

## SUPPORT | ADVOCACY | EDUCATION

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As we transition into Fall of possibly one of the strangest years any of us has experienced, NAMI Rome continues to maintain as much normalcy in our organization as possible. We are hosting our support groups via Zoom. We advocate through programs like Stepping Up, and in this newsletter specifically, information for this election season will be shared. Our monthly educational meetings have resumed and are being streamed and shared on Facebook live. We continue to be a resource for our NAMI Rome members and our community. As always, there are resources in this newsletter for those in crisis.

**We are in this together.**

Join us **IN PERSON** for our annual candlelight service on October 6. Bring a chair or blanket and join us in observing safe distancing. RSVP to the event on [Facebook](#) for updates!



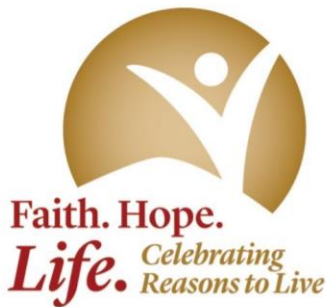
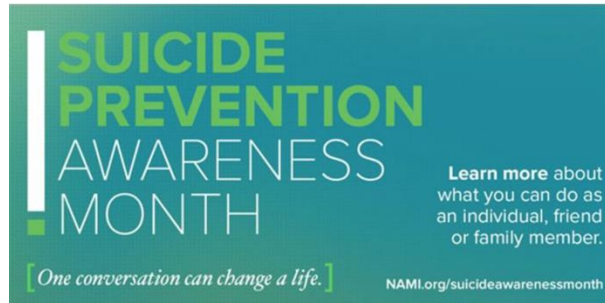
*2020 Candlelight Service*

National Day of Prayer for Mental Illness Recovery & Understanding  
Tuesday, 6 October, 7pm, Rome Town Green

Featured Speaker: **Jennifer Ayers-Moore**  
Sister of Nathaniel Anthony Ayers ([The Soloist](#)),  
& Founder of The AYERS Foundation

Also featuring local leaders **William S. Davies, Nanci Hicks, & Phillip Edge**

**September is Suicide Prevention Awareness Month! Click the image below to view NAMI national's online resources for this month including posts for your social media to share!**

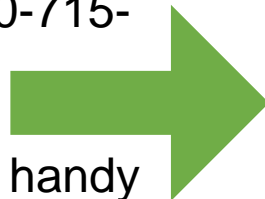


**The National Action Alliance for Suicide Prevention offers Faith.Hope.Life campaign resources on suicide that can be used throughout the year.**  
<https://theactionalliance.org/faith-hope-life/resources-materials>

### **A CRISIS HAS NO SCHEDULE**

In a crisis but not at the severity of dialing 911, do you know that help may be reached at the GA Crisis and Access Center (800-715-4225)?

Our state has created a handy app used to confidentially chat, text and talk 24/7 to a professional. Download and install on your Android or Apple Smartphone.



## Suicide Risk during the Pandemic: Stay Hopeful and Stay in Touch

By Cathy Jacobsen, NAMI Rome Secretary

In this era of Covid-19 it is especially important that we turn our attention to suicide prevention. The article [Suicide Mortality and Coronavirus Disease 2019-A Perfect Storm? \(4/10/20\)](#)<sup>1</sup> reports that suicide rates have been rising in the US over the last two decades. The latest data available (2018) show the highest age-adjusted suicide rate in the US since 1941. In a survey conducted by the CDC in late June,<sup>2</sup> US adults reported considerably elevated levels of mental health conditions, substance use and suicidal ideation associated with the Covid-19 pandemic. Based on the survey of US adults 18 years and older, conducted during June 24-June 30, 2020, 11% had seriously considered suicide. According to the survey, twice as many respondents reported serious consideration of suicide in the previous 30 days as compared to the same time period in 2018 (10.7% vs 4.3%).

### Why does Covid-19 increase the risk of suicide

Social distancing and related public health recommendations often lead to social isolation, economic difficulties, anxiety, fear of contagion, uncertainty and chronic stress. Individuals may develop a sense of hopelessness and helplessness. For some, suicide may seem like the only way out of inescapable problems. Decreased access to community and religious support as well as barriers to mental health treatment are also contributory.

