

Social Media Best Practices

Approved websites to share or to find content:

<http://www.samhsa.gov/>

<http://www.nimh.nih.gov/index.shtml>

<http://www.dsamh.utah.gov/>

<http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org/>

<http://www.youmatter.suicidepreventionlifeline.org/>

<http://www.citutah.com/>

<http://www.uw.org/211/>

<http://odysseyhouse.org/>

<http://www.alliancehouse.org/>

http://www.nami.org/Template.cfm?Section=Child_and_Teen_Support&Template=/TaggedPage/TaggedPageDisplay.cfm&TPLID=72&ContentID=38391

<http://www.chadd.org/>

<http://www.afsp.org/advocacy-public-policy/become-an-advocate>

<http://www.thebalancedmind.org/>

<http://www.drugabuse.gov/>

<http://teens.drugabuse.gov/>

<http://www.mindsontheedge.org/>

<http://www.youmatter.suicidepreventionlifeline.org/blog/>

<http://twloha.com/blog>

<http://justforyouth.utah.gov>

Approved Language:

Words to Avoid (and Words to Use)!

Some words can be seen as offensive to some groups. Here are some words and phrases that we *avoid* using:

Consumer

Identifying a person by his or her illness (e.g., Jenny is a schizophrenic)

Suffer (e.g., suffering from depression)

Instead of using these terms we say an individual **living with a mental illness** or an individual or family **affected by mental illness**. A person is bigger than any illness and should not be defined solely by it. A mental illness is only one aspect of a person's life.

Don't Be Too Technical

Sometimes it is hard to avoid using scientific jargon when discussing mental health topics. However, while some people may understand these terms, many individuals just learning about mental illness, and even individuals who are knowledgeable of the topic, may have a hard time understanding what you are trying to tell them. Be sure to break down technical or medical terms into language that a general audience can understand. Often people who will be reading what you have written are not knowledgeable of the subject.

FACEBOOK

The breadth of Facebook's network is enormous: there are more than 350 million active users and approximately 50% of active users log on to Facebook on any given day.

A Facebook Page allows you to:

- create a basic profile describing NAMI's mission
- make your community aware of your local NAMI presence
- post news related to important issues, such as mental health budget cuts
- alert supporters to NAMI advocacy efforts
- encourage dialogue through wall posts, status updates and newsfeeds
- share photos, videos and links

Encourage Advocacy Efforts

- Post a news story about state mental health budget cuts
- Share a link to a video clip of a local TV news story about NAMI advocates fighting budget cuts
- Invite fans to a local NAMI event
- Upload pictures from your computer or phone of a press conference on the steps of the state capital building
- Encourage NAMI fans to call or write emails to legislators asking them to save mental health care in your community.

Sample Facebook Posts:

- Further budget cuts would threaten mental health services in Oklahoma <http://bit.ly/4JPdTu>
- Watch: NAMI Maine asks for moratorium on proposed mental health budget cuts <http://bit.ly/6eB3Zr>
- Take Action. Help prevent suicides and help improve treatment for veterans <http://bit.ly/Tpn5C>

TWITTER

Twitter is a free microblogging and social networking service that allows users to communicate using "tweets," which are short posts of up to 140 characters in length.

Like Facebook, Twitter has millions of users. As of Sept. 2011, Twitter reported having more than 100 million active users.

Tweets were originally meant to answer the question: What are you doing? Over time, they have come to answer: What's happening? Individuals can update tweets, which appear on a personalized newsfeed. Tweets are then delivered to the person's "followers."

Twitter fosters its own interactive community because each Twitter feed is linked to a list of the user's followers, as well as the users that they in turn follow. Twitter users can easily identify others who share their interests, and smaller communities form around different priorities. Using Twitter is a great way to make connections and build a network.

Twitter Basics

To address another Twitterer, post the username preceded by an "@"

Example: [@NAMICommunicate](#)

To tag a message with a keyword, type a "#" before the word.

Example: [#mentalhealth](#)

A Few Good Tweets

Variety in tweets will keep followers engaged and coming back to see what new information you have to offer.

Ideally, your followers will spread your messages by retweeting, which means that a follower will take your tweet and rebroadcast it to their own followers. You can also retweet messages by others to help strengthen your relationships with peer groups, expand your Twitter presence and bolster Twitter's dialogue on mental health. The ripple effect can help your message reach individuals and organizations beyond your current reach.

You can use Twitter to keep followers informed about interesting news related to different aspects of mental health. For example, you can keep your community informed of stories related to the impact of state mental health budget cuts.