

Active Minds, Inc.:

Reaching Out to Young Adults on Campus

State/Tribal/Adolescents at Risk Suicide Prevention Grantee Meeting
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Alison K. Malmon
Founder and Executive Director
amalmon@activeminds.org

1875 Connecticut Ave, NW; Suite 418
Washington, DC 20009
202-719-1177 (ph) ; 413-502-1593 (f)
<http://www.activeminds.org>

What is Active Minds?

A student-run mental health awareness,
education, and advocacy organization
on the college campus

Mental Illness and College Students

- NIMH estimates that 22.1% of all Americans 18+ suffer from a diagnosable mental disorder in any given year
 - Young adults aged 18-24 have the highest prevalence of diagnosable forms of mental illness at 27%
- Nearly 19 million Americans suffer from depression
 - Half of report onset before age 20
- 75% of people with schizophrenia experience onset between the ages of 15-25
- Nearly $\frac{1}{2}$ of all college students reported feeling so depressed they could not function, and almost 10% have seriously contemplated suicide (ACHA, 2005)



Mental Illness and College Students (cont.)

- More children and young adults die from suicide each year than from cancer, heart disease, AIDS, birth defects, stroke, and chronic lung disease *combined*
- Over 4,000 children and young adults take their lives each year, making suicide the 3rd leading cause of death among 18-24 year olds
 - 2nd leading cause of death for college students, killing over 1,100 students each year
- About 90% of students who die by suicide have a diagnosable mental illness at time of death

Mental Illness, College Students, and Campus Resources

- 95% of CCDs report an increase in students coming to them already in psychiatric care, but 36% of Centers have **no direct access to psychiatrists***
- > 70% of CC budgets decreased or remained the same in 2005
- 90.3% of Centers believe that the number of students with severe psychological problems on campus has increased in recent years
- #1 administrative concern of CC's is "a growing demand for services without an appropriate increase in resources"

*2005 National Survey of Counseling Center Directors



Active Minds'
Mission

- To utilize peer outreach ("the student voice") to increase students' awareness of issues of mental health, symptoms of mental illness, and available resources for seeking help
- To serve as liaison between students and the administration/mental health community, and become the major point of reference for mental illness and promotion of good mental health

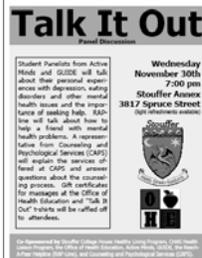
**Active Minds on Campus:
What Chapters Do**

Utilize Peer Advocacy to...

- **Discuss**
 - Encourage discussion about mental health issues
- **Educate**
 - Educate students about signs, symptoms and prevalence of mental illness; and available resources
- **Expose**
 - Expose students to other people who have experienced mental illness
 - Especially young adults who have been successful while living with a mental illness
- **Plan campus-friendly events**
 - ...that reach as many members of the campus community as possible!

**Active Minds Chapters:
Sample Events**

- **Mental Health Awareness Week**
 - Speakers, Panels, brown bag lunch sessions, movie screenings
- **Silver Ribbon/Wristband for the Brain Campaign**
- **Basic educational campaigns**
 - Flying, handing out brochures from NIMH, Counseling Center



Active Minds Chapters: Sample Events (cont.)

- Charity Coffeehouse, Vigils
- Stress Relief Activities during Final Exams
- Journal Publications
- "Stomp out Stigma" Run

STOMP OUT STIGMA



Active Minds
A Mental Health Awareness & Advocacy Group
We're making a difference.

Fact Sheets...

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"If you are interested in joining Active Minds, a new organization devoted to raising Mental Health Awareness on campus, please contact studentjournal@cam.ac.uk

Did You Know?:

Famous People with Mental Illness

- Erin Brockovich shared her stories as a recovering alcoholic
- Bruce C'Donnell, has suffered from depression for over 20 years
- 60 minutes correspondent Mike Wallace suffers from depression, as does astronaut Buzz Aldrin
- Abraham Lincoln suffered from stress, insomnia and occasionally suicidal depression
- Wu. Conner 1999 became clinically depressed in her sophomore year of college
- Lionel Aldridge, a defensive end for Vince Lombardi's legendary Green Bay Packers of the 50s, played in two Super Bowls, but suffered from schizophrenia in the '70s
- Renee Green, guitarist for Fleetwood Mac, as well as Boyd Barrett of Fionn Regal suffered from schizophrenia
- Entrepreneur Ted Turner and Academy Award-winning actress Patty Duke both suffered from bipolar depression
- Sarah McLachlan, Sheryl Crow, Ethan Zohn, and Janet Jackson all suffer from depression, as have actors Drew Carey, Anthony Hopkins, and Stephen Ford
- Ludwig van Beethoven, the brilliant composer, experienced bipolar depression, as did serial Vincent Van Gogh and author Edgar Allan Poe
- Writers Ernest Hemingway, and Charles Dickens both suffered from clinical depression
- Winston Churchill: "Had he been a stable and equable man, he could never have inspired the nation. In 1940, when all the odds were against Britain, a leader of whose judgment might well have concluded that we were finished," wrote Anthony Storr of Churchill's bipolar depression

You can live a happier, fuller life and enjoy your creativity even more if you get help. You shouldn't have to spend a lifetime suffering.

FREE, CONFIDENTIAL SERVICES ARE AVAILABLE TO YOU AT USA UNIVERSITY

Counseling and Psychological Services
303 University Ave.
3rd Floor
949.424.4800

ACTIVE MINDS ON CAMPUS WEBSITE:
www.active minds on campus.org

Active Minds: Role within the University and Mental Health Community

- Student-run, volunteer, organization
 - Part of Student Activities Council
 - Staff/Faculty Advisor
- With support from, and affiliation with:
 - Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS)
 - Other Student Affairs Administrators
- Promote local Depression Screenings
- Work with local mental health agencies (MHA, NAMI, etc)
- Present to local high schools

Who is in Active Minds?

Generally...

- Students with diagnosed mental health disorders
- Students with family members or friends who live with mental illness
- Suicide Survivors
- Psychology majors, Nursing students, Social Work students
- Students simply interested in learning more *

*Spans the range of college majors!

Why Peer Advocacy?

- Non-threatening
- Empowers students into being proactive against the stigma that they have encountered
- Free labor!
- Administrators respond well to students
- Students are the best ones to know how, and when, to most effectively reach other students
- First defenders vs. First responders
 - "When it comes to mental health, students are the main line of defense, but often the last to be heard" (University of Pennsylvania President Judith Rodin)
- Capitalizes on the energy of young adults, and ensures a future generation of mental health advocates

Active Minds, Inc.:

Expressing the Voice, and Fostering a Movement, of Young Adult Mental Health Advocates

- Campus chapters around the country
- Comprehensive website: www.activeminds.org
- National Partnerships
 - Jed Foundation, NMHAC, SPAN-USA, AFSP, Mental Health America, ADAA, Screening for Mental Health, NASPA
- National 'Mental Health on Campus' Conference
 - October 27-28, 2006 at American University, Washington DC
 - Featuring Kay Redfield Jamison, world-renowned expert on mood disorders
 - Lizzie Simon, author of *Detour: My Bipolar Road Trip in 4-D*
 - Jenilyn Ross Anxiety Disorders Association of America
 - Ross Szabo, Director of Youth Outreach for NMHAC

Active Minds, Inc.:

Expressing the Voice, and Fostering a Movement,
of Young Adult Mental Health Advocates (cont.)

- Recognition
 - 'Tipper Gore Remember the Children Award' from National Mental Health Association
 - 'Innovation Award' from Mental Health Association of Southeastern Pennsylvania
 - 'Young Leadership Award' from NARSAD, the Mental Health Research Association
- Featured on CNN, ABC World News Tonight, in [New York Times](#), [Washington Post](#), [Chronicle of Higher Education](#), [Psychiatric News](#)

Active Minds, Inc.'s

Vision

To destigmatize mental illness by promoting an open,
enlightened discussion of mental health issues;
and to create a better life for all who suffer;

To capitalize on the energy and dedication of young
adults in the fight against the stigma that
surrounds mental illness; and,

To educate, enlighten, and empower all young adults
to ensure their own mental health before it ever
reaches a tragic stage.

“Never doubt that a small group of
thoughtful, committed citizens can
change the world. Indeed, it is the
only thing that ever has.”

- Margaret Mead
