YU Student Mental Health and Well-being

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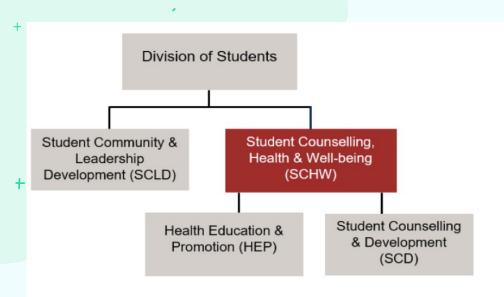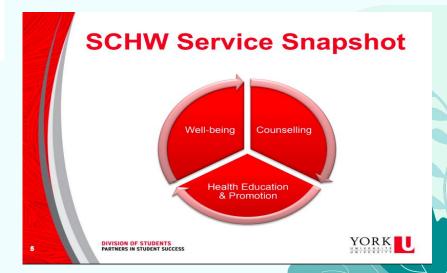
Section 1

The Overview

What is the YU mental health and well-being services?

➔ The YU mental health and well being services offers students with a variety of different resources that can help them when struggling with a mental illness.

➔ There are many services all across campus that students may not be aware of, which is why our task was to come up with ways to spread awareness on this topic. This will be discussed further in the next section.

➔ They hold multiple workshops throughout the year as well as webinars that students can attend.

Division of Students
York University

MENTAL HEALTH & WELL-BEING AT YORK UNIVERSITY

YORK U

➔ These photos show that all the services are essentially grouped together under the division of students. All the services work together to try and ensure student safety, health, wellbeing and educational needs.

Section 2

The Capstone Project Ask

➔ York is one of the largest campuses in Canada and having students navigate a new learning environment as well as learning the layout of our campuses and physical space can be overwhelming.

➔ Students being able to locate or have awareness of resources available to them on campus has been a long-standing issue.

➔ In 2022, results from the recently issued Canadian Campus Wellbeing Survey (CCWS) confirmed that there is still a disconnect in students' awareness about supports and services available to them.

➔ Within the Division of Students, York offers many beneficial resources, programs, and supports to help students succeed across their learning journey.

Some of the questions we asked ourselves while engaging in this project are…

So much noise – how many emails a day are students already receiving? Is there a better way of reaching them?

Are the students who need to be reached being reached effectively?

How do students prefer to receive information?

How can our departments promote services and support in a different way to truly reach students?

What are innovative and engaging ways to reach students?

Section 3

The Research

How are they currently reaching out to students?

Atkinson Centre for Mature and Part-Time Students (ACMAPS)

➔ List services/email
➔ YUMSO list-services (Mature student organization)
➔ Email to colleagues across campus to share with their students – LAPS Advising, York international, LAPS International students, LAPS Peers etc.
➔ ACMAPS events Calendar
➔ YU Events calendar
➔ ACMAPS social media

Student Accessibility Services

➔ Attend open houses
➔ Offer sessions to highschool students to explain services
➔ Offer a service provider workshop to highschool teachers
➔ Offer an ASD transition day for students on the autism spectrum and their families to hear about post-secondary transition for students with autism
➔ Include information in a package that gets sent out from recruitment to high schools
➔ YU Start and YU Prep
➔ Highlighted on the division of students twitter and Facebook
➔ Do presentations at the beginning of the year for programs during their orientation
➔ Highlighted in This Week @ York, especially at the beginning of the year

How are they currently reaching students cont…

Centre for Indigenous Students

➔ Email
➔ Website
➔ Social media

Residence Life

➔ Posters
➔ Sharing content through floor social media channels
➔ Residence-wide emails (though we use these infrequently)
➔ Word-of-mouth via Residence Life Staff
➔ House Meetings

Career Education and Development

➔ Social media (Twitter & Instagram
➔ York's online calendars (York U, CED's website)
➔ Experience York (CED's Experiential job and event platform)
➔ Monthly newsletters
➔ Email campaigns
➔ York U on campus LCD screens
➔ Physical handouts
➔ Staff stationed at Vari Hall
➔ Events
➔ e-Class notifications
➔ Student Club Newsletters

Student Counselling, Health & Well-being: Health Education and Promotion

➔ Emails
➔ Tabling
➔ In person and online workshops
➔ The SCHW website
➔ Online calendar

Why is getting the word out about services important?

