

The Equalizer

Marriage & Family Therapy Solutions, LLC Newsletter



STRATEGIES FOR EQUITY AT INTERCEPT 0: INCREASING MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS IN BIPOC COMMUNITIES

Welcome to the May, 2023 issue of the Marriage and Family Therapy Solutions the “Equalizer” Newsletter. In this issue, we highlight May as both Mental Health and National Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) Heritage Awareness Month.

MAY IS MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS MONTH

Mental Health Awareness Month was established in 1949 to increase awareness about the importance of mental health and wellness for all people. The National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) is the largest grassroots organization in the US devoted to providing free mental health awareness, education, support, and advocacy.

Newsletter Highlights

[Strategies for Equity at Intercept 0](#)

[Mental Health Awareness Month](#)

[The National Alliance on Mental Illness \(NAMI\) Prince William](#)

[National Asian American and Pacific Islander \(AAPI\) Heritage Awareness Month](#)

[Region 2 News & Updates](#)

[Upcoming Events & Resources](#)

- [May- Mental Health Workshop](#)
- [June- Mental Health & Wellness Expo](#)

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THE NATIONAL ALLIANCE ON MENTAL ILLNESS (NAMI) PRINCE WILLIAM

NAMI Prince William (NAMI PW) is a local affiliate of NAMI, serving Greater Prince William and Northern Stafford. While some larger NAMI affiliates have paid staff, all local NAMI affiliates depend on volunteers to offer evidence-based programs created at the national level. Free training and materials are provided to volunteers by the state affiliate, NAMI Virginia.

NAMI PW offers classes, presentations, and support groups on two parallel and complimentary tracks—one for persons living with a mental health condition and one for their families and caregivers. For example, **NAMI Peer-to-Peer** is an 8-session mental health educational program for persons with a mental health condition. For their family members, **NAMI Family-to-Family** is an 8-session course about mental health conditions, brain science, treatment modalities, communication and problem-solving strategies, local resources, and recovery. Similarly, NAMI PW offers separate facilitated support groups for persons in recovery (NAMI Connection) and for their families/loved ones (NAMI Family Support Group). NAMI PW is currently the **only affiliate** in Virginia **offering programs in Spanish**.



NAMI also offers classes and presentations geared to parents/caregivers of children 17 and younger, for faith communities, veterans/their families, law enforcement, youth, school staff healthcare professionals, and for general audiences. A complete listing of NAMI programs is available at nami.org. NAMI PW collaborates extensively with local government agencies and health-related coalitions, the Human Services Alliance, other non-profits, faith-based organizations, as well as schools, community colleges, and universities.

NAMI PW **actively seeks volunteers** with “lived experience” (persons living with a mental health condition or caregivers/family members of persons with a mental health diagnosis). We recommend that prospective volunteers first participate in the program for which they may wish to volunteer. Having experienced the benefit of the program, volunteers are motivated to share it with others.



[WWW.NAMI-PW.ORG](https://www.nami-pw.org)



INFO@NAMI-PW.ORG



MVICTORS@VERIZON.NET

PAT VICTORSON

NATIONAL ASIAN AMERICAN AND PACIFIC ISLANDER (AAPI) HERITAGE AWARENESS MONTH

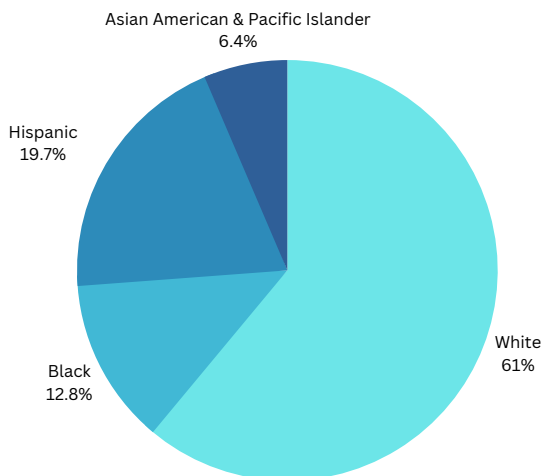
May is [Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month](#), a time to honor and pay homage to the generations of Asian and Pacific Islanders that have contributed to the history and culture of the United States.

Six percent of the population in the United States and 10% percent of the population in Virginia is made up of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders (AAPI). AAPI communities are the least likely out of all racial and ethnic minority groups to seek mental health treatment. And suicide is the leading cause of death among, AAPI young adults, ages 20-24 years old.

