

NAMI SW WA ANNUAL REPORT

JULY 2020 - JUNE 2021

20

21

TABLE OF CONTENTS



01

Introduction

02

Message from our leaders

03

Our priorities

04

Our team

05

Our team

06

Our impact

07

New adventures

08

Program numbers

09

Our financials

10

Amazing donors

INTRODUCTION: WHO WE ARE

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.

What started as a small group of families gathered around a kitchen table in 1979 has blossomed into the nation's leading voice on mental health. Today, we are an alliance of more than 600 local Affiliates and 48 State Organizations who work in your community to raise awareness and provide support and education that was not previously available to those in need.

NAMI Southwest Washington, or NAMI SW WA is an affiliate of NAMI.

We currently serve Clark, Cowlitz, Skamania, and Wahkiakum counties. As an independent 501(c)3 non-profit organization, NAMI SW WA has access to the excellent educational resources of the national organization and the independent status to create and implement our own innovative programs to serve our local community.

NAMI SW WA advocates for access to services, treatment, and support for individuals and families struggling with mental health challenges; we offer our services at no charge. We are steadfast in our commitment to raising awareness and building our community of hope for all those in need through education, support, and advocacy.

We provide unique mental health services that otherwise are unavailable or inaccessible to many individuals and families.

NAMI SW WA has a Board of Directors and three full-time staff members. But who matters most is our volunteers. They are the ones who keep our organization going. Without them, we could not have weekly support groups, community presentations, or offer life-changing education for individuals and their families.

MESSAGE FROM OUR LEADERS

Dear Membership and Community Members,

What has the last year brought? So much!

March 2020, Washington state shut down for what we thought would be a couple of weeks. Here we are in Fall of 2021 and though not entirely shut down, people are still with reduced services.

We are proud that NAMI SW Washington has kept on helping people throughout the entire time. Many non-profit organizations and government entities have been and, in many cases, still are working from home, the NAMI SW Washington staff has continued to come into the office to answer phones and be here for the people that need us.

We've started additional support groups for dual diagnosis, parents of youth affected by mental health challenges, and adults living with Autism. We've added 10 new STRive modules. We launched a new website for youth living with parents dealing with mental health challenges; it's called YouTalk.

We've changed Customer Relationship Management software, signed up for a non-profit Google Ad grant, and found new ways to reach people since all in person outreach was put on hiatus. We had to reimagine how we do things, stretch in ways we would have never imagined and discovered that we're much stronger than we thought.

MESSAGE FROM OUR LEADERS

"We are proud that NAMI SW WA has kept on helping people throughout the [pandemic]."

We've added additional accessibility to our website using Recite Me. It's an accessibility tool that not only offers text to word, but translates into over a hundred languages, 35 are text to word. It also has tools for people dealing with dyslexia, poor eyesight, and many other challenges people might have in getting information from websites. When on our website, click on the Accessibility link at the top to try it out.

We're planning on training people and offering WRAP (Wellness Recovery Action Plan) classes to our community beginning next Spring. These will hopefully assist people in both in staying well and if tough times do happen, having a plan to come out of it and get back to recovery.

We've got big plans for the next year, stay along for the ride.

Kim Schneiderman
Executive Director



Michelle Bookout
Board President



OUR PRIORITIES

In the early 1970s, small groups of family members, nationwide, began to gather around kitchen tables searching for support and understanding of their mentally ill family member, more often than not, a son. The majority of those meeting together were moms blamed by the medical profession that their parenting skills caused their child's schizophrenia or other mental health disorder.

Groups began in Clark County in 1977 and in Cowlitz County in 1978. Our SW WA founders include Jean Lough and Virginia Cox from Clark County, and Bernie and Marcia Altman from Cowlitz County, among others. NAMI SW WA was, in the beginning, and continues to be a volunteer driven organization.



Our Vision

NAMI SW WA envisions a world where all people affected by mental illness live healthy, fulfilling lives supported by a community that cares.



Our Mission

NAMI SW WA provides advocacy, education, support, and public awareness so that all individuals and families affected by mental illness can build better lives.



Our Values

Hope: We believe in the possibility of recovery, wellness, and the potential in all of us.

Inclusion: We embrace diverse backgrounds, cultures and perspectives.

Empowerment: We promote confidence, self-efficacy and service to our mission.

Compassion: We practice respect, kindness and empathy.

Fairness: We fight for equity and justice.

OUR TEAM - BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The role of the Board is to provide oversight of the organization's finances; to give vision for the agency's growth and direction; and to assist in providing needed resources. The NAMI SW WA Board of Directors meets on the fourth (4th) Wednesday of the month. We currently have seven members on our board.

Executive Committee



Michelle Bookout
Board President



Jim Luce
Board Vice President



Jack Bothwell
Board Treasurer

Board of Directors



**Greg
Cheney**



**Edward
Cote**



**John
LaPointe**



**Mark
Mantei**

MEMBER INPUT - BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Every September, any changes to the board will be decided by the members of NAMI SW WA. During the Annual Meeting in October, members vote to officially add (or not) the new members of the board.

This year, Edward Cote and John LaPointe are our newest members. Read a bit about them in advance.



**Edward
Cote**

Ed Cote has been involved in the Vancouver, WA community for over 4 decades. He's served as a social worker, casework supervisor, the area manager of DCFS, and lastly the Director of Professional Services at Lutheran Community Services. We are proud to have his expertise. He is a passionate person with so much knowledge of the mental health, court, and social work systems.



**John
LaPointe**

John LaPointe discovered NAMI SW WA when he became aware of how sick his son was after he moved out of the house as a young adult. His son was diagnosed with a mental health condition and John wanted to support him anyway he could. After finding out about NAMI SW WA during a chance encounter, he and his son began attending support groups. John's background in sales, management, meeting organization, and communication have helped him run groups, answer phones, and be an impactful presenter for NAMI SW WA for almost 4 years now.

OUR TEAM - STAFF MEMBERS

The staff runs the NAMI SW WA office, runs programs, and act as the "boots on the ground." They also engage volunteers, connect community members to resources, and represent NAMI SW WA at community meetings.

Executive Committee



Kim Schneiderman
Executive Director



Deanna Lugo
Executive Assistant, Office Manager



Angie Williams
Programs and Volunteer Coordinator

OUR IMPACT

NAMI SW WA's peer-led support groups and recovery education programs continued to be offered on a weekly basis throughout the year. They were all virtual because of the COVID restrictions.

Our outreach was spectacular because of the virtual platform we used. People from all over the United States and the world attended our groups, classes, and awareness presentations. Community programs held included Suicide Awareness and Prevention Month, StigmaFree Company, StigmaFree Campus, SEE ME, FaithNet, and In Our Own Voice.

Continuous outreach and marketing strategies, such as collaborating with other organizations and offering programs virtually, has led to an increased number of participants in the individual adult support and education programs.

Peer volunteers will always be an integral part of the NAMI SW WA office operations by staffing the reception desk, leading support groups, and representing NAMI at outreach events. Volunteer Family Peers provide leadership in ongoing family, caregiver support, and education programs as well.

Because of the convenience of meeting online, we were able to hold monthly volunteer meetings to allow for all voices to be heard and considered in decisions around programming.

We have been fortunate to be featured in The Columbian, be the monthly non-profit for company fundraisers, and partner with amazing people to hold webinars throughout the year.

We reached out to the homeless community who are greatly impacted by mental health disorders, to support them during the holidays with gift bags filled with donations by NAMI SW WA members.

Participation in other activities held by other community organizations has also helped NAMI SW WA become a household name and a leader others look to for support, advocacy, and education about mental illness.

NEW ADVENTURES

New programs included YouTalk, Ending the Silence, Dual Diagnosis Support Group, Parent Support Group, Resiliency Booklet, Autism Support Group, and NAMI On Campus.



YouTalk is a website that provides education, support, and resources to tweens and teens who have a parent with a mental health condition. YouTalk's goal is to provide a safe place where youth aged 13 to 19 can get information on mental health conditions and communicate with others going through the same thing.

Visit the website at www.youtalkwa.org



Ending the Silence is an early intervention and educational presentation to engage youth, school staff and families about mental health. It encompasses three separate presentations (requesting one does not require a commitment to host all three) for families, school staff, and students. Each presentation includes a PowerPoint presentation, followed by a young adult who shares their lived experience coping with a mental health condition.

The presentation's message of empathy and hope encourages students to actively care for themselves and for their peers, whether by reaching out for help, encouraging a friend or family member to seek help or by reducing stigma.

Contact with a positive role model, in the form of the young adult presenter, can powerfully change their views of a common but stigmatized life experience. The discussion portion gives students a rare opportunity to ask questions and learn personal truths about mental illness.

NEW ADVENTURES



NAMI Dual Diagnosis Connection is a recovery support group program for adults living with both mental health and substance use disorders.

These group meetings provide a place that offers respect, understanding, encouragement, and hope. Dual Diagnosis Connection Support Group groups offer a casual and relaxed approach to sharing the challenges and successes of coping with mental illness and substance use.

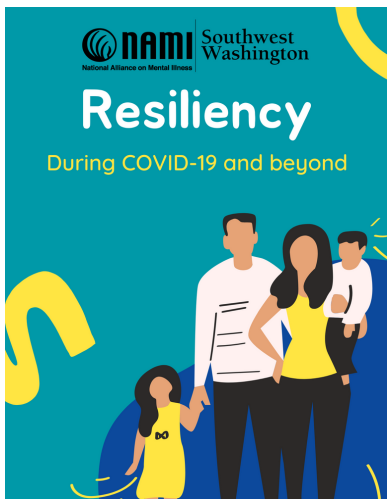
The group follows the NAMI Signature Support Group model, not a 12-step model. The group is led by peers who live in recovery from their own mental health and substance use disorders.



NAMI Family Support Group is a peer-led support group for any adult with a tween, teen, or twenty-something who has experienced symptoms of a mental health condition. You can gain insight from the challenges and successes of others facing similar experiences.

Because of the lockdown of society during the COVID-19 pandemic, we received numerous calls from parents at a loss of how to help their youth. Our Parent & Caregiver Support Group is open to any type of caregiver, whether grandparent, adult sibling, parent, etc. as long as they are primary caregiver for the youth experiencing mental health challenges.

NEW ADVENTURES



Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, we all know the isolation, loss, and interruption of daily routine greatly impacted everyone's mental health.

In response, we created the Resiliency During COVID-19 and Beyond Booklet. It includes what resiliency is, how to deal with anxiety and depression, and how to increase resilience to tough situations.

It has been used throughout the country and downloaded almost 1,000 times from our website.