### Who is at risk

The most vulnerable populations include: individuals with pre-existing psychiatric and substance use disorders; low-resilient persons; individuals who reside in high Covid-19 prevalence areas and people who have a family member or friend who has died of Covid. Also at risk are essential workers and unpaid caregivers of adults, especially in multigenerational families.

### What would help prevent a suicide epidemic

People need access to information through traditional and social media. Transparent, timely and responsible media reporting is essential. People need to be encouraged to stay connected and maintain relationships by phone or other media. We must provide community support to those living alone and encourage family and friends to check in. Mental health providers and crisis hot lines should be accessible. Community and organizational gatekeepers must listen closely for signs of suicidality. This group includes: clergy; first responders; pharmacists; geriatric caregivers; school personnel; healthcare providers and others in the public sector.

### What you can do to prevent a suicide

If you're concerned that someone might be suicidal, ask directly if they've ever thought of suicide. If they have contemplated suicide, you should evaluate the level of risk, for example, whether they've planned it, have they researched how they might do it and do they have the means, have they made previous attempts and more. Above all, stay with the person and let them know you take them seriously as you arrange for appropriate and timely help.

If you or anyone you know is facing a suicidal crisis, call your local crisis hotline (or call the National Suicide Prevention **Lifeline at (800) 273-8255**).

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<sup>1</sup> Published online, April 10, 2020 in *JAMA Psychiatry*

<sup>2</sup> CDC *MMWR*/ August 14, 2020/69(32);1049-1057

## Your voice matters—Exercise your rights



United States<sup>®</sup>  
**Census**  
**2020**

### Be Counted

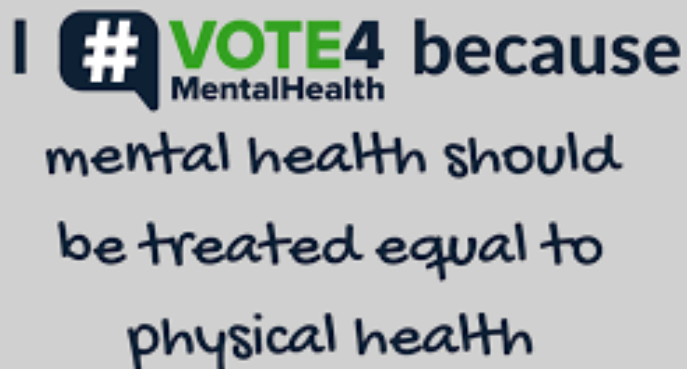
If you have a minute to read this, you could have already completed the census. It's important for everyone to complete it. Help Georgia get off of the bottom rung by completing the census. Simply click on the image to


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### Your Vote Counts

Are you registered to vote? The deadline is October 5. Click on the image on the right, which is the link to register online.

Don't want to vote in person on November 3? You can request an absentee ballot by October 30 and send it in no later than November 3.



I  **VOTE4** because  
MentalHealth  
mental health should  
be treated equal to  
physical health

**Take the pledge to #Vote4MentalHealth &  
Contact local policy makers today!**

<https://www.vote4mentalhealth.org/engaging-candidates/>



Advocating for change is a major mission area for NAMI. Your voice matters and it makes it more powerful when you use factual information. Click on the image to the left and download a handy Georgia specific fact sheet.

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## Speaking of voting, it is election time for NAMI Rome's Board of Directors

At this time each fall, NAMI Rome announces its annual election of board members, which takes place in November. It looks like everything will be done virtually as we don't anticipate having a monthly education meeting in November. Your board is comprised of nine directors; three roll off each year (after serving a 3-year term that begins each January). The criteria for being on the board are rather simple: be a member in good standing and the willingness to work on a committee. There's an application to submit by October 26. Please contact us at [namirome@gmail.com](mailto:namirome@gmail.com) if you are interested.

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## What We've Been Up to During the Pandemic:



We have used Zoom to hold our weekly support group meetings on Mondays from 6-7 pm. We encourage everyone who attended the in-person meeting to try out the online groups. Staying connected with your peers leads to mental health.

Our Connection group will change from Zoom to Google Meet on October 3. Thus, everyone will need a new log in. Send us an email, and we'll send you the new link. The Family Support Group link remains the same.





