

NAMI Launches Social Networking Site for Young Adults: Mental Health, Finances, Relationships, Music and More



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The National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) has launched StrengthofUs.org, a new online community where young adults living with mental health concerns can provide mutual support in navigating unique challenges and opportunities during the critical transition years from ages 18 to 25.



Developed by young adults, StrengthofUs.org is a user-driven social networking community where members can connect with peers, share personal stories, creativity and helpful resources by writing and

responding to blog entries, engaging in discussion groups and sharing videos, photos and other news.

The site offers resources on issues important to young adults, including:

- Healthy relationships
- Family and friends
- Campus life
- Independent living
- Finances
- Employment
- Housing
- Mental health issues

“Young adulthood is an exciting challenge, but also a confusing and stressful time for anyone,” said Michael Fitzpatrick, NAMI executive director. “Life can throw things at you fast.”

“Mental illness affects everyone. StrengthofUs.org is intended not just for young adults who have a mental illness, but for anyone entering adulthood that has a friend, parent or other family member facing a mental health problem.”

“Most of all, StrengthofUs.org is an interactive, fun space where young adults can share experiences and other information to empower each other, build relationships and offer peer support.”

“StrengthofUs.org is about helping and inspiring each other,” said Alex M. White, age 23, a member of the advisory group of young adults who helped develop the Web site. “I would not be alive today if it had not been for the love, care and support I received from family, friends and loved ones.”

White was diagnosed with bipolar disorder at age 13. He dropped out of school and attempted suicide before gaining control of the illness.

A Montana State University graduate, White now leads a happy, productive life in New York City. He has made an award-winning short film, *Une Vignette de Melancolie*, about depression and suicidal ideation that has played internationally.

NAMI created the StrengthofUs community through the support of the Rodwell Dart Memorial Foundation, established by Hailey Dart, in

loving memory of her son, Roddy, who lost his life at age 22.

Special

Note

On April 20, the Web site will host a "launch party" featuring a remix of the song "Goodmorning" from the upcoming Derivatives album by William Fitzsimmons, who worked helping people with mental illness before turning a passion for music into his profession. He was named an iTunes Best Singer-Songwriter for his album The Sparrow and the Crow and his music has been featured on the television show Grey's Anatomy.

About

NAMI

NAMI is the nation's largest grassroots mental health organization dedicated to improving the lives of individuals and families affected by mental illness. NAMI has over 1100 state and local affiliates that engage in research, education, support and advocacy.

Visit us on the web at:

www.nami.org/

www.strengthofus.org

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