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

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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)

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
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).
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: otp@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:
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“Living life to its fullest!”