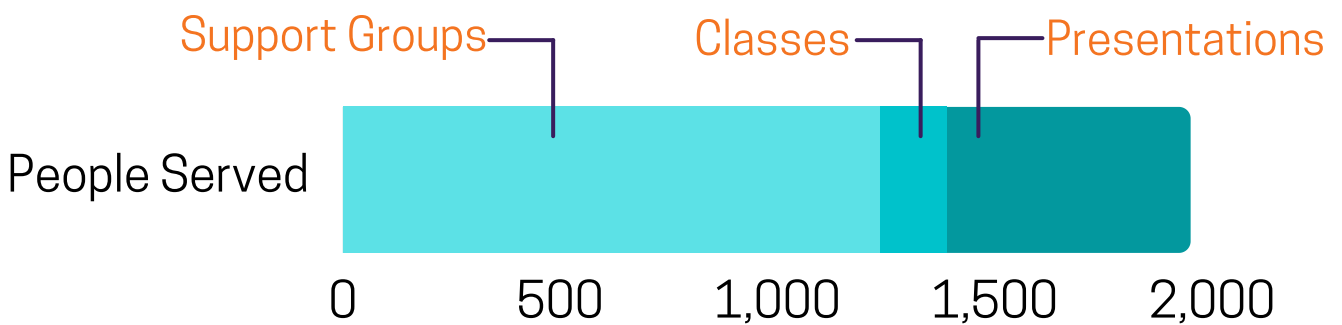
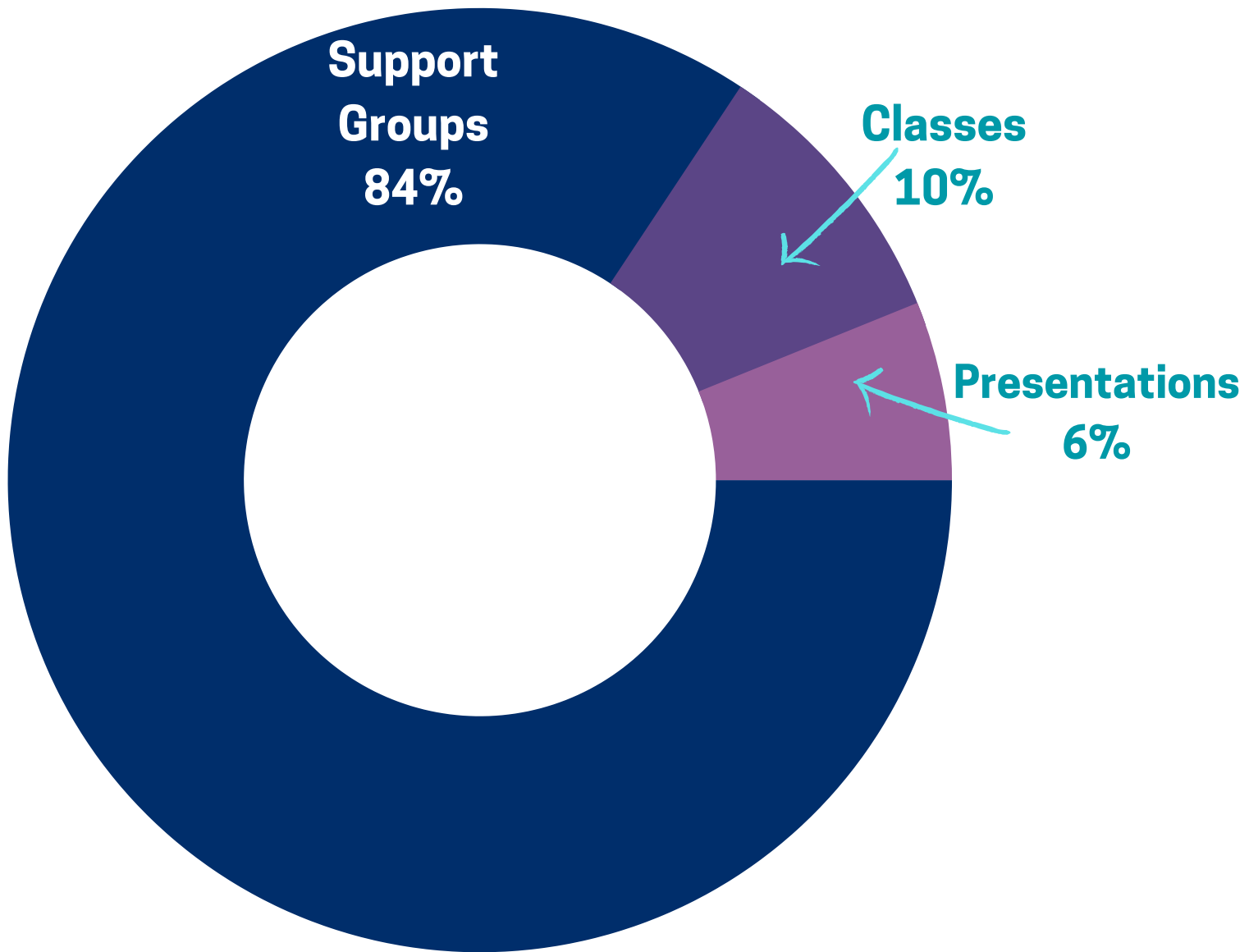


This group is for adults on the Autism Spectrum, or who think they might be. Find support, socialize, and learn from others on the same journey. This is a supportive place where people can feel included, accepted, and respected.



