Addressing College Mental Health Concerns Through Wellness Coaching for Academic Success

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Objectives

• Describe mental health concerns of undergraduate students
• Describe GatorWell’s Wellness Coaching for Academic Success Program
• Identify the benefits of Wellness Coaching for Academic Success
What is GatorWell?

• Health Promotion Services at the University of Florida
• Mission: to educate, empower, and coach students to make healthy decisions and provide leadership and advocacy for health-enhancing policy.
• Theory-based, data-driven services and programming targeting current UF students

Mental Health Trends

• What are some mental health trends you are seeing at your institution?
2016 Healthy Gators Survey

- Population based survey administered biannually since Spring 2008.
- 7,500 undergraduate students sampled
- Online survey, two forms
- n = 1,511, response rate = 20.1%

Top Impediments to Academic Performance

**ACHA-NCHA (n = 80,139)**
- Stress (33.8%)
- Anxiety (24.4%)
- Sleep Difficulties (22.2%)
- Depression (16.2%)
- Cold, Flu, Sore Throat (15.7%)
- Work (14.9%)
- Internet Use/Computer Games (11.8%)
- Concern for Friend or Family Member (11.7%)
- Participation in Extracurricular Activities (10.2%)
- Relationship Difficulties (9.8%)

**UF Healthy Gators (n = 1511)**
- Stress (32.8%)
- Anxiety (27.6%)
- Cold, Flu, Sore Throat (21.1%)
- Internet Use/Computer Games (19.0%)
- Participation in Extracurricular Activities (17.7%)
- Sleep Difficulties (17.5%)
- Depression (14.7%)
- Relationship Difficulties (11.5%)
- Finances (11.4%)
- Work (11.1%)
### College Students’ Mental Health

#### In The Past 12 Months...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>UF Students</th>
<th>ACHA-NCHA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Felt things were hopeless</td>
<td>51.6%</td>
<td>21.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Felt overwhelmed by all you had to do</td>
<td>88.3%</td>
<td>18.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Felt very sad</td>
<td>58.6%</td>
<td>23.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Felt so depressed that it was difficult to function</td>
<td>33.0%</td>
<td>16.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Felt overwhelming anxiety</td>
<td>57.8%</td>
<td>20.6%</td>
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</tbody>
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#### In The Past 12 Months, Have You...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>UF Students</th>
<th>ACHA-NCHA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ever seriously considered suicide?</td>
<td>10.0%</td>
<td>6.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ever attempted suicide?</td>
<td>1.3%</td>
<td>1.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ever intentionally cut, burned, bruised, or otherwise injured yourself?</td>
<td>5.9%</td>
<td>7.3%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Strain on College Counseling Centers

• 2016 National Survey of Counseling Center Directors
  • 57.1% surveyed felt the severity of student mental health concerns and related behavior on their campus has increased in the past year
  • 50.61% of students presented concerns of anxiety (2011: 40.94%)
  • 41.23% of students presented concerns of depression (2011: 37.18%)
  • 20.52% of students presented concerns of suicidal thoughts/behaviors (2011: 15.92%)
  • 14.17% of students engaged in acts of self-harm or injury (2011: 9.22%)

What is Wellness Coaching?

• Tailored approach focusing on holistic wellness
• Based on positive psychology, Stages of Change Model (or TTM), and motivational interviewing
• It is NOT
  • Therapy or Counseling
  • A “quick fix”
  • A prescriptive or one-way process
• Certification through: Real Balance Global Wellness Services, Wellcoaches, International Coach Federation
GatorWell’s
“Wellness Coaching for Academic Success”

• Health Promotion Specialists with Masters degrees
  • Certified in Wellness Coaching through Real Balance
• Initial appointments about 1½ hours. Follow-up appointments about 1 hour.
• Focuses improvement in one or more of the following areas:
  • General wellness and self-care
  • Stress management and relaxation strategies
  • Time management and organization
  • Sleep habits
  • Eating habits
  • Physical activity
  • Study skills

GatorWell’s
“Wellness Coaching for Academic Success”

• Students can see a Wellness Coach for as many sessions as they want, though tend to see improvement with a minimum of 4-8 weeks of work
• Sessions include:
  • Identifying areas of growth or change
  • Recognizing benefits and identifying barriers to change
  • Creating an action plan (SMART goals)
  • Helping with accountability, problem solving, skill building, and other referrals as needed
Evaluating Wellness Coaching

• Fall 2016:
  • 251 Wellness Coaching appointments
    • Cancellations or no shows: 28.7%

• Evaluative components:
  • Intake and follow-up forms
  • Self-analysis tools and resources
    • Ex: Readiness for change tool, self-permission inventory
  • Post-session questionnaire taken on iPad upon exiting the appointment
    • 117 post-session questionnaire respondents

Number of visits

- 51 visits: 1 Time
- 29 visits: 2 Times
- 11 visits: 3 Times
- 5 visits: 4 Times
- 21 visits: More Than 4 Times
Key areas identified to work on in the next week or two

Skills learned during your session
Action Steps

• 98% of students reported being either very clear or moderately clear about the action steps they needed to take in the next week or two.

Program Satisfaction

I would recommend this program to other UF students who need help.

Overall, I was satisfied with this session.

Which of the following best described what happens next?
Topics Discussed by Appointments

Limitations

• No shows/cancellations
  • Policy considerations
• Follow-up is not mandatory
• Student to coach ratio and waitlist
• Fidelity with Real Balance
• Evaluations inconsistent
• Connect assessment with measures related to academic success
Implications

• Supplemental service to mental health support in a college community
• Covers skills aligned with academic success
• Focuses efforts on prevention, resiliency skills
• Lessons learned:
  • Reaching out to students who cancel or no-show
  • Increase post-session evaluation response rate

• What are some potential benefits or roadblocks to creating a Wellness Coaching program in your campus community?

Thank You!

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