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Promoting Mental Health Occupational Therapy in Higher Education: Lifestyle Redesign® for the College Student

Karen McCarthy
University of Southern California, karen.mccarthy@dominican.edu

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Promoting Mental Health Occupational Therapy in Higher Education: Lifestyle Redesign® for the College Student

Karen McNulty, OTD, OTR/L
College Students & Mental Health

Stress

50% college dropout rate
63% so stressed that they could not get their work done
55% so stressed they didn’t want to hang out or participate in social activities
85% of students reported feeling stressed on a daily basis

(ACHA, 2007)

College Students & Mental Health

• **Depression:**
  
  - **Half of all college students** report feeling so depressed at some point in time that they have trouble functioning.
  - **14.5%** meet the criteria for clinical depression. (mtvU survey)
  - 10% of college students have been diagnosed with depression and including 13% of college women.
  - 18 to 24 is a very common age range for people to experience their first episode of depression.

Facts & Stats below are courtesy of the National Mental Health Association (now known as Mental Health America):

*mtvU survey: ww.halfofus.com*
College Students & Mental Health

• Anxiety

In 2000, almost 7% of college students reported experiencing anxiety disorders within the previous year. Women are 5 times as likely to have anxiety disorders.

Facts & Stats below are courtesy of the National Mental Health Association (now known as Mental Health America):
College Mental Health Trends

• More students enter college already taking psychiatric medications,
• More colleges are reporting increases in severe psychopathology in students
• Campus mental health centers were prescribing more medications
• Suicide was the 2nd leading cause of death among students.
Healthy Campus 2010

• Lifestyle Issues:
  – Physical Activity: 33%
  – Diet: 6.7%

(University of Southern California, 2007).
Sleep

- Students aren't getting enough sleep:
  - 13% of college students responded that they had been able to get enough sleep to make them feel rested in the morning.
  - 46% polled said they had slept enough on 3-5 days,
  - 29% felt well rested on 1-2 days
  - 12% said that they didn't get an adequate amount of sleep once in the past week.
Substance Use

• Alcohol Abuse and Dependence:
  – 31% alcohol abuse
  – 6 percent alcohol dependence in the past 12 months

* (Knight et al., 2002)
Transitioning to College

• First-Year Students:
  – many students initiate heavy drinking
  – interfere with successful adaptation to campus life.
  – 1/3 of first-year students fail to enroll for their second year.

Statistics from NIAAA’s "Snapshot of Annual High-Risk College Drinking Consequences"
Factors contributing to Depression

• Dealing with the Loss of the Familiar
• Handling Rigorous Academics
• Negotiating a New Social Network
• Access to Alcohol and Drugs
• Lack of Mental Health Information

• http://www.lifespan.org/services/mentalhealth/articles/depression/collegedepression.htm
What is Occupational Therapy?

• **Occupations:**
  Meaningful activity that occupies our time and is embedded in the flow of our day

• Based on Occupational Science

• OT started in Mental health
What is Lifestyle Redesign®?

- Lifestyle Redesign® is the process of developing and enacting a customized routine of health promoting and meaningful activities.
- New area of Wellness/Prevention.
Program Description

• **Population**: College students (junior college, undergraduate & graduate)
  – Common diagnoses: Depression, Bipolar Disorder, Anxiety, ADD/ADHD, and various learning disabilities

• **Program**: The Lifestyle Redesign® for the College Student provides individualized support and coaching throughout the year to help manage the demands of college life.
  – Services provided in environment of the student
Who can benefit from the Lifestyle Redesign® Program?

Any student who is experiencing difficulty….

- Initiating or following through with academic, social, or personal tasks
- Transitioning away from home or adjusting to the college lifestyle
- Completing academic assignments on time
- Managing their stress level
- Or any student who wants to learn skills for healthy living and academic success!
Program Description

– *Occupational Therapists help students:*

• Optimize study/work environments
• Increase organizational skills
• Improve time management
• Increase focus
• Learn techniques to handle stress
• Manage money effectively
• Access community transportation
• Goal setting
• Pain Management
• Nutrition & Exercise
• Create a balanced lifestyle!
OT: Unique Service on Campus

• Counseling Services
• Disability Services and Programs (DSP), Center for Academic Support (CAS)
  – Learning Assistants
  – Tutors
Collaboration with Other Services

- Counseling Services
- Disability Services and Programs
- Resident Advisors (RAs)
- Athletics
- Veteran Affairs
- Marriage and Family Therapist
- Student Health
- Lyon Center
- Hospitality
- Health Promotion & Prevention Services
- Veterans Affairs
USC Occupational Therapy
Faculty Practice

• Location:
  USC: Both University Park Campus & Health Sciences Campus

• Contact:
  Email: otpf@usc.edu
  Website: usc.edu/otfp
  Phone: 323-442-3340
Accessing OT Services

Referral Process:
• Self-referral
• Psychologist/ Psychiatrist, Primary care physician
• Diagnosis required

Payment:
• Most insurance accepted, including Medicare
• Medical and HMO’s not accepted
• Co-pay or deductible applies
• Private pay option
Mental Health + Health & Wellness (Lifestyle Redesign®) → Lifestyle Redesign® for the College Student
Thank you!

For other questions or comments:
kmcnulty@usc.edu

“Living life to its fullest!”