

Young Adults Rise: Building Bonds, Shaping Futures

A unique space for twentysomethings
to build community and life skills

Reason for Young Adults Rise-the Problem

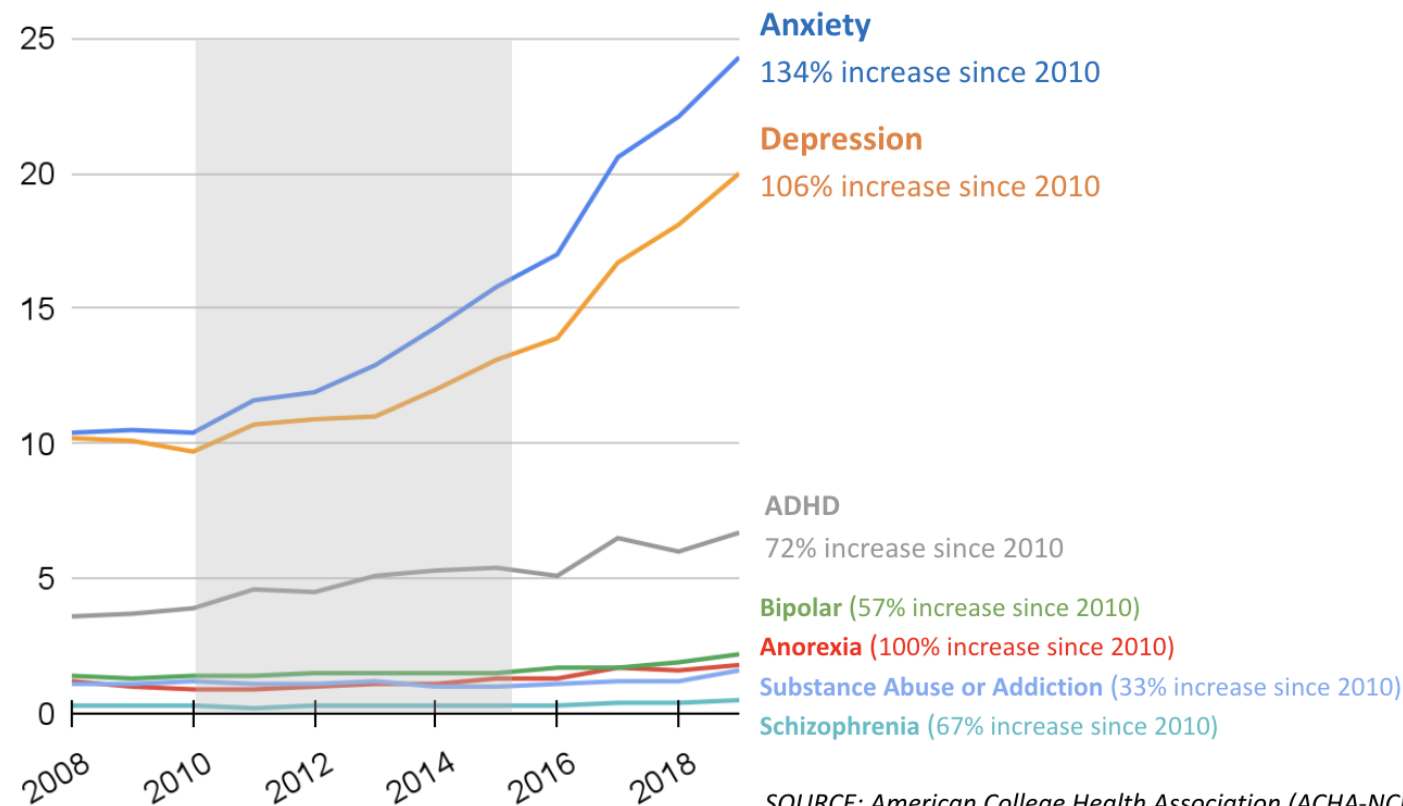
Twentysomethings are in trouble-they are more depressed, anxious, and lonelier than any other age group in America-but their distress has gone widely unnoticed. *The Atlantic, Faith Hill, August 24, 2024*

Reason for Young Adults Rise-the Problem

- Their stressors have led to an epidemic of mental health problems.
- 48-70% of young adults have reported mental health symptoms.
- Serious psychological distress rose by 70% in young adults, with suicide-related thoughts or actions rising by a similar margin.

