The Role of Mental Health in Student Success

Presented by the staff of the Texas State Counseling Center
LBJ Student Center 5-4.1
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www.counseling.txstate.edu
First Year Experience

While college is exciting, there are adjustments to be made in the first year that can be stressful.

You can help us to help them.
There are normal adjustments to be made...

- Academic demands are greater
- New environment, no matter where you’re from
- Personal changes that are part of ongoing development at this age
What is influencing student stress?

- Focus on academic independence
- Over-stimulating and competitive world
- New levels of responsibility
- Social adjustment
Coping with the stress

- Remind your student …
  - That stress is normal
  - To engage in prevention strategies
  - Learn stress reduction techniques to use at early signs of stress
  - To acknowledge when they need help
  - To know where to seek help
The Best Tools are Prevention Tools

- Practice basic self-care
  - Sleep
  - Nutrition
  - Exercise
  - Safety

- Build and keep connections

- Utilize time management and study skills
  - Abundance of university resources
Developing a sense of balance

- Learning what is the best balance personally can take time, but it is a key to mental health and wellness.
- Be careful to avoid taking on too many demands at once.
  - Number of academic hours
  - To work or not to work
  - Student involvement
But it may not be “just” stress...

- There are sometimes biological or genetic factors involved
- Traditional college age, 18-24, is a common period for the onset of mental illness in the general population
- Early recognition and treatment can make an important difference
- If left unattended, symptoms can become more frequent and severe thus affecting
  - Academic performance
  - Interpersonal relationships
  - Job stability
  - Overall functioning
Signs and Symptoms of Concern

- Exaggerated emotional responses
- Radical change in behavior
- Loss of interest in activities
- Communications about hopelessness, depression, or suicide
- Excessive worry
- Poor concentration/memory
- Frequent crying

- Sleep disturbance
- Major change in appetite
- Social withdrawal
- Missing classes
- Significant change in personal hygiene or dress
- Detection of alcohol and/or other drug abuse
What’s a Family to Do?

- Listen
- Ask
- Share
- Encourage
- Act
- Consult
- Follow-Up
- Maintain Health Coverage
Counseling Center Services

**What We Do**

- Individual counseling
  - Short term
  - About every two weeks
- Group counseling
- Crisis Response
- Consultation & Referral Services
- Psychiatric service referrals

*Services provided by qualified professionals*

**What We Don’t Do**

- Long term therapy
- Treatment of severe mental illness
- Academic advising
Counseling Center Resources

- Developing Effective Approaches for Life (DEAL)
- EmWave Relaxation Software
- Web Resources
  - www.counseling.txstate.edu
  - Family Page (also in Spanish)
  - Online screening for students
  - Self-Help
  - Stress Management
  - Suicide Prevention
  - and more

Social Media

@txstCC
If your student is already receiving mental health services…

- Consult with current providers.
- Consider maintaining current psychiatric services for availability and continuity.
- Consult with Counseling Center Referral Specialist to locate community provider for individual counseling.
- Visit the Counseling Center website for group offerings and workshops appropriate for your student.
Accessing our services

- Students begin by calling for an Initial Consultation to determine appropriate care.
- There are no charges for counseling services.
- All services are confidential as mandated by law and professional ethical standards.

The Counseling Center website has detailed information on accessing services and much more.

www.counseling.txstate.edu
Families Can Help

- Stay in touch with your student
- Be observant & respond to distress
- Balance their need to make decisions for themselves with their need for your input
- Look for opportunities to understand their college experience
  - Attend activities like Family Weekend & athletic events
  - Join the Family Association
  - Visit campus
Your student’s turn to hear our message

- The Counseling Center is part of the mandatory preview sessions before classes start.
- We will be sharing the message about good mental health for college success and life.
Wellness for a Lifetime

College, like life, is full of joys, disappointments, challenges, successes and many transitions. Establishing skills for wellness now will serve your student for a lifetime.