

Evaluation of NAMI's Ending the Silence Executive Summary—May 4, 2017

Rationale

- NAMI Ending the Silence (ETS) is a 50-minute presentation that provides facts about mental health conditions in youth, describes warning signs, discusses what one should do in response to such warning signs, encourages acceptance of mental health conditions, and urges action to reduce stigma.
- The purpose of the current research was to determine whether or not ETS is effective in changing knowledge and attitudes toward mental health conditions and toward help-seeking.

Methods

- Ten schools from five different areas of the United States participated in the study.
- Participation involved completion of a 12-item research questionnaire measuring knowledge and attitudes related to mental health conditions and help-seeking attitudes.
- For each school
 - Three classes received the ETS presentation and three comparable classes did not.
 - The ETS classes completed a 12-item research questionnaire before the ETS presentation, immediately after the presentation, and 4-6 weeks following the presentation.
 - The non-ETS (Control) classes completed the same questionnaire on the same schedule as ETS classes.

Results

- Altogether, 932 students—530 from ETS classes, 430 from Control classes—completed the full research procedure.
 - 55% were female and 42% male.
 - Less than half (47.5%) were White. 35% were Hispanic, 14% African-American, and 7% Asian.
- Knowledge and attitudes changed for ETS classes but not for Control classes.
 - Scores on the research measure increased significantly following the ETS presentation and remained elevated over pre-ETS scores at the 4-6 week follow-up. Scores for the Control group students, however, remained the same across all three administrations.
 - The pattern (change for ETS classes, no change for Control classes) was similar for each of the 12 individual items and for each of the 10 schools.

Conclusions

- NAMI Ending the Silence is effective in changing high school students' knowledge and attitudes toward mental health conditions and toward help-seeking.
- The effect is a robust one, occurring across different presenters, across different study schools, and across the diverse populations within those schools.