 100-hour internship, as required for state certification. For more information or to request an application, please contact Paula Verrett at paula@namifoxvalley.org or (920) 954-1550.
**Peer Run Respite Center planning, development taking shape**

*Healing is a matter of time, but it is sometimes also a matter of opportunity.* - Hippocrates (460 – 370 BC)

NAMI Fox Valley is off and running with the development of its new Peer Run Respite Center, which will offer short-stay respite in a homelike environment for people with mental illness.

Karen Iverson Riggers, who has served as NAMI Fox Valley’s Development Director for the past three years, has been hired as the director of the new center. In June, our agency was one of three sites in Wisconsin selected to receive $441,000 in state funding to develop and open a Peer Run Respite Center. Gov. Scott Walker approved more than $2 million in state funds to create the centers – a first-of-its-kind program in the state – as part of his mental health initiatives.

Work is underway to find a site, create an advisory board and recruit and train respite staff. Paid positions for a house manager, recovery specialist and peer companions will be posted in September.

“This is dream come true for me and NAMI Fox Valley,” said Karen, who wrote the successful grant application on behalf of the agency. “Peer Run Respites provide an incredible opportunity for self-directed healing within the framework of peer support. We get to create a comforting center that will foster wellness, healing, support and hope.”

Elsewhere in the country, Peer Run Respites have delivered impressive outcomes in reducing hospitalizations and crisis and improving the quality of life for guests who utilize the services. Peer Run Respite serves as a supportive alternative to hospitalization for people experiencing difficult times when they need more intensive support.

The respite will offer a safe and stable environment where peer support is available around the clock, seven days a week. As a completely peer run service, all staff will be individuals with lived experience of mental illness and/or substance abuse. Staff will receive intensive training to offer support to guests utilizing the respite as a crisis alternative.

An important goal of the Peer Run Respite is to connect guests with other community resources and become an integral part of services in community as well as a collaborative partner in the larger wellness and recovery community, Karen added.

In addition to NAMI Fox Valley, the other two grant recipients are Grassroots Empowerment Project, which will be starting a respite in the Madison area. While each of the Peer Run Respites will be regionally focused through community collaboration and partners, they will all be welcoming to eligible individuals from throughout the state.

Would you like to be involved with this groundbreaking project?

Contact Karen at (920)954-1550 or karen@namifoxvalley.org. We are looking for individuals (especially those with lived experience) to serve on task groups; support development of the property; facilitate programs; and provide feedback on programs and activities offered; and help develop policies and procedures. Feedback and engagement with NAMI Fox Valley participants as well as the general community will be integral to the success of this project!

**Young Adult Support & Transition Group launches in October**

We are excited to announce the launch of our new Young Adult Support and Transition Group. This weekly support group will meet 4:30 – 6 p.m. each Wednesday at NAMI Fox Valley. The group, targeted for young adults ages 18 to 24, will be led by trained facilitators who are young adults living well with mental illness.

This confidential support group will offer a safe and supportive environment for individuals to connect with others who live with similar challenges, where they can express their feelings, hopes and challenges, and offer creative and practical solutions to specific problems or concerns.
NAMI FV, Samaritan Counseling Center offer “Creating Hope” mental health training for faith leaders

Samaritan Counseling Center’s Clergy and Congregation Care (CCC) program and NAMI Fox Valley along with members of the Mental Health Ministries Task Force are partnering to offer a one-day mental health training for clergy and church staff members.

The daylong training, entitled “Creating Hope: The Power of Faith Communities in Mental Health Recovery” will be held 8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m., Thursday, Oct. 30 at the Grand Meridian, 2621 N. Oneida St., Appleton. There is a $50 registration fee which includes lunch. The registration deadline is Oct. 17. To register online, visit www.samaritan-counseling.com. For more information, contact Ann Jadin at ann@namifoxvalley.org or (920) 954-1550.

The workshop will explore how faith communities and people engaged in mental health recovery can work together to educate their communities about mental illness, break stigma and develop supportive, caring responses. The training will offer faith leaders resources to create caring congregations that help facilitate mental health recovery. Attendees will receive a congregation toolkit with information about breaking stigma, creating a faith-based support group, materials for worship services, and community resources.

In 2012, Samaritan Counseling Center approached NAMI Fox Valley to discuss support for faith communities and leaders on understanding mental health. Through NAMI Fox Valley’s 2012 Community Survey, the agency found that education and programming for faith communities and education and support programs incorporating spirituality were identified as community needs and part of desired programming. Both agencies were being approached by faith leaders and congregations to provide training and support for members affected by mental illness.

