



Family Support Foundation  
for  
MENTAL ILLNESS

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**The Family Support Foundation for Mental Illness Establishes Non-Profit  
Organization**

--Foundation created to provide fundraising and advocacy to people suffering from  
mental illness--

**Wayne, PA – February 16, 2009**—The Family Support Foundation for Mental Illness announces the development of a non-profit foundation designed to support individuals coping with mental illness and their families. The mission of the Family Support Foundation for Mental Illness is to increase awareness and understanding of mental illness issues, to support legislation benefitting those suffering from mental illness and their families, to help cover unreimbursed mental health care expenses for qualifying families, and to support other non-profit organizations that have been strong and effective leaders on issues consistent with the Foundation's mission

The Family Support Foundation for Mental Illness was established in Montana in 2008 when Jonathan Foxman, President and CEO of Cellular One, read a story about Meghann Eckerdt, a Billings teenager struggling with multiple mental illnesses. "My

daughter was going through a very similar situation and illness to what Meghann had gone through," Foxman said. "It unraveled for her at 12 years old. The last two years have been just a terrible time." Foxman, who lives in Pennsylvania, was so moved by Eckerdt's story that he tracked down her family and agreed to help them put on a fundraiser to pay off medical debt from treatment that was not covered by insurance. He also developed the Family Support Foundation for Mental Illness, of which he is the Executive Director.

Mental illness is a disease that does not discriminate based on age, race, religion or income. Defined as a medical condition that disrupts a person's thinking, feeling, mood, ability to relate to others and daily functioning, mental illness affects one in four adults in America. Although treatable, less than one-third of adults and half of children with a diagnosable mental disorder receive any mental health services in a given year.

In 2008, the Family Support Foundation chose to support both the Eckerdt Family, as well as the Montana Chapter of the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI), a grassroots organization created to provide support, education, and advocacy to those suffering with a mental illness and their families. Various fundraising activities included sponsoring a team at the annual NAMI-Walks benefit, and organizing "Santa's Workshop," a fundraising event that took place in Billings in November with all proceeds benefitting NAMI-Montana and the Eckerdt Family.

In 2009, Foxman plans to expand the Family Support Foundation for Mental Illness on a national level. "We are committed to making a difference for this cause. Mental

illness and the terrible suffering it causes, particularly for young people, is an issue that rarely gets the attention or the support it deserves,” stated Foxman. “We will help those suffering from mental illness and their families feel a little less alone, a little less invisible, a little less like no one understands and no one cares.”

### **About The Family Support Foundation for Mental Illness**

The mission of the Family Support Foundation for Mental Illness is to increase awareness and understanding of mental illness issues, to support legislation benefitting those suffering from mental illness and their families, to help cover unreimbursed mental health care expenses for qualifying families, and to support other non-profit organizations that have been strong and effective leaders on issues consistent with the Foundation's mission. For more information on the Family Support Foundation for Mental Illness, visit us online at [www.fsfmi.org](http://www.fsfmi.org). For companies interested in helping the Family Support Foundation for Mental Illness make a difference, please contact Jonathan Foxman at 610-535-6901.

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