➔ Improve **wellbeing** of yorku students

➔ Reduce stigma

➔ Mental health concerns can affect students school life and everyday life if they don't receive the help they need.

➔ Improve student rapport

➔ Give students knowledge about resources offered

Overview of Academic Resources

→ In university's there are peer group classes where students can educate themselves and others about mental health. This education reduces stigma and improves mental illness surroundings. There are students in the university's that also are mental health advocates that can strengthen your understanding on mental health. They also offer educational campaigns discussing mental health awareness. Students also have the opportunity to speak amongst health professionals that are available on campuses to address mental health needs to young students. Their goal is to create awareness through knowledge and change the attitudes of students while help seeking behavior. This type of knowledge would essentially improve mental health literacy and will effectively reduce stigma for students and workers on campus. (Hernández-Torrano,. 2020).

Overview of Academic Resources cont...

→ The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline (1-800-273-8255) is a free, 24-hour hotline that provides immediate assistance to anyone in suicidal crisis or emotional distress. The hotline is staffed by trained counselors who are available to provide confidential, non-judgmental support. They can assist callers in finding a mental health professional, provide referrals to local resources, and offer support and guidance. (Hernández-Torrano,. 2020).

WARNING SIGNS OF SUICIDE:
The behaviors listed below may be some of the signs that someone is thinking about suicide.

TALKING ABOUT:
▷ Wanting to die
▷ Great guilt or shame
▷ Being a burden to others

FEELING:
▷ Empty, hopeless, trapped, or having no reason to live
▷ Extremely sad, more anxious, agitated, or full of rage
▷ Unbearable emotional or physical pain

CHANGING BEHAVIOR, SUCH AS:
▷ Making a plan or researching ways to die
▷ Withdrawing from friends, saying good bye, giving away important items, or making a will
▷ Taking dangerous risks such as driving extremely fast
▷ Displaying extreme mood swings
▷ Eating or sleeping more or less
▷ Using drugs or alcohol more often

If these warning signs apply to you or someone you know, get help as soon as possible, particularly if the behavior is new or has increased recently.

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline
1-800-273-TALK

Crisis Text Line
Text "HELLO" to 741741

NIH National Institute of Mental Health

www.nimh.nih.gov/suicideprevention

Overview of Academic Resources cont...

➔ "According to the evidence, there are several factors that increase the likelihood that people with mental illnesses will delay or avoid seeking treatment before they actually need it. These include (1) ignorance of the symptoms of mental illnesses, (2) lack of knowledge about how to access treatment, (3) prejudice against those who have mental illnesses, and (4) expectation of discrimination." (Henderson et al., 2013, p. 777).

➔ A lot of students are required to leave their homes and cut off from their support systems, frequently for the first time. Students struggle to adapt to a new environment and also struggle to interact with diverse people. Higher education students' mental health and general wellbeing may be impacted by these difficulties. (Henderson et al., 2013).

Overview of Academic Resources cont…

- ➔ Shows that stronger awareness from faculty could be useful.
- ➔ Word of mouth is also very strong; if someone has a positive experience with the services they will tell their peers.
- ➔ Shows that advertisement has a strong presence.

TABLE 2. Sources From Which Students Learned About University Mental Health Services

Source	Frequency of use (%)	% of sample
Friend/fellow student	76	29
Advertisement	51	19
Internet	50	19
Other	49	18
Student orientation	34	13
Faculty	20	8
Physician	11	4
Resident advisor	7	3
Family member	6	2

Note. Students were allowed to choose more than 1 response, resulting in the total of percentages exceeding 100%. We categorized the following sources of information as "other": (a) campus health center, (b) assumed some services were available, (c) therapist in surrounding area, (d) article in the newspaper, (e) military superior officer, (f) sorority, (g) own efforts/research, and (h) religious leader.

Retrieved from: *Mental Health Among College Students: Do Those Who Need Services Know About and Use Them?* (Yorgason et al.)

Overview of Academic Resources cont...

➔ This shows us that the services needs to be more accomodating for those who are already busy with school, work and personal life.

➔ This shows us that there needs to be more advertising.

➔ Also shows that stigma around services needs to be addressed.

