



# Mental Health Matters

Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS)

Spring 2007  
A Healthy Campus

## A Healthy Campus

**HEALTH** -- There are many interpretations of what is meant by health, but we choose to believe that good health is not merely the absence of disease or symptoms.

Multiple variants influence college students' academic achievement. One variable that affects all students is health. Students regularly report health factors as high on the list of issues affecting their academic performance. ***It is common knowledge among student affairs and health professionals that there is a correlation between students' health, academic achievement, and completion of a degree. Given these facts, institutional efforts to ensure a healthy campus environment can have an impact on student success and potentially affect retention.***

The incidence of mental and emotional health issues continues to increase on college campuses and often have more of a negative effect on student success than do physical health issues. The increasing prevalence of mental and emotional health issues likely contributes to the continuing rise in student risk-taking behaviors. These behaviors, in turn, are often detrimental to physical health...an ongoing cycle.

Traditional models of health care have emphasized the treatment of illness (mostly physical) and focused on the individual's responsibility for maintaining good health. The effect of the environment and community on the individual health and well being is largely ignored in this model. To successfully address the health of today's college students, the focus must move beyond individuals and their behaviors to establishing a healthy campus community. ***Campus health concerns need to expand from the student health center to integration throughout the institution's various systems.***

## The Ecological Perspective

The National Association of Student Personnel Administrators' (NASPA) Health Education and Leadership Program proposes an ecological approach to understanding the campus environment that can help assist campus leaders address health-related issues to achieve a healthy campus that is community based and not just individually focused.

Campus ecology is an innovative approach that merges student affairs and health paradigms to provide a broader understanding of campus health and its determinants (Strange and Banning, 2001). In this construct, health is interwoven among all aspects of college life and campus infrastructures. Campus ecology is not a blueprint or a recipe for improving an institution's health. ***It is a new way to view the connections among health, learning, and the campus structure that explores relationships between and among individuals and the learning communities that comprise the campus environment.***

(Adapted from 'Leadership for a Healthy Campus: An Ecological Approach for Student Success'. Full text is available at <http://www.naspa.org/help/hhekc/ecology.cfm>)

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***“Health is active, alive, and vital. It is the presence of well being and dignity in the lives of individuals, communities, and cultures. It is the holistic integration of the six dimensions of wellness - physical, emotional, intellectual, social, spiritual, and environmental.”***

## Partnership for Health: the IUPUI Wellness Coalition

### Mission

The mission of the IUPUI Wellness Coalition is to promote all dimensions of wellness by organizing and supporting activities on campus to enhance the quality of life for IUPUI students, faculty, and staff.

### Vision

The Wellness Coalition is recognized as a leader in promoting and advancing IUPUI's wellness culture.

### Core Values

- Promoting and advancing personal and professional development in all aspects of wellness
- Collaborative and cooperative relationships
- Creativity and innovation
- Providing resources to meet the wellness needs of the IUPUI community

### Partnerships

- IUPUI Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS)
- IUPUI Health Services
- IUPUI Campus and Community Life
- IUPUI Work/Life Balance: Human Resources Administration
- IUPUI Department of Intramural and Recreational Sports
- IU Center of Excellence in Women's Health
- IUSM Department of Public Health
- Smoke Free IUPUI
- IUPUI Office for Women
- School of Nursing

To join the coalition, learn more about Wellness events around campus, please visit [http://www.iupui.edu/~iupuishc/wel\\_coal.html](http://www.iupui.edu/~iupuishc/wel_coal.html)

## Factors affecting Individual Health and Academic Performance:

- Stress – 29%
- Having a cold/sore throat – 22%
- Sleep disturbances – 21%
- Concern for troubled friend/family member – 16%
- Relationship difficulties – 15%
- Depression and anxiety – 11%
- Alcohol use – 10%

(Nationwide study of 28, 258 college students: American College Health Association [ACHA], 2002)

## Promoting Healthcare: Working with Diverse Populations at CAPS

***Rather than treating people the way we want to be treated, we treat our students the way they want to be treated.*** It takes genuine empathy, listening, understanding, accepting, and an open-mind in realizing that each culture is different and has a particular system in which they prefer to be treated.

Improving relationship across cultures – some points we consider:

- Culture determines the roles for polite, caring behavior and will formulate one's concept of a satisfactory relationship.
- Lack of eye contact, asking questions about treatment, or credentials, do not always equate impoliteness and/or insult.
- Ask clarifying questions without assumptions, judgment, or interpretation.
- Culture plays a role in forming one's beliefs from which, in turn, assign meaning to one's experience.

When working with interpreters: some tips --

- Plan what to say ahead of time. Do not confuse the interpreter by backing up, rephrasing, or hesitating.
- Use language the interpreter can handle; avoid abstractions, idiomatic expressions, similes, and metaphors.
- Use short questions and comments; avoid technical terminology and professional jargon.
- Be patient. Careful interpretation often requires that long explanatory phrases be used.
- Learn basic words or sentences in the target language (ASL, non-English); emphasized by repetition and speak slowly, not loudly (Putsch II RW. Cross-Cultural Communication. JAMA 1985).