In 2013, a diverse group of faith leaders, clergy, consumers, family members and other interested community members formed a Mental Health Ministries Task Force to explore community need, opportunities for training/support and planning and funding. The Task Force hopes to provide further training and resources to create caring congregations in our community that support and promote mental health and recovery.

Did you know?

- More than 70% of individuals have interaction with a place of worship or faith community monthly.
- Clergy outnumber psychiatrists nearly 10:1 and are more equitably distributed geographically than health professionals.
- More than 30% of individuals who sought treatment and support for mental illness did so from a clergy member (compared with 16% for psychiatrists and general medical doctors).
- Faith communities play a crucial role in the mental health care system; however, most clergy and faith leaders report feeling inadequately trained to support people with mental illness.

Agency launches new Parent & Caregiver Support Group

NAMI Fox Valley is pleased to introduce Dana Hainer and Rob Kaminski who are facilitating our new Parent & Caregiver Support Group. This monthly support group, which meets on the second Tuesday of the month from 6 – 7:30 p.m. at NAMI Fox Valley, is designed for parents and other caregivers of children and adolescents living with mental illness.

The group offers a supportive environment for caregivers to experience compassion and mutual support from others who understand their experience. The group also helps parents and caregivers discover resources to meet the challenges of raising a child with a mental illness, learn coping skills and develop problem-solving skills. Advance registration is not required and new participants are welcome at any time.

Dana Hainer and Rob Kaminski
Beth Writes

NAMI FV stretches itself to meet demand for services

By: Beth Clay, Executive Director

My heart is so heavy with the loss of Robin Williams to suicide. What a stark reminder that even with the love of the entire world, Robin Williams succumbed to the devastating psychological pain of depression. For those of us who, at some point in our lives, have been “swallowed whole” by mental illness and for those of us who have helplessly watched a loved one experience it, we look to Robin Williams and think, “That could be me ….” What wasn’t shared with us, in all of the news coverage, were the thousands of days of his life that Robin Williams won the internal battle and found the hope to live another day. These are the days that should define his life, not the very last one.

Just last week, the World Health Organization released its very first global report on suicide prevention. According to the report, there are more than 800,000 suicides per year (globally) – that’s one suicide every 40 seconds. NAMI Fox Valley recognizes suicide as “death by mental illness” and is an active member in the Suicide Prevention Task Force of the NEW Mental Health Connection. The group’s mission is “100% collaboration for 0 suicides,” reminding us that it will take full community engagement to relentlessly pursue prevention and a reduction in suicide… to zero. The mission carries with it a great deal of HOPE!

Hope is the guiding light of all NAMI programs – the belief that recovery is possible and that, with the support of peers, we can work toward wellness. More community members than ever are searching for hope, and they are finding it by engaging in the programs and services of NAMI Fox Valley.

Our affiliate has served more Fox Valley community members in the first half of 2014 than we served in all of 2013. We are welcoming three to five new members in each support group, with group participants topping 20 at times. The demand for new groups (additional teen groups, a young adult transition group, a dual diagnosis group, a women’s group, etc.) has us working overtime to train facilitators and to find community-based sites that fit the needs of our group members.

Demand for our classes has caused waiting lists, forced us to change sites to accommodate more participants, and has pushed us to hold more course offerings in 2014 than we’d planned. In the fall, we will be running two Peer-to-Peer courses concurrently to accommodate all interested consumers, with one course being offered in Neenah at Friendship Place. Family-to-Family has been offered five times this year, which is unprecedented among NAMI affiliates around the country.

From my heart to yours, a HUGE thank you. Thank you for your membership, financial support and mission-connection! If you are not yet a member, please consider joining us – at the affiliate, state and national level – to support, educate, and advocate. It has never been more critical than NOW to engage with us as a Bowl-a-thon team captain, bowler, volunteer, fundraiser or donor, so that NAMI Fox Valley’s doors are always open and everyone in the community has access, at no cost, to our life-changing programs. See you on October 4th at the Strike Out Stigma Bowl-a-thon!

NAMI FV offers three teen support groups

NAMI Fox Valley now offers three Teen Support Groups, for ages 13-18 (18-year-olds must still be in high school). These ongoing, weekly support groups provide a safe and supportive environment for teens to learn about symptoms, treatments and resources through peer support. Two mental health professionals facilitate the groups to provide additional education and encouragement for teens to support each other with hope and help for recovery. New participants are welcome at any time.