NAMI knows that some of the best support a student can receive is from peers. When students connect with one another, they can share common experiences and support each other through the transitions. NAMI on Campus helps make those connections happen.

PROGRAM NUMBERS

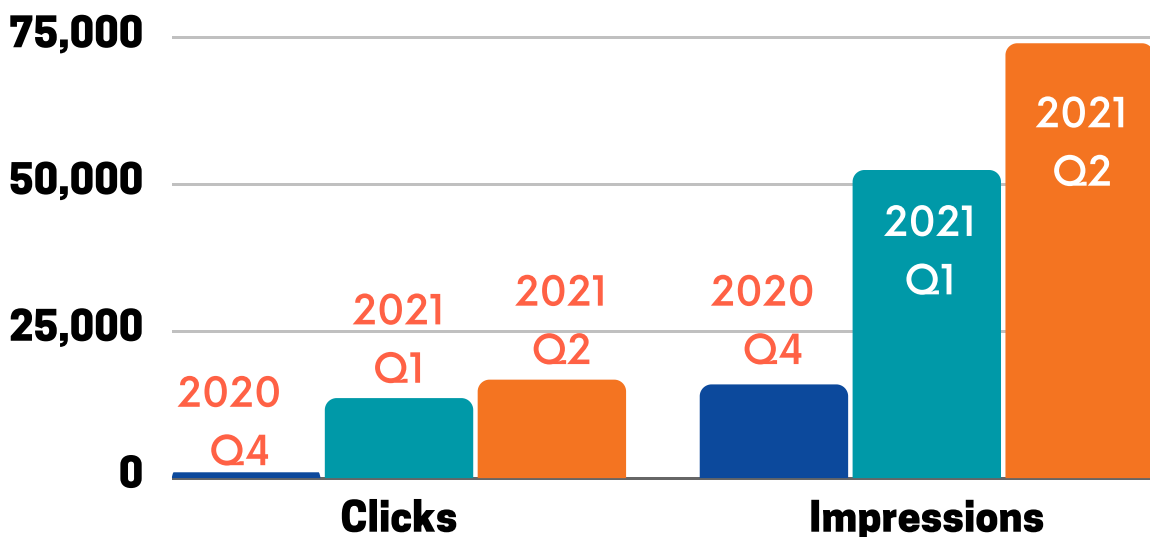


NAMI SW WA aims to reach everyone, regardless of race, religion, gender, sexuality, or political beliefs. Mental illness does not discriminate.

After taking all our support groups, educational courses, and presentations online to the Zoom platform, we ventured out into the online world more by taking advantage of the Google Ad Grant, which connects people with the causes they care about by providing up to \$10,000 USD per month of in-kind search advertising for qualifying nonprofits.

WEBSITE STATISTICS

After doing a complete update on our website by adding new information and using the Google Ad Grant, our website experienced an abundance of traffic from all over the United States.