## New Data on Suicidal Behaviors in Black Americans

The prevalence of attempted suicide among black Americans is higher than previously reported, but near the levels reported for the general population. However, certain risk factors for suicide in this group differ from the general U.S. population.

Suicide is the 11th leading cause of death in the United States, with older white men having the highest suicide rate. Significant increases since the mid-1980s in reported suicide and suicidal thoughts and actions among young blacks have highlighted an emerging and serious health issue. Sean Joe, M.S.W., Ph.D., of the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor and colleagues sought to identify the prevalence of suicidal thinking and attempts among black Americans in order to document the burden and advance development of interventions to prevent suicide in this population.

In reviewing data from 5,181 African Americans and Caribbean Americans ages 18 and older, the researchers found that the lifetime estimate for attempted suicide among African Americans and Caribbean Americans is 4.1 percent, higher than the 2.3 percent<sup>1</sup> reported previously, but similar to the 4.6 percent<sup>2</sup> for the general population.<sup>3</sup> In addition to prevalence, the researchers assessed risk factors for suicidal thoughts (ideation), plans, and attempts among black Americans. *The presence of an anxiety disorder was the strongest risk factor compared with other mental or substance use disorders, which differs from other studies in the general population where depression is often the strongest predictor.* Caribbean black men and young people aged 15-24 years had the highest prevalence of attempted suicide and the risk of suicide attempts was highest during the first year following suicidal ideation. Marital status, often closely linked to suicidal behavior, was not a significant predictor of suicide planning or attempts.

(Joe S, Baser RE, Breeden G, Neighbors HW, Jackson JS. [Prevalence of and Risk Factors for Lifetime Suicide Attempts Among Blacks in the United States](#). JAMA. 2006 Nov 1;296(17):2112-2123.)

## Referring Students to CAPS

When it is determined that support alone is not adequate and professional counseling may be beneficial:

- It is usually best to speak privately with the student, and directly express concerns.
- It is not advisable to attempt to coerce or trick the student in to seeking counseling.
- Make it clear that the recommendation represents a best judgment based on observations of the student's behaviors.
- Be specific regarding the behaviors that raise concerns.
- The option must be left open for the student to accept or refuse counseling EXCEPT in emergencies (e.g. suicidal or homicidal intent).
- Depending on circumstances, it may be appropriate to obtain the student's permission to contact CAPS while he or she is present and/or offer to walk the student to CAPS to be seen immediately.
- Finally, a follow-up is recommended with the student at a later date to indicate a continued interest, even if he or she did not accept the attempted referral.

**REMEMBER** to get involved within your comfort level and capacity to help.

For an appointment, the student may contact CAPS by:

Phone - 317-274-2548

Email - [capsindy@iupui.edu](mailto:capsindy@iupui.edu)

Visit - Union Building, room 418

## Guidelines for Recommended Counseling

CAPS discourages the requiring of students to receive mandatory counseling as a condition of campus disciplinary proceedings. We recognize, however, the importance of our supportive and consultative roles in promoting student success and the health and safety of the campus community.

The following guidelines are designed to assist when faculty or staff members recommend counseling, assessment and/or evaluation for students due to **specific concerns and/or behaviors**. Please contact CAPS staff at 274-2548 or [capsindy@iupui.edu](mailto:capsindy@iupui.edu) with any questions regarding this process.

1. Discuss the specific concerns and recommendations with the student.
2. Complete the forms: 1. Recommended Counseling Agreement, and 2. Authorization for Release of Confidential Information (Download the required forms from CAPS website: <http://life.iupui.edu/caps/refer.asp>) and review the content in detail with the student. Obtain the required signatures of both **faculty/staff and the student**.
3. Clarify what feedback and/or reports will be required or requested from CAPS.
4. Be clear about the consequences if the student does not comply with the recommendation or invokes his or her right to confidentiality and does not give consent for feedback to be released.
5. Provide a specific timeline for the student to contact CAPS for tracking purposes.
6. Inform the student that when he or she presents at CAPS, they will be expected to show a picture ID for verification of identity.
7. Review and discuss the specific expectations related to scheduling, attendance, and cooperation with the referral, as well as the consequences of non-compliance.
8. Fax completed forms to CAPS at 278-0948. Please notify the office by phone at 274-2548 prior to transmitting.
9. If the student needs immediate assistance, contact CAPS' staff and proceed immediately to CAPS: Union Building, room 418.

CAPS reserves the right to assess and determine the appropriate level of care. In the event the student's needs and/or services recommended are beyond the scope of CAPS' practice, the party making the referral, as well as the student in question, will be appropriately informed. In such cases, the student will be assisted with referral to other mental health care providers

**CAPS Upcoming Events:**

**Eating Disorders Awareness**

Tuesday, February 6, 2007

10am – 3pm UC Lobby

**Anxiety Screening**

Thursday, April 19, 2007

10am – 4pm UC Lobby

**Counseling and  
Psychological Services**

620 Union Dr. Suite 418  
Indianapolis, IN  
46202

**Phone:** 317-274-2548

**Fax:** 317-278-0948

**Email:** [capsindy@iupui.edu](mailto:capsindy@iupui.edu)

**Web:** <http://life.iupui.edu/caps/>

*The Division of  
Student Life and  
Diversity*