



Collaborating for the health of residents in  
Aurora, Batavia, Big Rock, Blackberry, Kaneville,  
Sugar Grove, and Virgil Townships

**April 2023**

**INC Links**

**Featured Agency**  
**NAMI KDK**

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**National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) is the largest grassroots mental health organization in the country. NAMI KDK is a local affiliate of NAMI that serves Kane-South, DeKalb, and Kendall Counties.**

**NAMI KDK's INC-funded community support programs include Connections, Family, BIPOC, Spanish, LGBTQ+, and Teens. Education services include Family-to-Family, Ending the Silence, NAMI Homefront, NAMI Friends & Family, and NAMI Basics. Educational**

presentations include In Our Own Voice, Compartiendo Esperanza, Sharing Hope, and custom presentations. NAMI KDK helps individuals that are enrolled in Treatment Alternative Court (TAC) with expenses such as bus passes and gift cards. The agency is also in the planning stage for peer support and peer support specialists.

NAMI KDK is proud of its ability to create safe spaces to explore the intersectionality of mental health stigma that impacts the community. For more information on NAMI KDK, visit <https://www.namikdk.org/>.

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## What's Happening With

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Staff will attend the Association of Community Mental Health Authorities (ACMHA) membership meeting on April 13 & 14 in Springfield, providing an opportunity to collaborate with fellow colleagues in the field.

Staff attended a Ribbon Cutting at Ascension Mercy in March. The

event marked the grand opening of the new Crisis Stabilization Unit funded in part by INC Mental Health Alliance.

INC will be saying a heartfelt goodbye to intern Isabella Ramirez in May as she completes her internship. After her graduation from Northern Illinois University, she will begin a data analyst program with Northwestern in hopes of improving her skills to one day work with a nonprofit organization focused on mental health. Isabella shared that her time with INC has sparked an interest for her in the mental health field. Her favorite project with INC was time spent on understanding and evaluating outcomes. We wish Isabella all the best on her professional journey and thank her for sharing her many strengths to help the organization.

INC's FY24 funding application portal closed on March 17<sup>th</sup>. Several agencies expressed an interest in supporting the FY24 Funding Objectives. INC's Program Committee will meet in April to review agency applications and present recommendations to the full board at their annual meeting in May. INC Board of Directors meetings can be found on our website at [www.incmha.org](http://www.incmha.org).

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# May 7-13 is National Prevention Week

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National Prevention Week is dedicated to raising awareness about substance use prevention and mental health. The significance of having National Prevention Week in May is that it falls just before summer break, when children often have a lot of time on their hands and may be left unsupervised while parents are at work, which could lead to higher risk behavior.

This year, INC-funded agency Mutual Ground will be working with

students from the Snowflake after school club held at Harter Middle School in Sugar Grove to increase awareness during National Prevention Week. The students will research various drugs and read the facts they learned over the morning announcements during the week. One day will be dedicated to facts on mental health as well. Some of the students will design posters based on what they learned and share them in the school for everyone to learn about the harms of drug use. The students' research on drugs will also be announced during the morning announcements at Kaneland High School so that both schools benefit from the information discovered. For more information on Mutual Ground, visit [www.mutualground.org](http://www.mutualground.org).

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### April is Autism Acceptance Month

**Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) is a group of neurological disorders that affect brain development and can lead to challenges with social skills, language/communication, and behavior. The month of April is dedicated to the support, awareness, and acceptance of ASD. Some facts about ASD include:**

- \* Affects 1 in 68 children.**
- \* No two people experience it in the same way.**
- \* Hyperlexia, the ability to read above one's grade level, commonly accompanies ASD.**
- \* Individuals may be exceptionally creative and passionate.**

**\* It is widely speculated that Albert Einstein, Isaac Newton, Andy Warhol, and Bill Gates are/were on the autism spectrum.**

**\* Many people live happy, successful lives with appropriate services and support.**

**Association for Individual Development, an INC-funded agency, has several services that provide support, awareness, and education for those living with ASD and their families. To learn more, visit [www.aidcares.org](http://www.aidcares.org).**