Check out our updated times and locations:

- Mondays, 6 - 7:30 p.m. at Heart of the Valley YMCA, 225 W. Kennedy Ave., Kimberly
- Wednesdays, 4:30 - 6 p.m. at Harmony Café, 233 E. College Ave., Appleton.
- Thursdays, 4:30 - 6 p.m. at Harmony Café
NAMI Oshkosh hires first executive director

We are thrilled to introduce Betsy Wandtke as the new Executive Director of NAMI Oshkosh. Betsy comes to the affiliate with long-time relationships in the Oshkosh community; significant fundraising skills and expertise; leadership experience; and a deep, personal connection to the NAMI mission.

The Board of Directors of NAMI Oshkosh, the Oshkosh Community Foundation, NAMI Wisconsin, and NAMI Fox Valley, were all honored to participate in the hiring process for the first executive director of NAMI Oshkosh.

Betsy, who most recently served as the Major Gifts Officer for the American Red Cross in Northeast Wisconsin, is a passionate mental health advocate with a diverse and rich employment history.

She has served as a volunteer first responder and was the first female firefighter to serve the Ogdensburg/St. Lawrence Fire Department. She has also served as the Executive Director of the Wyoming Wildlife’s Foundation. She also worked in a hospital emergency department where she came face-to-face with mental illness.

“We had many patients who turned up there and I had the privilege of working with them,” Betsy said. “It was at that time that I also had the honor of donating a kidney to my Mom. She is still sportin’ that kidney and it’s so nice to have her pick up the phone when I call her!”

By serving NAMI, Betsy also wants to honor the memory of her oldest brother, who lost his battle with mental illness and died by suicide three years ago.

“He was a genius and the most wonderful person you ever wanted to meet with a streak of mischief and a smile that lit up the room,” she said. “I had contacted NAMI during that time for advice. The people I talked with were very understanding. … I always wanted to do something for Jeff and his memory, but I never knew what that would be. Well, let’s say I am the Executive Director of NAMI for a reason!”

All of the stakeholders are filled with hope about how a strong NAMI affiliate in Oshkosh will impact the community for consumers, families, professionals and the community at large.

You can reach Betsy at NAMI Oshkosh at (920) 651-1148 or betsy@namioshkosh.org. Welcome Betsy!

Welcome to our new Development Director

We are thrilled to welcome Sandra Potts as NAMI Fox Valley’s new Development Director. She comes to us with a rich background in social work, advocacy and resource development with community-based agencies including Family Services and Lutheran Social Services. She brought in the first-ever million-dollar donor to LSS.

Sandy will need time to leave her current position as the Executive Director of the Fox Valley End of Life Care Coalition. She will start with us on October 20, 2014.

Sandy said she’s excited to apply her skills as a development professional to serve NAMI Fox Valley’s mission to support and empower people affected by mental illness.

“I have not only personally experienced the impact of mental illness in my family, but early on in my career, as an individual, marriage and family counselor, I witnessed the struggles individuals and families deal with when mental illness is a part of their life,” she said.

She has also served on the board of the local Thrivent Financial Chapter and is currently the president of the Appleton Fox Cities Kiwanis. She has a long history in the Fox Valley.

Sandy added that she’s looking forward to building upon the agency’s fundraising successes. “Developing and implementing a system to increase individual donations and growing the endowment fund are high on my priorities,” she added.

NAMI Fox Valley will be enriched by Sandy’s skills, experience and her personal connection to our mission. Welcome to Sandy!

Sandy replaces Karen Iverson Riggers, who has served as the agency’s Development Director for three years. Karen is transitioning to her new position as director of the agency’s new Peer Run Respite Center, which is being developed.
Advocates for Change: From Dialogue to Action

By: Helene Iverson, NAMI FV Family-to-Family teacher and volunteer

The four-day 2014 NAMI National Convention held this year in Washington DC is in the books. Staffers Megan McLachlan, Paula Verrett and Family-to-Family teachers Mike and Sherry Williams and Helene and Jerry Iverson participated. Besides meeting and networking with people from all over the United States, we got to hear and give input to the presidents of the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) and the American Psychiatric Association. Many of our speakers were the experts in their field. Mary Giliberti, our new NAMI National Executive Director, outlined her vision for our organization.

Before going to Capitol Hill to meet with five of Wisconsin’s elected officials, we got a rousing send off from Patrick Kennedy, co-founder of One Mind Research and Demi Lovato, recording artist, actress and mental health advocate. We shared our stories and educated the staffers who met with us. There is some proposed legislation on the Hill to improve mental health care. We need to make our voices heard on the various aspects of these bills. Follow NAMI.org.