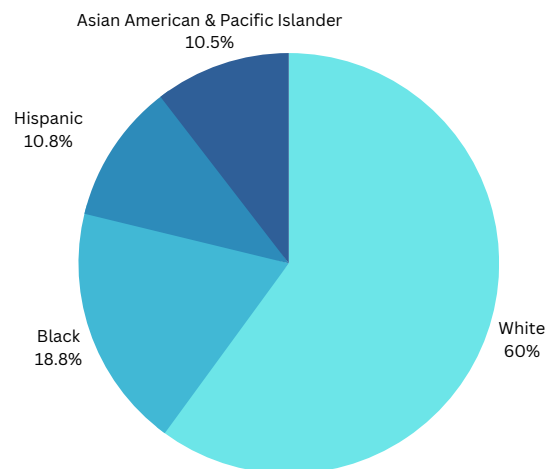
Mental health providers can help to improve mental health outcomes for AAPI communities by taking certain actions:

1. Create culturally competent environments for **each** specific ethnic group served.
2. Create strategies to engage the AAPI communities in the therapy process:
 - a. Recognize the importance of culture when building rapport with AAPI clients.
 - b. Provide services in the language spoken in the home. AAPI clients are likely to live in multi-generational homes and are likely to speak a language other than English at home.
 - c. Recognize that language barriers may contribute to AAPI communities not seeking treatment.
3. Reduce stigmas about mental health by spending time educating family members about how to access mental health services and about the benefits of mental health treatment prior to a mental health crisis arising.

United States Population



Virginia Population



4. Adopt **zero tolerance** for Ant-AAPI Hate. There has been an increase in AAPI hate crimes which has negatively impacted mental health in AAPI communities. In a report released by Stop AAPI Hate, Brigham and Women's Hospital of Boston and the Asian American Psychological Association, researchers found that nearly 72% of AAPIs who have experienced racism felt more stress over the anti-AAPI hate than they did regarding the the pandemic. (<https://stopaapihate.org/mental-health-report>); IFDHE, AHA Institute for Diversity and Health Equity: Illuminating Mental Health Equity in Asian American and Pacific Islander Communities, May 26, 2022.
5. Create Psychologically safe environments for clients and staff. Psychological safety is an important strategy towards creating **cultural competency** within the workplace.
6. In **Psychologically Safe** environments, people feel safe to express their thoughts, ideas and concerns; to ask questions and admit mistakes, without the fear of negative consequences.

Psychologist, Carl Rogers summarized that, in order for a person to "grow," they need an environment that provides them with:

genuineness (openness and self-disclosure), acceptance (unconditional positive regard) and empathy (being listened to and understood)

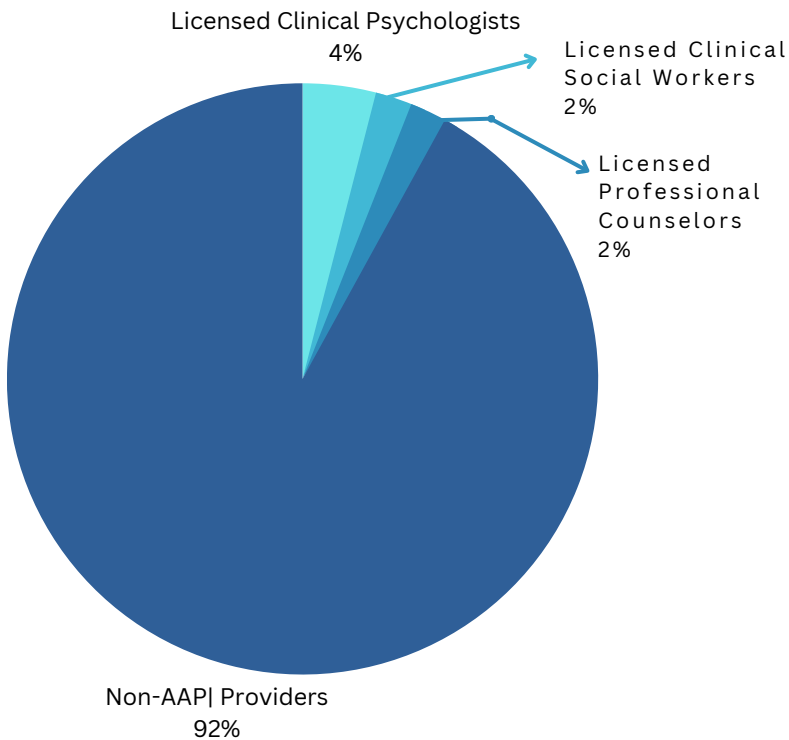
because without these, relationships and healthy personalities will not develop as they should, much like a tree will not grow without sunlight and water.

Diversity affects mental health and psychological safety in the workplace. Employees from diverse backgrounds may face underrepresentation, microaggressions and unconscious bias and other stressors that impact their mental health and psychological safety at Work.