**COVID-19 has seen Zoom taking over many areas in our lives. We adjusted by holding monthly educational meetings on Facebook Live and we've been reaching many more people than previous in-person meetings.**

### **Virtual education meetings on Facebook Live**

- **May: Floyd County Sheriff Candidate Forum**
- **June: What Is the Mental Health Court?**
- **July: Racial and Ethnic Disparities in Mental Health Care**
- **August: What Is the Stepping Up Initiative?**

**Over 1000 people Like our Facebook page. Are you one? Go to [www.facebook.com/namiromegeorgia](http://www.facebook.com/namiromegeorgia) and Like us and watch past and future educational meetings.**

## **Completing Surveys**



NAMI GA conducts an annual survey of its current and past members so as to gather information of what it and its affiliates are doing well and areas to improve upon.

Click on the clipboard and please tell us how we're doing.

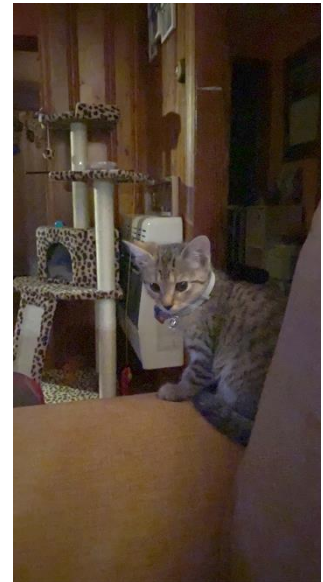
**We want to hear from you! What have you been doing?**

**Email us a picture for our next issue!**



**Jim has taken up painting.**

**Morgan adopted a sweet kitten!**



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## **Upcoming events! Mark your calendars!**

- **Mental Illness Awareness Week, Oct. 4-10**
- **NAMI Rome Annual Candlelight Ceremony, Oct. 6 7p, Rome Town Green**
- **NAMI Ask the Expert Webinar, “New Horizons in Schizophrenia Research” – Oct. 8 4p-5:30 [Register](#)**
- **NAMIWalks Georgia – Oct.10, Virtual [Sign Up](#)**
- **NAMI Rome Education Meeting – Oct. 20 7p, FB Live**
- **NAMI Rome Education Meeting – Nov. 15 7p, FB Live**
- **NAMI Rome Elections – Nov. 23**

# NAMI Rome Info Corner

## NAMI Rome 2020 Board of Directors

**President:** Jim Moore

**Vice President:** Alli Mitchell

**Secretary:** Cathy Jacobsen

**Treasurer:** Johnna Allen

**Members:** Don Benson | Jeremy Salter | Jill Salter | Linda Blankenship | Morgan Driskell

As a non-profit corporation (501c3), NAMI Rome complies with US and Georgia statutes. Contributions may qualify as a charitable deduction for federal income tax purposes. Donors should consult with their tax advisors or the IRS to determine whether a contribution is deductible. That being said, NAMI Rome is able to accomplish its mission through kind contributions from the community.

NAMI Rome may be contacted at:

E-Mail [namirome@gmail.com](mailto:namirome@gmail.com) Phone 706-506-5010

Website

[www.namirome.org](http://www.namirome.org)

Facebook

[www.facebook.com/namiromegeorgia](http://www.facebook.com/namiromegeorgia)

Twitter

[www.twitter.com/romenami](http://www.twitter.com/romenami)

Instagram

[www.instagram.com/namirome](http://www.instagram.com/namirome)

**CRISIS HOTLINE** – 24 hour Georgia Crisis and Access Line, operated by Behavioral Health Link and sponsored by the state: 1-800-715-4225

**WARM LINE** – 24 hour state-funded, consumer-directed resource for anyone struggling with mental health issues: 1-888-945-1414

**NAMI** –NAMI, the National Alliance on Mental Illness, is the nation’s largest grassroots mental health organization dedicated to building better lives for the millions of Americans affected by mental illness.

**NAMI Rome** is your local affiliate of the national organization. Please contact, visit or join us in our effort to erase the stigma surrounding mental illness.

## JOIN NAMI Rome Today!

Your membership supports NAMI with its work improving the lives of persons with mental illness.

Joining NAMI Rome automatically enrolls you in NAMI Georgia and NAMI.

### ANNUAL DUES

Family Membership \$60

Regular Member \$40

Open Door Member \$5

You may join online or by mail/or in person. Visit NAMI Rome website and follow instructions:

<http://www.namirome.org/join-nami.html>