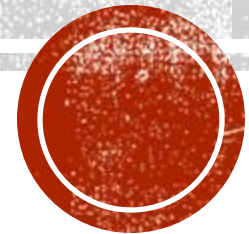


SUPPORTING MENTAL HEALTH IN COLLEGE STUDENTS

Presented by:

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OUR DISCUSSION TODAY

- Current mental health trends on college campuses
- Impact of mental health on academic performance
- Best practices to support college students' mental health

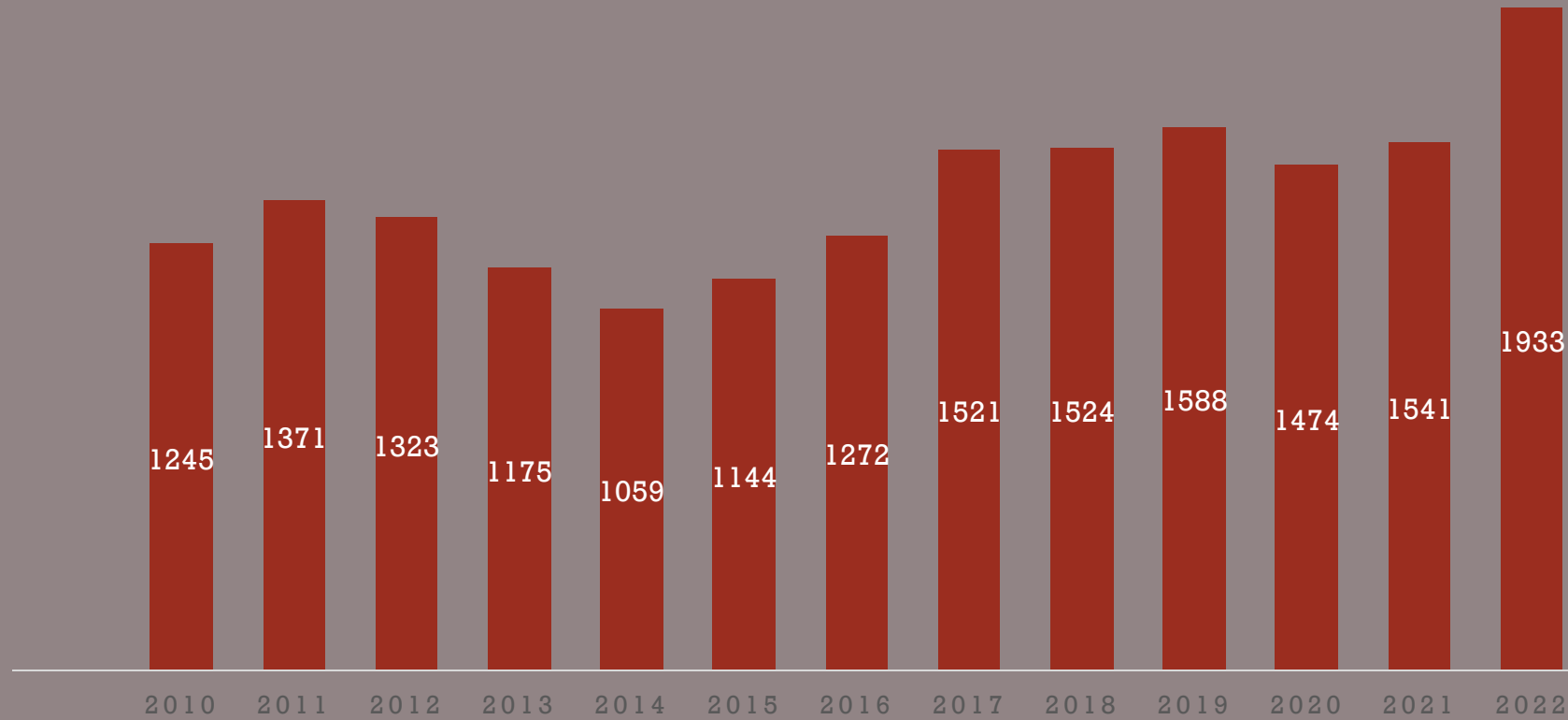


THE CHRONICLE of Higher Education

- A 'Crisis' of Student Anxiety? - The challenges to student mental health are real. They are also decades in the making
- Colleges Should Spend Covid-Relief Funds on Mental-Health Support, Education Department Says
- The Mental Health Crisis on Campus
- Trends in College Student Mental Health



NUMBER OF COUNSELING SESSIONS



PERFECT STORM



Collective trauma refers to the impact of a traumatic experience that affects and involves entire groups of people, communities, or societies. Collective trauma is extraordinary in that not only can it bring distress and negative consequences to individuals but in that it can also change the entire fabric of a community (Erikson, 1976).

