

Duquesne University Center for Student Wellbeing



IDENTIFYING AND RESPONDING TO COLLEGE STUDENT ISSUES AND CONCERNS IN THE 21ST CENTURY: PROBLEMS, SOLUTIONS, AND STUDENT FORMATION

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College Student Wellbeing: Problems Students Face



- Rising Levels of Depression, Anxiety, and Suicidality over the past ten years (Suicide is the second leading cause of death among college students).
- 80% of college presidents that were surveyed for the 2019 *College Student Mental Health and Well-Being: A Survey of Presidents* survey indicated that student mental health has become more of a priority on their campus than it was three years ago.
- One president wrote, “Mental health has become a major issue for retention and the general well-being of our students . . . This is in my top three areas of improvement for my college.”

College Student Wellbeing: Problems Students Face



- Roughly seven out of 10 presidents (72 percent) reported they had reallocated or identified additional funding to address the issue.
- One president reported raising \$15 million to build a “comprehensive student well-being building.”
- Nearly one in three public and private nonprofit four-year presidents and one in five public two-year presidents reported hearing once a week or more about students struggling with mental health.

College Student Wellbeing: Problems Students Face



- When asked for the top mental health concerns they hear about, three-quarters of presidents said anxiety (75 percent) and depression (74 percent).
- 90 percent of presidents agreed or strongly agreed that their staff is spending more time addressing these concerns than they did three years ago

College Student Psychological Wellbeing



- If given more resources, 58 percent of presidents said they would hire additional staff—mostly in the counseling center.
- Over 80 percent of presidents indicated that student well-being is mentioned in their strategic plan, and over 40 percent of plans mention mental health specifically.
- Since 2016, the percentage of students triaged at Duquesne has gone up 384%.

Pandemic-Related Presenting Concerns



- Economic Concerns
- Housing Issues
- Food Insecurities
- Increased Separation Anxiety
- Baseline Suicidal Ideation
- Overstimulation
- Distrust in their own happiness
- Increasing Anxiety about falling behind
- Differing attitudes toward COVID

Pandemic Related Presenting Concerns



- Increased Anxiety about social relationships
- Different levels of adjustment among roommates
- “Physically” but not “mentally” here
- Reduced stigma related to help seeking
- Alienation
- Increase in number of reported sexual assaults
- Pre-existing mental health conditions being exacerbated because of the pandemic

What can you do?



- Establish a Biopsychosocial Model for Care: PREVENTION through PROMOTION
- Establish a Formative Approach to Developing Students
- Develop and Promote a Wellbeing Culture
- Develop Student-Oriented Wellbeing/Wellness Clubs
- Wellbeing Courses and Seminars in the Classroom
- An Annual Week of Wellbeing
- Wellness/Wellbeing Days
- Wellbeing Coaching and Peer Education
- Utilization of mental health and wellbeing apps
- Promote Faculty and Staff Wellbeing