



# 2025 Impact Report

Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance

In 2025, DBSA celebrated its 40th anniversary by honoring four decades of impact while looking ahead to the future. This milestone year included the launch of new in-person convenings that brought together peers, leaders, and partners to strengthen collaboration, share knowledge, and expand the reach of peer support.



## The Power of Peer Support

Ray's journey reflects the impact DBSA has had on thousands of people over more than 40 years of peer support. Her experience is one example of a life-changing, welcoming community that continues to grow nationwide.



## Leaders Empowering Leaders

Without DBSA Chapters, thousands would lack support from those who understand their experiences. In 2025, DBSA strengthened Chapters through training and opportunities for connection, learning, and shared problem-solving



## Peers Using Their Voice for Systemic Change

DBSA helped shape mental health policy change in 30+ states through our strategic coalition partnerships and comment letters:

- Federal protections strengthened for 988 (georouting + cybersecurity)
- New national crisis care guidelines released key federal legislation reintroduced to expand affordability and peer support
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## Ray's Story of Resilience

In 1986, Ray was doing her best to hold everything together. She was earning advanced degrees and building what looked like a successful career, but privately she was living with depression and deep isolation at a time when stigma was overwhelming, and support felt out of reach.

When she joined what is now DBSA in 1989, she found something she had never experienced before: a place where she could take off the mask. There was no judgment, no fixing, and no unsolicited advice. It was simply people sharing lived experience and finding strength together.

### "Being there was like a lifeline."

During a period when depression made it difficult for her to maintain employment, another group member shared his experience applying for disability benefits. With encouragement from the group, she applied. The stability that followed created a foundation that protected her housing and income during the hardest periods of illness.

DBSA became more than a place to talk. It became a place to learn, connect, and build stability.

For more than 30 years, Ray has rarely missed a meeting. After the passing of the prior president in 2010, she stepped in as president and has continued to serve as the primary facilitator of the Pittsburgh group.

Because of her leadership and her long-standing commitment to the peer community and to DBSA, she received the 2025 Outstanding Peer Leader Award at DBSA's 40th anniversary celebration, an event centered on strengthening ties between chapters and the national organization.

Ray shares her story the same way she approaches her group. "My idea of paying back what was given to me is to be there. To simply be there. To listen to other people's concerns, their journeys, their lives, and to be able to say, I relate. I understand."



See the 2025 Impact



# 237,193 Peer Support Group Attendances



Support Groups

## Support Group Meetings →

20,000+ Chapter  
348 General Online  
293 Black Community  
87 Parent & Caregiver

51 Family & Friends  
50 Rural Community  
19 LGBTQ+ Community  
(Launched August 2025)



## National Online Support Group Participant Outcomes

**81%** gained new coping tools, wellness strategies, & resources for mood disorders

**96%** felt welcome at DBSA support group meetings

**83%** reported feeling more hopeful after attending a DBSA support group meeting

Chapters



## 73 DBSA Chapter Affiliates Across the USA

- 55 Chapters participated in DBSA Support Group Facilitator Training
- 27 Chapters participated in DBSA Next Level Thinking Sessions
- 34 Chapters participated in DBSA Facilitator Think Tank
- 20 Chapters participated in DBSA Quarterly Check-Ins

Advocacy & Education



## 122 Peer Specialists Trained

- 22 Dauten Scholarship Recipients Graduated DBSA Peer Specialist Course
- 8 DBSA Peer Specialist Course training sessions offered
- 56% increase in DBSA Peer Specialist Course graduates from 2024 to 2025
- 42% of all 2025 DBSA Peer Specialist Course graduates were Veterans

Be part of the conversation driving mental health awareness and support—follow us @DBSAlliance.



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