Trauma left unprocessed affects individuals, communities, and the nation.

- Pandemic
- Social unrest
- Mass shootings
- Political upheaval
- Weather-related disasters
- Inflation/Rising prices



ADDITIONAL FACTORS

- **Psychiatric Disorders in Emerging Adulthood** – anxiety, substance use, mood disorders, personality disorders, disorders with psychotic features
- **Academic Stress** – demanding course loads, studying, time management, classroom competition, financial concerns, family/personal pressures, adapting to a new environment



ALARMING STATISTICS!

- **Mental health is now one of the top reasons many college students are considering dropping out of college.**

About a **third (32%)** of currently enrolled students pursuing a bachelor's degree report they have considered withdrawing from their program for a semester or more in the past six months due to **emotional stress**.

(*2022 State of Higher Education Study sponsored by the Gallup and the Lumina Foundation)

- Between 2020 and 2021, **over 60%** of college students met the criteria for at least one mental illness — double the rate of 2013.

(*Healthy Minds Network/Journal of Affective Disorders)





U.S. Surgeon General Dr. Vivek Murthy

In December 2021, Dr. Murthy issued a Surgeon General's Advisory on Protecting Youth Mental Health.

“Mental health is not just a side subject we need to address. It’s foundational. **It is our fuel.** It takes a toll and affects whether we **show up** or build healthy relationships.”



IMPACT OF MENTAL HEALTH ON ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

- Marked decline in quality of course work, class participation, quality of paper, test results
- Increased absence from class or failure to turn in work
- Chronic fatigue and low energy
- Lack of motivation
- Attention and memory difficulties
- Drastic change in sleep patterns, eating habits, and personal hygiene
- Nervousness and excessive worry
- Increased agitation and low tolerance for frustration





Resiliency:

Ability to find ways to cope with challenges constructively, accept what has happened, adapt, and eventually move forward.

Can be developed and maintained over time!



RESILIENCY FACTORS

- Persistence
- Motivation
- Goal Orientation
- Optimism
- Confidence
- Cognitive reframing
- Emotional regulation
- Insight
- Self-efficacy
- Connection to others
- Helping others
- Well-balanced lifestyle



BEST PRACTICES TO SUPPORT STUDENT MENTAL HEALTH

1) **Include a statement on mental health in the syllabus**

- Sets expectations
- Normalizes the need to seek help
- Emphasizes the link between mental health and academic success

2) **Be open about your own experience with overcoming challenges**

- Helps students understand that setbacks are a normal part of the educational process (and life in general)
- Promotes resilience (recover from stress despite challenging life events) and supports mental well-being
- Allows for authenticity



BEST PRACTICES TO SUPPORT STUDENT MENTAL HEALTH

3) Establish academic conditions, inside and outside of the classroom, that promote mental well-being and social connectedness

- Talk about mental health openly to destigmatize it
- Share ways that you practice self-care and encourage students to share how they practice self-care as well
- Find ways to build connections with students
- Listen and make yourself available
- Empathize: share in someone else's feelings and emotions and show concern towards that person
- Be flexible



BEST PRACTICES TO SUPPORT STUDENT MENTAL HEALTH

4) Identify and refer students experiencing emotional distress

<https://www.ulm.edu/counselingcenter/>

Faculty, staff, and peers are uniquely positioned to notice patterns and express concern about a student's well-being.



CONCLUSION



“If we seize this moment and lead with inclusion, kindness, and respect, we can lay the foundation for a healthier, more resilient, and more fulfilled nation.”

- *US Surgeon General, Dr. Vivek Murthy*