TABLE 4. Self-Reported Reasons for Not Using Campus Mental Health Services When Needed

Reason	Frequency of response (*n*)	Overall sample (%)
Not enough time	24	9
Lack of knowledge	17	6
Embarrassed	6	2
Did not think services would help	6	2
Lack of motivation	5	2
Independent approach to solving problems	5	2
Frightened or nervous	5	2
Worried about anonymity	3	1
Believed services were offered only to those with severe problems	3	1
Others	7	3
Total	81	30

Note. Respondents to this question were only those students who reported that they could have benefited from using services (while enrolled as students) but did not seek them out. We grouped responses with frequencies lower than 3 into the "other" category; these responses consisted of (a) perceived social stigma associated with counseling, (b) told by others they did not need the help, (c) currently used other services outside of the university, and (d) had had bad experiences with previous mental health providers.
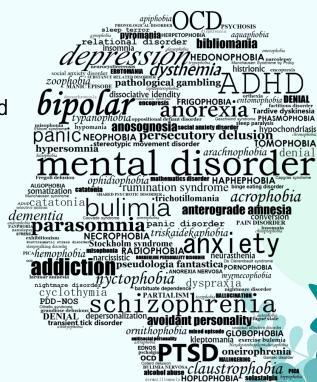
Retrieved from: *Mental Health Among College Students: Do Those Who Need Services Know About and Use Them?* (Yorgason et al.)

Overview of Academic Resources cont...

➔ Black/Minority ethnic groups, low socio-economic class, disabled, commuting and marginalized students are all classified as "hard to reach" (Shaw et al).

➔ Low socio-economic class was at the top of 'hard to each' students (Shaw et al).

➔ Milbourne draws on the links between 'hard to reach' and the experiences of low income, lack of employment, low skills, low self-esteem, poor health and housing conditions and even those living in high-crime environments (Shaw et al).

➔ In thinking about our recommendations - How can services be made to be more accessible and inclusive?

➔ Study shows that students who were mentally distressed were more likely to use services; however, some students who reported t be mentally distressed either did not know about the services or knew about the services and did not use them (Yorgason et. al).

➔ This can show that greater advertisement is needed and we need to reduce the stigma around using mental health services.

➔ In thinking about our recommendations - How can we achieve this?

Overview of Academic Resources cont...

➔ Social Marketing applies commercial marketing techniques to social issues or approaches tailored to individual campus needs or circumstances (Yorgasen et al).

➔ It has successfully addressed mental health needs in innovative ways.

➔ Ex. Variations of this approach have challenged stigma related to mental health services, encouraged college students sexual assault victims to seek services, encouraged young adults and adolescents to change mental health practices, reduced the occurence of alcohol impaired driving, and marketed mental health services to men (Yorgasen et al.)

Overview of Academic Resources cont...

➔ All faculty and staff should be knowledgeable as to the early warning signs of mental illness, especially concerning severe depression and suicide risk, and about when and how to refer students to counseling services or other campus resources as well as confidentiality and legal issues (Mowbray et al)

➔ How can this be incorporated into our recommendations?

➔ Access to mental health services should reflect a "no wrong door policy" to provide ease of entry and overcome barriers presented by prevailing attitudes toward mental illness and difficulties coping when experiencing psychiatric symptoms (Mowbray et al)

➔ Shows that students should feel welcomed in any way they choose to access these resources (i.e. going in person, receiving online help, etc)

➔ On-campus mental health services should be maximally accessible to all students—in terms of their physical location and information about function and procedures (Mowbray et al)

➔ The institution should provide widespread notification of services and short written guides about services and their accessibility, which are distributed to staff, students, and faculty through multiple channels (Mowbray et al)

➔ For students who indicate that they need urgent psychiatric care, appointments should be available within 24 hours (Mowbray et al)

Best Ways to Reach College/University Students: Overview of our General Google Search

➜ Text messages, students are often on their phones and will see a text message very quickly after getting one

➜ Information shared by professors

➜ Flyers posted around the university

➜ Social media as a lot of students use social media platforms frequently

➜ Students being able to walk in and ask questions about the services

➜ Emails with a tagline that catches their eye

Section 4
Our Recommendations

Recommendations

➔ **Professors** can briefly **talk about York's services** within their classrooms before or after their lectures. They can ask their students how they are feeling and if any of them are struggling or feel overwhelmed. Professors can then **bring awareness** to what services they can use for help. Have **faculty** be aware of warning signs of mental illnesses so they can direct students and bring awareness to services that could help them.