67.5%

Percentage of being the top result

7.3%

Click Through Rate

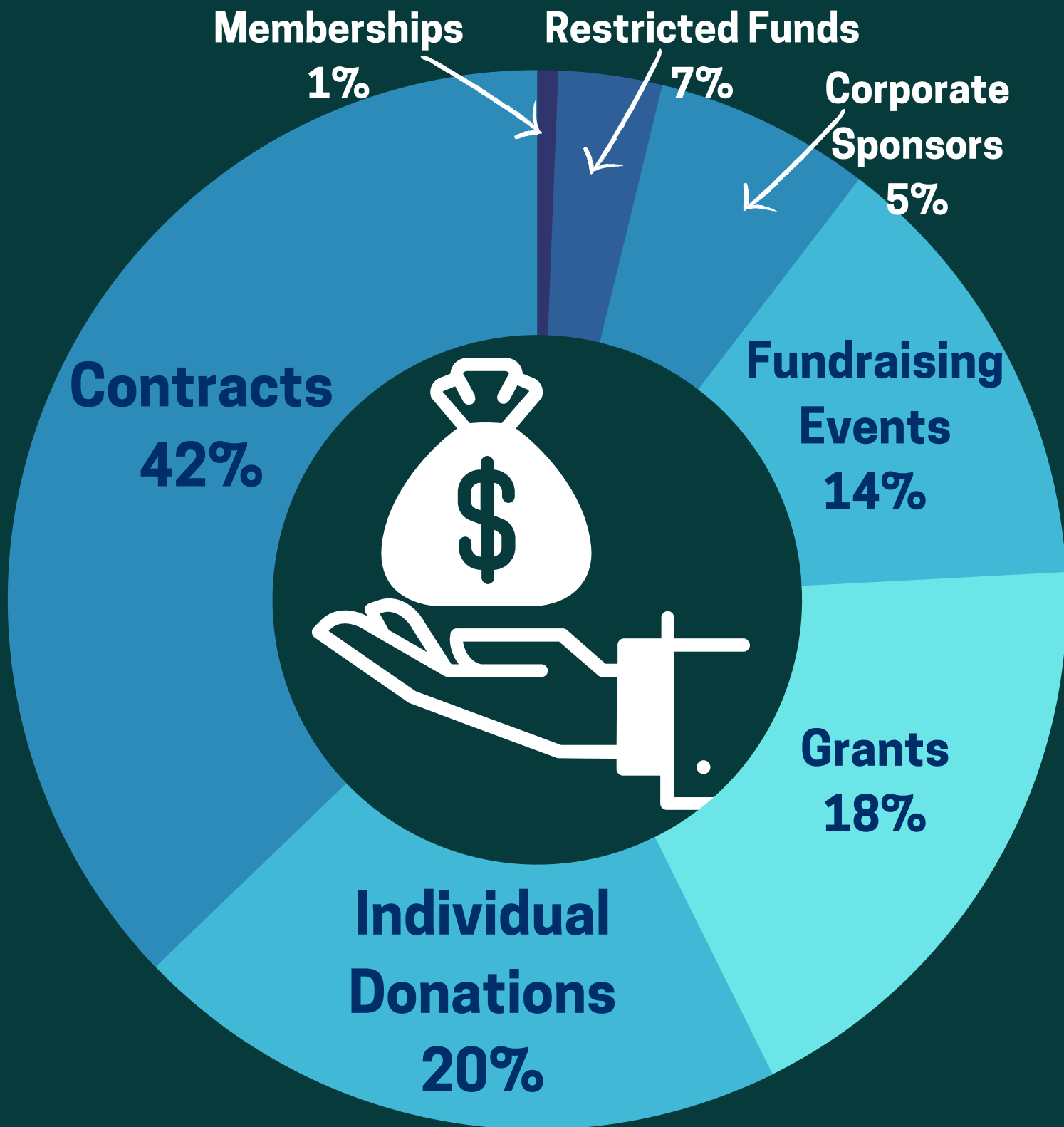
The average click through rate for a Google Ad is 1.91%.