In Virginia, **only 2%** of Licensed Clinical Social Workers and Licensed Professional Counselors identify as Asian and **4%** of Licensed Clinical Psychologists identify as Asian. It is especially important for mental health care providers to understand the link between **shared experiences** and the **capacity for empathy**. A therapist must be able to empathize with their clients to provide effective therapy.



Percentage AAPI Providers



1. **Market** – Promote public behavioral health as a career option for BIPOC students across the education system.
2. **Explore** – Create opportunities for BIPOC students to familiarize themselves with the public behavioral health career paths.
3. **Educate** – Guide students throughout their educational process and through the licensure process.
4. **Employ** – Create opportunities to successfully recruit and retain students.



Research has shown that people feel each other's pain more intensely when they are part of the same group, such as a culture, religion, race or social group. While this relates more to implicit bias rather than to conscious bias, it shows why racial diversity and gender parity matter.

There is a shortage of mental health providers in Virginia. Marriage and Family Therapy Solutions has developed a four-part strategy for increasing the number of BIPOC mental health providers:

If your agency wishes to join in on preparing the next generation of mental health providers and has opportunities for internships or residents

please email
laurie.wilson@mftsva.com

CALLING ALL BIPOC SOCIAL WORK, COUNSELING AND MARRIAGE AND FAMILY THERAPY STUDENTS AND RESIDENTS

-  Sign up for **free** mentoring and career coaching
-  Sign up for **free** clinical supervision towards your license as a Licensed Clinical Social Worker, Licensed Professional Counselor, or Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist

Visit our website or click below to apply

[STUDENTS](#)

[RESIDENTS](#)



MARCUS ALERT/NORTHERN VIRGINIA REGIONAL PROJECTS OFFICE REGION 2 NEWS AND UPDATES

Click to access the [Northern Virginia Public-Sector Crisis Brochure for community members and Stakeholders](#). Please feel free to share this with others as warranted.

Please distribute this brochure to your contact list, encourage others to visit the Marriage and Family Therapy Solutions website, and like us on social media.

NOVA Regional Crisis Call Center:  (703) 527-4077 or Text 8551

The NOVA Regional Crisis Call Center provides immediate help to callers by connecting them to behavioral health and other community services.

Mobile Crisis Response

CR2 Mobile Response:  (844) 627-4747 (24/7)

CR2 provides 24-hour rapid response to children, youth, and adults facing a mental health and/or substance use crisis who may be at risk for hospitalization.

[CR2 Public Flyer 5-2022](#)

[CR2 Client Flyer 5-2022](#)

REACH Mobile Response:  (855) 897-8278

The REACH program is designed to meet the crisis support needs of individuals who have a developmental disability and are experiencing crisis events that put them at risk for homelessness, incarceration, hospitalization, and/or danger to themselves or others. REACH programs offer an additional layer of support to emergency services, the state hospital system, and caregivers who work most closely with individuals with developmental disabilities (DD).

UPCOMING EVENTS

Mental Health Workshop

May 20, 2023

On May 20th, register and attend this free Mental Health Workshop

Click on the flyer to learn more



Mental Health & Wellness Expo

June 3, 2023

Free family event

Attend for:

- Door Prizes
- Raffles
- Resources
- Informational Tables
- Exercises



www.ncbwpwcc.org

Neabsco Baptist Church

15557 Neabsco Church Way

Woodbridge, VA 22193

RESOURCES

988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline

The SAMHSA [988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline](#) provides information about 988, and understanding the background, history, funding opportunities, and implementation resources for strengthening suicide prevention and mental health crisis services

The [Native Americans and Alaska Natives](#) section of the [988 Lifeline](#) website provides Native American specific information and resources for AI/AN communities

Other Suicide Prevention Organizations

[Suicide Prevention Resource Center](#)

Helps with the development of suicide prevention programs, interventions, and policies, and advances the National Strategy for Suicide Prevention

Suicide Prevention Fact Sheets

[Suicide among Racial/Ethnic Populations in the U.S.: American Indians and Alaska Natives](#)

Provides information on suicide and risk and protective factors among American Indians and Alaska Natives

[Suicide Facts at a Glance](#)

A fact sheet from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

[HTTPS://STORE.SAMHSA.GOV/PRODUCT/ADVANCING-BEST-PRACTICES-BEHAVIORAL-HEALTH-ASIAN-AMERICAN-NATIVE-HAWAIIAN-PACIFIC-ISLANDER/SMA17-5032](https://store.samhsa.gov/product/advancing-best-practices-behavioral-health-asian-american-native-hawaiian-pacific-islander/sma17-5032)