



National Alliance on Mental Illness

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Chattanooga

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namichattanooga.org

SUPPORT GROUP MEETINGS FOR CAREGIVERS

**Tuesday
March 6, 2018
Wally's Restaurant
East Ridge Tennessee
11:30am – 1:00pm**

**Tuesday
March 20, 2018
Johnson Mental Health
Facility
420 Bell Avenue
"North Chattanooga"
6:30pm – 8:00pm**

Local Contact Information
Namichattanooga@gmail.com
(423) 521-2590

Reprint Article (CNN)

NBA stars join fight against stigma surrounding mental illness

Heading from Washington to Los Angeles for the NBA All-Star Game, Dikembe Mutombo watched news reports about the Parkland shooting.

The harrowing accounts of the high school massacre filled his entire six-hour journey and hit especially close to home, the NBA Hall of Famer revealed. Mutombo is a father of seven and the son of a lifelong educator. It was "very painful," he said.

As more details about the 19-year-old gunman emerged, so did police incident reports from before the February 14 shooting that described him as suffering from mental illness and being "emotionally handicapped." In the tragedy's aftermath, [President Donald Trump](#) said he wanted to focus more resources on mental health issues in an effort to stop future gun violence.

But experts caution that having a diagnosis of mental illness does not mean a person will become violent and advocates insist that Americans need to work toward breaking the [stigma around mental health issues](#).

On Thursday, athletes and public figures gathered at the Total Health Forum event in Atlanta, organized by the NBA and Kaiser Permanente, where they addressed mental health and how best to reduce that stigma.

Mutombo was joined by five-time All-Star Stephen Curry of the Golden State Warriors. Both offered suggestions about the need for improved communication with young people who may be feeling alienated or depressed.

Future 'is built around youth'

Kids dealing with mental health issues such as anxiety and depression "should not be afraid to show their emotions," Curry said, and he hopes "they understand they have people they can talk to. The future of our society is built around our youth," he said.

Mutombo said that society must find better ways to reach out to young people.

"Talk to them; open up the door for them. That will allow them to come to us as a teacher, as a mentor, as coaches, principals, parents, to tell us what issues they are facing.

"There is a lot of pressure being put on our youth to succeed in their life," leading to undue stress, he said.

You

Are

Not

Alone

That's
why
there's
NAMI

The NBA offers mental health service for its players and guidance on issues such as work-life balance, image and self-esteem, coping mechanisms, stress and anger management.

Athletes have chance to make real difference

Deputy Commissioner Mark Tatum said athletes have the opportunity to make a Real difference in fighting sstigma surrounding mental illness.

Kaiser Chairman and CEO Bernard J. Tyson added that it's important to see high-profile people like Curry speak out about such issues.

"They are role models. They are exemplary individuals, so in addition to being very gifted and talented and great in their professions, people assume that everything is just fine, and what I believe they provide is a realistic perspective."

NBA Cares, the league's global social responsibility program that builds on the NBA's mission of addressing important social issues, aims to encourage and support young people to be mindful and committed to their emotional and mental wellness through its Jr. NBA and NBA FIT programs.

"Where we can have a major impact is at the youth level," Tatum said. Kaiser Permanente, the nation's largest integrated health system, says it's focusing on mental health and rethinking how it provides related services, encouraging Americans to talk about mental health issues openly, like we talk about other health issues such as heart disease or cancer.

A major theme of the forum event was resilience, giving individuals the tools to cope with everyday stresses and anxieties. This could be done in a number of ways, said Curry.

"Just having that confidence in yourself that no matter what happens in life, you have an opportunity to right the ship, to continue to exceed to higher levels no matter what you are doing," he said.

"I think we all will experience failure at one point or another. We all will have letdowns, and that should not define you. You should be able to learn from those experiences, to make yourself better, and come back stronger. ... Having that resilient attitude is something everyone should adopt."



NAMI Statement on the Parkland School Shooting (Reprint from NAMItn.ORG)

NAMI, the **National Alliance on Mental Illness**, is deeply saddened by the tragic school shooting that occurred yesterday in Parkland, Florida. These tragedies impact our communities – our parents, our children, our school professionals, our first responders – the mental health of our whole country.

The details are still unfolding and there are still unanswered questions, but what we do know is that there were warning signs and that the shooter had received mental health treatment. As we continue the national discussion about what we can do to prevent further tragedies, we need to be willing to engage in an honest conversation about what allowed this young man to fall through the cracks, and the broader personal and societal factors that may have fueled his actions.

It is paramount for us to ensure the safety and wellbeing of our children and youth, and to remember that 1 in 5 people, potentially hundreds of students in a high school, have or will experience a mental illness. We need to be very careful that the response to these tragedies by the media and others does not discourage students from seeking help.

There are steps we can take now to educate and intervene early to break down barriers of understanding, and put an end to the stigma that often prevents people from getting the help they so desperately need:

1. Increase mental health awareness and availability of counselors in schools. Students should be encouraged to seek help for themselves or a friend. School based mental health has also proven extremely effective in engaging students who would not otherwise seek help. Some states have made significant investments in school based mental health and more needs to be done.
2. Train school staff, administrators, parents and youth, and provide the tools necessary to have conversations about the signs and symptoms of mental health conditions and where they can turn to for help. Far too often, when families are most in need, there isn't a clear pathway to getting help.
3. Develop a comprehensive response program for youth who have demonstrated behavioral issues including involving family and mental health providers. Take steps to avoid expelling and suspending students as this only exacerbates the situation.
3. Increase the ability of the mental health system to be proactive in reaching out to youth, particularly those with the most serious conditions. Young people in distress will not seek help so there needs to be mobile outreach responses that are funded and easily available. This requires sustained and expanded funding for coverage for mental health, not cuts.

Another part of the conversation that cannot be ignored is acting on common sense approaches to ending gun violence such as gun violence prevention restraining orders, which can allow for the removal of guns from people who may pose a risk of violence to themselves and others. While the relationship between mental illness and gun violence is very low, we need reasonable options, including making it possible for law enforcement to act on credible community and family concerns in circumstances where people are at high-risk.

We all want an end to these horrific acts of violence. To achieve this, we need to understand the full picture of what is really driving increased violence and take sensible steps. Only then can we find meaningful solutions to protecting our children and communities.

MEMBERSHIP FORM

Support Mental Health

NAMI Chattanooga

Name: _____

Address:

Home Phone:

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Cell Phone: _____

Email:

May we share your information with other NAMI members: yes _____ no _____

Do you have any information or questions you would like to share or have someone call you about?

yes _____
no _____

MEMBERSHIP COSTS

Household: \$60.00 per household
Individual: \$40.00 per individual
Open door: \$5.00

Please make checks payable to:

NAMI Chattanooga
P.O. Box 1015
Harrison, TN 37341

Thank you for your support of mental health!

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