

Updated 5/2025

Supported Education ***Pursuing your educational goals***

Supported education programs help people with mental health challenges pursue their educational goals. Programs can support participants to apply for and navigate the college experience. Programs also help participants pursue vocational degrees and certificates. Participants can also get support and assistance obtaining their High School Equivalency diploma.

Supported education helps participants:

- Set educational goals
- Identify academic programs that match your goals
- Fill out applications, register for classes and map out your educational plan
- Find and apply for financial aid/support
- Use accommodations and educational supports
- Develop academic skills like studying, note-taking, and time management
- Build confidence and resilience
- Improve employment outcomes

The following programs offer educational supports to New York City residents aged 18+ who have struggled with mental health challenges and want support and guidance in pursuing their education. Eligibility varies by program.

[Blueprint Supported Education](#)

Blueprint services are grounded in the belief that mental health struggles do not preclude a successful education. This program provides one-on-one support for prospective, current, and returning students working on high school equivalency, post-secondary degrees, or vocational certification. The Blueprint program is targeted at individuals 18 and older who are ready to attend school within 6 months of starting the program. Click on the link above to learn more and to set up an information session. Services are free of charge.

[Community Links](#)

Community Links supports New York City residents with mental health conditions pursue education goals and apply for and complete college, certifications and licensing or vocational degrees. In addition, they help those without a high school diploma obtain their high school equivalency diploma. Community Links' services are mobile, flexible, and designed to meet participants' educational needs. This program is targeted at individuals 18 and older who are ready to attend school within 6 months of starting the program. Click on the link above to learn more. Services are free of charge

[Clubhouse Programs](#)

Among the many opportunities that clubhouses offer their members, educational supports are chief among them! If you are not ready to jump into school but would like to work with someone to develop clarity around your educational goals and choices, a clubhouse can provide these supports - and much more. The clubhouses with the strongest educational support programs include [Fountain House](#) and [Venture House](#). Services are free of charge.

To access education services through a clubhouse, one must first become a clubhouse member. To learn about all the supports and services offered through a clubhouse program, and how to apply to become a member, click on the “Clubhouse Programs” document above. Services are free of charge and targeted to adults aged 18+.

[Personalized Recovery Oriented Services \(PROS\)](#)

PROS programs help adults 18 and older with psychiatric disabilities identify and achieve their stated goals - which may include returning to school. There are many PROS programs across New York City. Once part of a PROS program, participants work with a counselor to identify goals and choose services that will facilitate reaching those goals. Most services are provided in group formats, similar to a school curriculum. If pursuing an education is one of your goals, you and your counselor will work together to create a tailored plan that will help you get there! Most PROS programs also have mental health treatment on site, so that participants can receive all their services in one place. You do not have to get your treatment at a PROS Program if you want to stay with your current treatment providers. All PROS programs are paid for by Medicaid. If you do not have Medicaid, you can inquire about their sliding scale fee. [Click here for a list of PROS programs in New York City.](#)

[OnTrackNY](#)

OnTrackNY is an early intervention program that offers [comprehensive personalized support](#) to teens and young adults (16-30) experiencing psychosis. This includes changes in perceptions such as hearing, seeing, or feeling things that others don't, having unusual beliefs and perceptions, and having new difficulty focusing or thinking.

OnTrack helps participants identify life goals and supports them in achieving them. Identifying and pursuing one's *academic* and vocational goals are a significant part of what they do. Participants can choose to engage in the elements of service that align with their aspirations for school, work and much more. OnTrackNY provides services regardless of insurance and ability to pay. However, specific insurance and billing policies vary by team. To explore eligibility and referral procedures, contact the [OnTrackNY team closest to you.](#)

[Access VR](#) (Adult Career and Continuing Education Services – Vocational Rehabilitation)

ACCESS-VR assists individuals with all disabilities 18 and older to achieve independent living through training, education, rehabilitation, and career development. *ACCESS-VR will only support your educational goals if college or a certificate degree is required to achieve your job goal.* If eligible they may provide financial assistance for college. See [this video](#) to learn more. To contact your local ACCESS-VR program, click [HERE for their district office listing.](#)

Many of the programs identified above (Blueprint, Community Links, Clubhouse, etc.) can also help you apply for ACCESS-VR services while they support you with their own services.

General Programs (not targeted to people with mental health conditions)

[NYC Adult Education Programs](#)

NYC Adult Education Programs offer eligible NYC residents 21+ who do not have a high school diploma, free Adult Basic Education (ABE), Career and Technical Education (CTE), High School Equivalency Preparation (HSE) and English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL).

These programs are not targeted at people with mental health disabilities specifically, but anyone who meets the criteria for service can apply. Click on the link above to learn more.

[Educational Opportunity Centers \(EOCs\)](#)

Though not targeted at people with disabilities specifically, EOCs provide tuition-free programs to help eligible adults earn a high school diploma, prepare for college and much more. Contact your local center to learn more about their eligibility criteria and what they offer.

[About NAMI-NYC](#)

At the National Alliance on Mental Illness of New York City (NAMI-NYC), we assist thousands of families and individuals affected by mental illness annually through free education, support, and advocacy.

NAMI-NYC offers [mental health classes](#), [Support Groups](#), [family mentoring](#), and a [Helpline](#) with translation services in 180+ languages. Our support services are free regardless of income, insurance, or immigration status. Contact our Helpline **M-F from 10am to 5pm** and we'll connect you with NAMI-NYC services or provide you with community resources that can help you take the next step in your journey.

Phone/Text: 212-684-3264

Chat: <https://naminycmetro.org/helpline/>

Email: helpline@naminyc.org