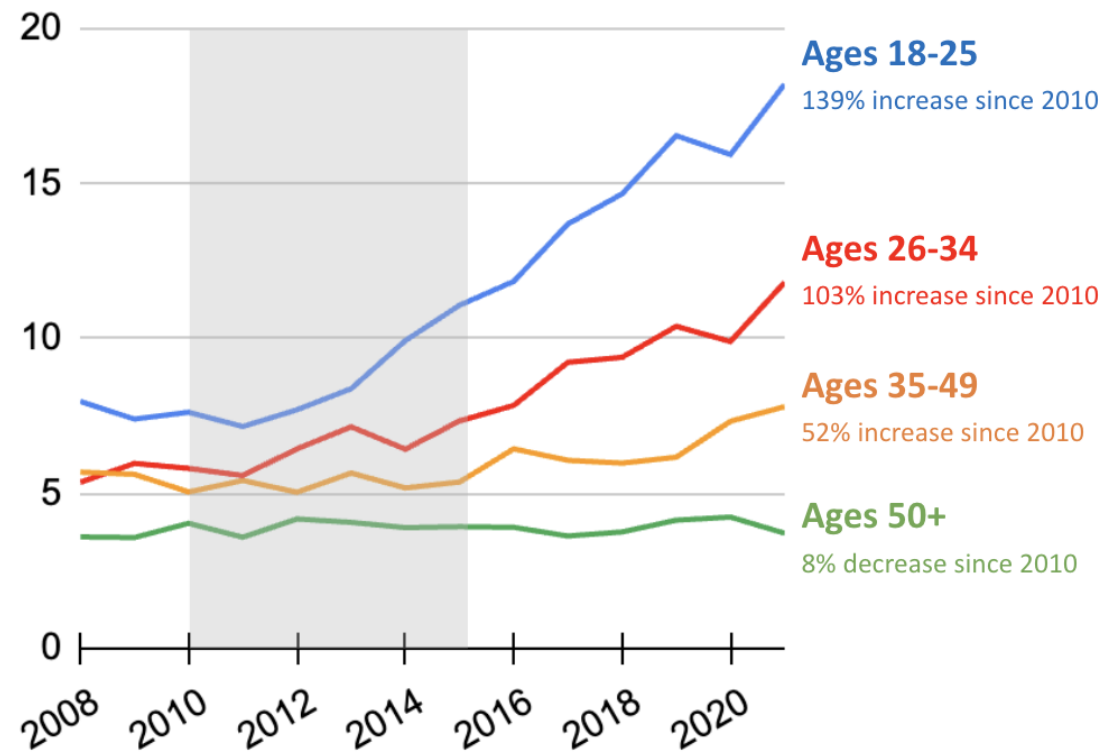
Reason for Young Adults Rise-the Problem

Percent of U.S. Undergraduates Diagnosed with a Mental Illness



Reason for Young Adults Rise-the Problem

Percent U.S. Anxiety Prevalence



SOURCE: U.S. National Survey on Drug Use and Health

Reason for Young Adults Rise-What Happened?

- At least a correlation to smart phone development. In 2010-2015, rapid adoption of smartphones, and social media platforms dramatically altered the landscape of adolescence (these people are now in their twenties)
- Change in parenting styles-more control, keeping inside more, more structured and supervised time
- Increased societal pressure for achievement

Impact on Young Adults and the Community

- YA are feeling financial worries, achievement pressures, a feeling of lacking meaning or purpose, and relationship deficits. *On Edge, Understanding and Preventing Young Adults' Mental Health Challenges, Richard Weissbourd, Milena Batanova, Joseph McIntyre, and Eric Torres with Shanae Irving, Sawsan Eskander, and Kiran Bhai, October 2023 (Published October 2023, Harvard Graduate School of Education) Extent of these struggles is just coming to light- Jonathan Haidt, The Anxious Generation (Penguin Press March 26, 2024)*
- Profound feelings of failure, loneliness, and hopelessness.
- We see the impact of these struggles when young adults “fail to launch,” return home to live, drop out of the work force, or socially isolate themselves.
- Direct parent impact-One May 2025 survey found that 40% of parents say supporting their adult children has impacted their savings goals-the highest percentage since the survey started 4 years ago

A Call for Help

“The emotional plight of so many young people demands far more concerted and serious attention from governments, colleges and universities, workplaces, and many other institutions. What seems clear is that we need to give more than lip service to prevention, reimagining and working to reconfigure this phase of life.” *On Edge*



We can help them

Cultivate meaning
and purpose

Develop gratifying
and durable
relationships

Develop meaning
outside themselves
-spirituality

Build life skills

What is Young Adults Rise?

- YAR was founded by a Lion and has since been adopted a lay mission of the Shenandoah River District of the United Methodist Church
- YAR helps young adults:
 - Develop life skills
 - Find their meaning and purpose
 - Discover something larger than themselves, and
 - Build relationships and community
- The program is free and open to any young adult

Details on Program

- Content of program draws from the experts who have studied this age group and their struggles.
- YAR meets weekly for 90 minutes
 - 30 minutes-diner and social discussion
 - 60 minutes for discussion, presentation, practice exercises
- One meeting month devoted to a social activity, such as bowling or game night
- Additional social activities are scheduled-such as snow tubing at Bryce Resort or a hike

Program Details-Topics

- YAR covers career, financial, social, and general physical and mental wellness
- Financial Topics:
 - Credit and credit cards,
 - Budgeting,
 - Saving/planning for the future,
 - Insurance,
 - Investing, and
 - Retirement

Program Details-Topics

- Social wellness and relationships:
 - Vulnerability,
 - Rejection,
 - Healthy relationships,
 - Social media versus reality,
 - Cross generation relationships, and
 - Cautions for pornography

Program Details-Topics

- Mental and physical wellness issues include:
 - Managing stress and anxiety,
 - Building confidence and risk taking,
 - Being settled with who you are-being true to self,
 - Importance of spirituality in well being, and
 - Importance of physical movement to well being

Program Results

- Generally, around 8 participants. Goal is 10 for a group
- Mostly young men in their 20s
- Wide disparity on where they are in life
- Social interaction is strong-One participant said that he felt he was back in school with his friends. Another said that he finally felt like he had a community
- Program evaluation for Spring Program revealed that there was a very high likelihood that the participants would recommend the program to others

Future Plans

- Expansions of YAR Programs
 - Adding locations
 - Expanding to 18-21 year olds.
 - Offering community programs-YAR will be co-hosting a free community mini-conference on AI in January
 - Offering a job program? YAR considering job program for under/unemployed twentysomethings

Additional Information-Donations

- ▶ Youngadultsrise.org-links on site for donations
- ▶ MHUMC.YAR@gmail.com