

NOTES FOR MENTAL HEALTH TALK WITH UNIVERSITY SENATE

CHIEF STUDENT AFFAIRS OFFICE SHAWN BROOKS, 19 OCT 2018

Student Mental Health continues to emerge as a significant challenge on college and university campuses across the country.

Issues and causes:

- Resilience
- Pressure to succeed
- Helicopter parents
- Social Media

The Association of University and College Counseling Center Directors administers an annual survey which can be used to help identify and track trends in college student mental health services. 621 Counseling Center directors responded to the 2016-2017 survey.

- Anxiety continues to be the most frequent concern among college students (48.2%), followed by stress (39.1%), depression (34.5%), suicidal ideation (25.2%), specific relationship concerns (22.9%), family concerns (21.2%), interpersonal functioning problems (18.8%), sleep problems (15.8%), and loneliness / social isolation (15.5%).
- 25.5% of students seeking services were taking psychotropic medications.
- 16.2% of center clients had extensive or significant prior treatment histories (e.g., serious suicide attempt; hospitalization for psychiatric treatment).

According to the [National Alliance on Mental Illness](#),

- 40% of college students with diagnosable mental health conditions do not seek help from a mental health professional, and
- 86% of college students who attempt suicide do not seek counseling center assistance beforehand.

The American College Health Association-National College Health Assessment

- 25% of college students have been diagnosed or treated for a mental health condition within the previous year.

The number of students receiving treatment at Georgia College Counseling Services has increased by 30.4% in 5 years.

- There has been an **84% increase in the number of students seen for “crisis appointments”** (e.g., students at risk for harming self or others, or who have experienced a recent trauma or loss) over the past 5 years.
- **The number of students reporting suicidal ideation has increased 92.7% in 5 years.** In the 2011-2012 academic year, 123 students reported suicidal thoughts in the prior two weeks compared to 237 in 2016-17, which is a 92.7% increase. It also represents a higher proportion of suicidal students in counseling: In 2011-12, 24.7% of students in counseling reported recent suicidal thoughts whereas in 2016-17, 34.9% of students in counseling reported recent suicidal thoughts.
- **The number of students reporting making a suicide attempt has increased 42.8% in 5 years.**

- **The number of students reporting engaging in self-injury increased 66.7% in 5 years.**
- **The number of students reporting prior mental health treatment has increased 72.6% in 5 years.**
- **The number of students reporting a psychiatric hospitalization has increased 138.1% in 5 years.** In the 2011-2012 academic year, 21 students reported a psychiatric hospitalization compared to 50 in 2016-17, which is a 138.1% increase.
- The most common reasons for which students seek Counseling are depression and anxiety.
 - When asked to state only one reason for seeking Counseling, students report the following:
 - Anxiety 40.9%
 - Depression 26.9%
 - Relationships 5%
 - Family issues 5%
 - Stress 4%
- 65% of Counseling Center Clients indicated that counseling had helped them remain in school, according to a recent survey of college counseling center directors. 64 percent stated that counseling helped improve their academic performance.

CARE Team Crisis Assessment Response and Education

- **Call 478-445-7475 (478-445-RISK) or click [here](#) to make report a concern to the CARE Team**
- Georgia College CARE Team offers support and assistance to anyone at GC who is concerned about an individual on campus. These concerns might be troubling behavior or potential threat to themselves or others. The individual may be a student, employee or visitor. The phone line is answered 24 hours per day, 7 days per week.
- In response, Student Affairs has the following measures in place:
 - Threat Assessment Team
 - Dean of Students
 - Suicide Prevention Efforts
- In response to increased demand:
 - Groups
 - Referrals to community resources
 - Exploring on-line and skype third-party provider assistance

Suicide Prevention Efforts at Georgia College

The current suicide prevention efforts at Georgia College center around three areas:

1. The wide distribution of information concerning mental health issues and how to seek help for yourself or a person you are concerned about,
2. Multiple ways to report concerns,
3. Trained staff to prevent and respond to mental health crisis.

Counseling Services

- Seven full-time licensed mental health professionals and a half-time psychiatrist.
- Provide 24/7 crisis response coverage
- Publishes a resource folder for faculty and staff which addresses the warning signs of students who are in crisis / distress.
- Conducted 234 crisis interventions in 2017-2018
- Counseling Services currently trains all Residence Life staff and Public Safety officers.

CARE Team

- Meets weekly to plan interventions for students of concern.
- CARE Line monitored 24/7 by public safety

QPR (Question, Persuade, and Refer) Training

- QPR teaches participants to:
 - Recognize the warning signs of suicide
 - Know how to offer hope
 - Know how to get help and save a life
- We currently have 6 trainers on campus.
- Plan to offer this training to athletes and fraternity and sorority members this year.
- Also plan to offer to faculty and staff.

Health Promotions

- The fall poster campaign will address: substance abuse, anxiety, depression, stress, and sleep.
- Substance use, anxiety, and depression are risk factors for suicide.
- These posters will push students toward online resources and the Counseling Center.
- Peer Health Educators will hand out materials on mental health issues one week each month and will focus on suicide prevention one week in the fall and one week in the spring.

Suicide Screening

- Students asked suicide screening questions:
 - when students make an appointment with Counseling Services
 - during the BASICS alcohol intervention appointments in Health Promotions
- We are exploring offering an online suicide screening product.

College & University Suicide Prevention Conference

- Every year we send a team to this 2-day training normally held in September.
- Organized by the Georgia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities.