Promoting a Culture of Mental Wellness

Department of Biostatistics
JHSPH Mental health Grad Network (MhGN)
Dec 10, 2019
Speakers

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Creating a sustained culture of mental health awareness and student wellbeing at JHSPH by...

• Seeking out **best mental health practices**
• Supporting current mental health efforts with a **unified student voice**
• Maintaining a **repository of effective strategies** for departments and student groups to implement and adapt to their specific needs.
Why Focus on Mental Health?

Why focus on mental health?

• Prevent student suicide
• Retain faculty, staff, students, and post-docs
• Enhance education and academic performance
• Improve success and reputation of programs & University
• Promote and model healthy behaviors at all levels
Three Sections

1. Orientation
2. Intro to Active Listening (not today)
3. Resource Refresher
Scope of this Session

What this is...

A brief introduction
Statistics about mental wellness among students and faculty
Brief primer on communicating empathically
Refresher on resources

What this is not...

Training for how to be a therapist or mental health provider
Comprehensive
Interactive
Future Workshops

Faculty
Faculty will have a future, interactive session with JHSAP to practice identifying mental distress among students, active listening, and making referrals!

Students
TA Training will take place at the start of the 2020-2021 academic year

Will comprise an interactive session to practice active listening + specific tailoring to the TA experience.
Orientation
Pervasive Issue for Students

Among JHU Grad Students:
• 69% reported feeling overwhelmed or depressed to the point of being functionally impaired

At JHSPH, among those who sought care:
• 75% reported it was to primarily treat being overwhelmed/depressed

JHU Mental Health Task Force report (2017)
Pervasive Issue for Faculty

**United Kingdom**¹,²

- **32%** reported clinical anxiety
- **53%** self-reported psychological ill-health severe enough for intervention

**Australia**³

- **44%** self-reported severe psychological distress

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Diverse Experiences and Needs

- Women
  - Sexual harassment & violence
- People of Color
  - Racism & discrimination
- LGBTQ+
  - Marginalization & homophobia
- International Students
  - Cultural differences & language barriers
- First Gen Students
  - Economic challenges
- Individuals with Disabilities
  - Stigma
Ways in which mental health struggles affect us:

“It affects everything.”

“A person can work well ... but still feel miserable. That feeling diminishes the “success” of the person’s life and human experience. Also, people can often work better when they feel more content.”
You “may know providers, if they are in a similar field”
“Concern that if found out, seeking help could affect careers”
“overwork is glorified”
“not comfortable talking to adviser.”
“the [Hopkins] culture does not encourage self care”
“language could be a barrier for international students”
“so as long as we still produce, it doesn’t matter how we feel”
But there's Hope: Mentorship makes a difference!

Graduate students who felt their advisors provided mentorship, support, and valued them were less likely to suffer from anxiety and depression!

(Evans 2018)
Communication Strategies
Active Listening Skills

Questioning
Paraphrasing
Reflecting
Summarizing
Resource Refresher
Connecting Students with Resources

1. Emergencies
2. On Campus Resources
Act immediately if someone...

- Makes suicidal statements
- Threatens others or property
- Is unresponsive or disconnected from reality
- Is incoherent or passed out
- Or if the situation otherwise feels threatening / dangerous

Call 911, walk them to the emergency department, call campus security (410-955-5585), or JHSAP (443-287-7000) for consultation
Emergencies: Suicide

Share your concern and listen.

It’s ok to ask:

“Are you having thoughts of suicide?”
“How are you thinking of harming yourself?”

If someone expresses desire or intent to commit suicide, do not leave.

Involve them in the decision making about getting help.

Call:

- If imminent, 911 and campus security (410-955-5585)
- JHSAP for support for the student and for you (443-287-7000)
- National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1-800-273-TALK(8255)
- Baltimore Crisis Response: 410-433-5175
Support for Students

Mental Health Resources on-campus

• **JHSAP** (emergencies, triage, goal-oriented counseling, referrals)
• **UHS, Mental Health** (treatment)
• **UHS, Wellness** (prevention)

**Support for non-students will be covered by Fallon in the next presentation.**
Department Specific Resources

Ben Ackerman
Biostatistics
PhD Student

Sophie Bérubé
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PhD Student

Karen Bandeen-Roche, PhD
Biostatistics
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Margaret Taub, PhD
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Mary Joy Argo
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Fallon Bachman, MBA
Biostatistics
Administrator

Kyra Grantz
Biostatistics and Epidemiology
PhD and MHS student
Take Home Resources
Take away resources

• Red Folder: Resource Guide
• How to Refer to JHSAP (4 types of referrals)
• Suggested Syllabus Language
• Taking Action and What to Say Cheat Sheet
  • Prioritize three items to take action on and keep handy to review active listening skills
• Slides from today (will be made available)
• Mental health Grad Network Working Group: Ben Ackerman, Sophie Berube, Calliope Holingue, Wendy Ingram, Angela Lin, Kaitlyn Harper, Rachel Presskreischer, Leslie Wang, Brooke Jarrett, Kyra Grantz
• JHSPH Steering Committee: Karen Bandeen-Roche, Maria Merritt, Bill Moss
• JHSAP: Hannah Fegley, Mary Vincitore
• Biostatistics Department: Fallon Bachman, Margaret Taub
• Other JHU folks: Karen Swartz, Holly Wilcox, Daniele Fallin, Sarah Cunningham, SOURCE and many more
• UC Berkeley: Aaron Cohen, Amy Honigman, Matthew Welch