Our brains were on overload as we chose from a varied slate of presentations such as NAMI Faithnet; New Technologies to Improve Care; Service Dogs in Mental Health Recovery and Treatment: Not Jail, Mental Health Services for Veterans, just to highlight a few.

We even braved the heat and humidity to take in some of what our nation’s capitol has to offer. The air-conditioned museums and the moonlit monuments were memorable.

I encourage anyone to attend the next NAMI Wisconsin gathering or the National NAMI Convention in San Francisco in July 2015. Then you too can return and be better “advocates for Change.”
NEW Mental Health Connection makes progress on multiple initiatives

NAMI Fox Valley is proud to be a member of the NEW (Northeast Wisconsin) Mental Health Connection, a backbone organization connecting stakeholders to improve the health of our community. For more information on membership or how to get involved, visit their website at: www.newmentalhealthconnection.org

Here's the latest update on the many initiatives underway, as shared during the board's September meeting.

1. Catalpa Health shared an update on their health access redesign. They are working toward:
   • More comprehensive front and telephone support for patients and providers
   • Clinical triage to determine appropriate levels of care
   • Crisis/urgent appointments within 24 hours and/or referral to inpatient providers
   • Initial assessments offered within 5 days
   • Follow up appointments offered within 7-10 days from initial assessment. If Catalpa is unable to find an appropriate match with one of their providers, they are referring out to partner community providers.
   • Case management to provide wrap around support for families with a higher level of need
   • Support and connection with Emergency Departments and Primary Care with day time and after-hours phone triage as well as expedited appointments
   • Extended evening and weekend hours in the Access Center with appointments available based on the family’s schedule and needs

2. No Wrong Door
   • Three trainings for 50 frontline staff and managers were held during the summer to provide information on the No Wrong Door philosophy of connecting individuals with the right service at the right time and in the right place.
   • The RAIL (Referral, Access and Information Link) web-based community referral system is being tested with 8 pilot agencies. This three year pilot will include 30 agencies by 2016 as well as a “refer in” module for consumers and family members.

3. National Depression Screening Day – October 9, 2014
   • Community efforts are underway to provide onsite screenings as well as publicity about the community’s free and confidential online screening tool. The screening has modules for mood disorders, anxiety disorders, eating disorders and substance abuse.
   • More than 3,000 individuals completed the online screening in 2013/2014 making our community the top site in the nation.
   • Individuals can access the free screening through the NEW Mental Health Connection’s website.

4. Children’s Mental Health Initiative
   • Appleton Area School District has developed a flow chart to support families in navigating the mental health system if they have concerns about their child’s mental health or emotional, social and behavioral development. The brochure is available to download through their Student Services page.
   • On September 30, a stakeholder session will be held to assess the community’s existing services and gaps in serving children birth to 5 to address early childhood exposure to trauma as well as the community’s trauma informed services and implementation of trauma informed care. A grant will be completed to become one of three pilot communities in the state to support training for providers, primary care physicians as well as parents in understanding trauma and accessing resources.

5. Community Needs Assessment
   • The NEW Mental Health Connection is completing a community needs assessment to identify gaps in service and strengths of our community.
   • Focus groups were held and the committee is now working on design of a general community survey.
   • A report will be shared with the community in January 2015.
6. Mental Health Integration Project

- The third session of training for Primary Care Providers will be held starting in September.
- This year’s sessions will focus on integrating physical and mental health care to address the risk for other health conditions. Additionally, a session will be focused on women’s mental health including prenatal and perinatal care.

7. Fox Valley Substance Abuse Coalition

- The coalition will be offering a community kickoff to share the Four Pillar approach (Prevention, Treatment, Harm Reduction & Law Enforcement Training) on October 20 from 8am-12pm at the Grand Meridian.
- The coalition is working with counties and the state to implement the Four Pillar best practice approach.

Summer Picnic 2014

Thanks to all our NAMI Fox Valley volunteers, the Outreach Center, and Friendship Place for another successful summer picnic! Nearly 200 consumers, friends and family members turned out July 21 at Pierce Park in Appleton for food, fellowship and fun.
Our Mission
NAMI Fox Valley works to support and empower everyone touched by mental illness. We commit to eliminating stigma and nurture recovery through education, support, advocacy and outreach.

Our Vision
We envision a community, free of stigma, that supports and promotes mental health and recovery.