Top key words:

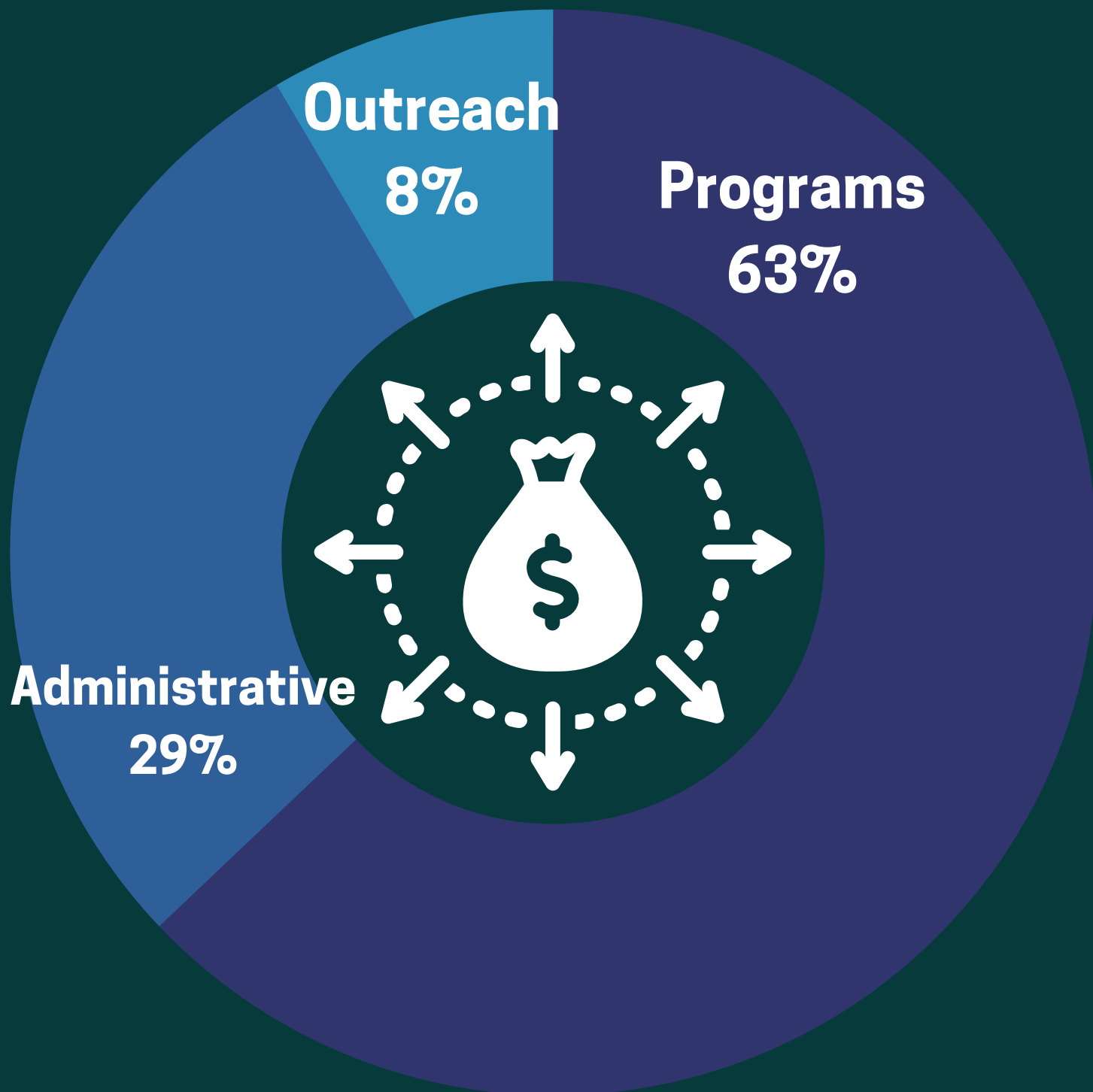
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We sincerely regret any inaccuracies or omissions. To notify us of errors, please reach out to us at info@namiswwa.org or (360) 695-2823.

Those with a * next to their name have given in memory of someone.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thank you to our amazing donors, our fantastic members, and those who have made amazing strides toward their own recovery by taking advantage of our services.

We aim to provide unique services to the people in our community.

Without you, we couldn't do what we do.

We thank you for your continued support in our efforts to support, advocate, educate, and bring awareness to our community.

Contact

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