➔ **Text messages:** 98% of all text messages are read within three minutes (blog.trumpia.com). We can use this to our advantage and send text messages to students about services offered on York. York can also provide students with a representative that they can text straight from their phone number to make it more accessible for all students.

➔ **Student interaction boosts participation:** Have representatives of York's mental health services get out on campus and speak to students. Create pop up booths all around campus to drive conversation about services and engage with students.

Recommendations cont…

➔ **Flyers:** Post flyers around campus with a **recognizable logo.** Having a unique logo is a key part of marketing. It brings awareness to the service/product you are trying to sell/provide. On the flyers (or any other type of advertisement for that matter) provide a map that will show WHERE students can locate the services on campus reducing any confusion about where they can find them.

➔ A **strong social media presence:** Utilize the most popular social media platform including **Instagram, Facebook, Tik Tok and twitter.** Gain as many followers as possible by **posting frequently** and **using hashtags** or **ideas** that are **trending** at the moment to **increase engagement.**

➔ Marketing services in a trendy fashion will also **reduce** the **stigma** associated with using mental health services, which is a big reason why some students may not be engaging with the services provided. Give an **incentive** to become a follower (i.e. For every person that follows they will be inputted into a draw to win a prize). Get someone with a strong following to **promote** York's services on their account.

➔ Have the ability for students to **walk in** and talk to someone right away. Having to book an appointment might steer people away from using the services.

➔ **Emails:** Students receive lots of emails, so using a **intriguing tagline** will most likely incline them to open the email and read it through.

Section 5

Debriefing our experience

What was your greatest challenge?

➔ Time Management
➔ With other classes, jobs, and other responsibilities, staying on time and sticking to deadlines were sometimes difficult
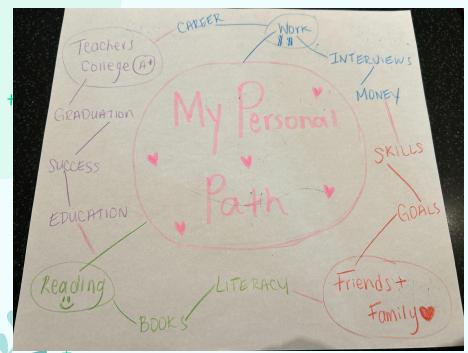
What was your greatest discovery?

➔ How well we worked with one another!
➔ Building connections with other future educators is so significant - we can rely on one another in our future work

How can you apply this experience to your life?

➔ Mental health awareness will be important to each of us even after this project is finished
➔ As educators our job is not only to teach - but to ensure the well-being of each student

What are you most proud of?

➔ We are proud of what we produced!
➔ We are proud of our communication with one another

Section 6

A look at our group members
"my paths"

Our Personal Paths...
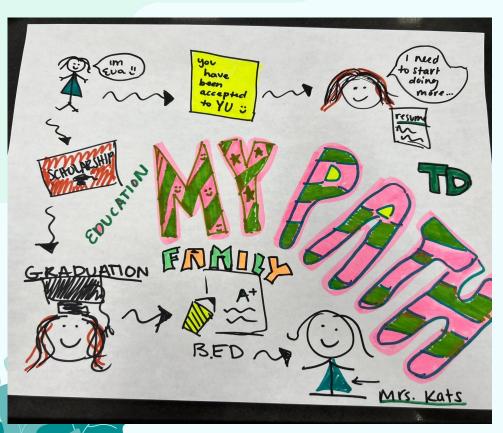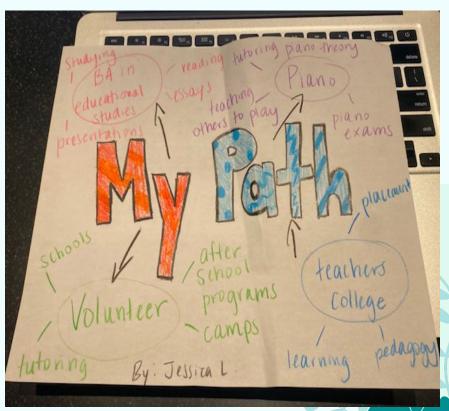

Victoria Gazza

Krista Williams

Our Personal Paths...

Eva Katsigiannis

Jessica Labrozzi

Our Personal Paths...

Jasmine Marok

Jahanvi Goswami

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