

Why it matters...

For most people, worries are a normal part of life. But chronic worries, whether about finances, academics or relationships, tend to increase the level of stress we experience and may have a harmful impact on our physical and emotional wellbeing.

University students are often faced with many challenges beyond academics, including living on their own for the first time, managing finances, being separated from family and friends, and needing to create new social networks.

Taking some measures to protect and/or enhance one's psychological resilience may help you cope with life's many challenges, as well as times of increased stress, disappointment and adversity.

What you can do...

According to the American Psychological Association (APA), there are a number of steps that people can take to enhance their psychological resilience — the ability to “bounce back” from disappointment or adversity and to cope with change and daily challenges:

- Develop and maintain caring, trusting and supportive relationships, whether with friends, family or romantic partners.
- Develop effective problem-solving skills and the ability to set realistic goals.
- Seek out opportunities for self-discovery.
- Nurture a positive view of one's self.
- Maintain a hopeful outlook.
- Keep things in perspective; avoid seeing most things as a crisis, or impossible to change.
- Give and accept help.
- Take care of your physical and emotional health.

(Source: www.apahelpcenter.org)

Resources:

- CAPS • Health Service • Health Promotion Programs
- Accessibility Services • Academic Success Centre

Sources of financial aid:

Government assistance through the Ontario Student Assistance Plan (OSAP), scholarships, disability bursaries, and grants. For more details, check out the following resources:

- Admissions & Awards: www.adm.utoronto.ca
- APUS: www.apus.utoronto.ca
- UTSU: www.utsu.ca
- SGS: www.sgs.utoronto.ca

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO HEALTH & WELLNESS SERVICES

Student Life Programs & Services has a number of services dedicated to supporting student health and wellness.

ACCESSIBILITY SERVICES

The professional staff works to facilitate the inclusion of students with disabilities in all aspects of university life. Services are provided to students with a documented disability, be it physical, sensory, a learning disability, or a mental health disorder. Students with temporary disabilities, such as a broken arm, are also eligible.

Hours: Monday to Friday, 9:00am to 5:00pm

Learning Disabilities Unit

Robarts Library, 130 St. George Street, 1st Floor

Phone: 416-978-8060 • **Fax:** 416-978-8246

TTY: 416-978-1902

Email: disability.services@utoronto.ca

Health Disabilities Unit

215 Huron Street, 9th Floor, Suite 939

Phone: 416-978-7677 • **Fax:** 416-978-5729

Email: as.healthunit@utoronto.ca

Web: www.accessibility.studentlife.utoronto.ca

ACADEMIC SUCCESS CENTRE (ASC)

Koffler Student Services Building, 214 College Street, Main Floor

The professional staff of the ASC come from diverse backgrounds to assist students with developing skills, strategies and competencies to succeed academically. Students can self-refer.

Hours: Monday to Friday, 9:00am to 5:00pm

Phone: 416-978-7970

Email: mail.asc@utoronto.ca

Web: www.asc.utoronto.ca

COUNSELLING AND PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES (CAPS)

Koffler Student Services Building, 214 College Street, Main Floor

The multidisciplinary staff offers assessment, treatment and referrals for a wide range of emotional and psychological issues. In addition to individual therapy, CAPS also offers group therapy,

assault counselling and education, and couples therapy, as well as workshops on a variety of topics. Assault Counselling & Education services are available to students who are in crisis as a result of sexual assault, partner abuse and other forms of abuse or violence. Services are covered by OHIP, UHIP or other provincial health insurance plans. Students can self-refer.

Hours: Monday to Friday (except Tuesday), 9:00am to 5:00pm
Tuesday, 9:00am to 7:00pm

Summer Hours: Monday to Friday, 9:00am to 4:30pm
Tuesday, 9:00am to 6:30pm

Phone: 416-978-8070 • **Fax:** 416-978-7341

Assault Counsellor: 416-978-0174

Web: www.caps.utoronto.ca

HEALTH SERVICE

Koffler Student Services Building, 214 College Street, 2nd Floor

The multidisciplinary team offers students the same services as a family doctor's office and more, including travel health medicine, sexual health care and counselling, as well as discounted prices on birth control products. Students can book appointments over the phone, in person or online, or drop in if needing to be seen the same day. Services are covered by OHIP, UHIP or other provincial health insurance plans.

Hours: Monday to Friday, 9:00am to 5:00pm
Tuesday & Wednesday, 9:00am to 7:00pm

Summer Hours: Monday to Friday, 9:00am to 4:30pm
Tuesday & Wednesday, 9:00am to 6:30pm

Phone: 416-978-8030 • **Fax:** 416-971-2089

Web: www.healthservice.utoronto.ca

HEALTH PROMOTION PROGRAMS

Koffler Student Services Building, 214 College Street, 2nd Floor

Health Promotion Programs works to foster a campus culture that values health and wellness. Programming is aimed at supporting students in their efforts to cultivate healthy attitudes and behaviours, while achieving their academic goals.

Health Promotion Coordinator

Phone: 416-978-8044

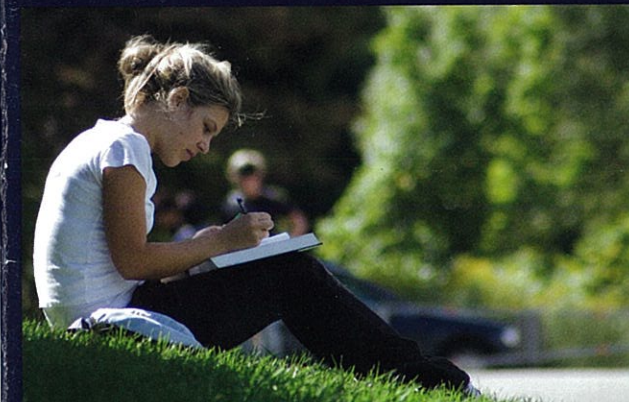
Email: kathryn.haworth@utoronto.ca

Community Health Coordinator

Phone: 416-978-8037

Email: judy.vorderbrugge@utoronto.ca

health & wellness



helping students make the most of
their university experience



UNIVERSITY OF
TORONTO

Student Life Programs & Services

HEALTH & WELLNESS



Wellness refers to one's overall physical, emotional, intellectual, spiritual, social and economic condition, as well as the impact experienced as a result of one's environment and occupation. Wellness does not refer simply

to the absence of illness, nor does it suggest that someone with a chronic illness can not be and feel well. Most university students share a common goal — academic success. The capacity to learn and be academically successful is greatly influenced by your physical and psychological health.

Whether in first year or fourth, students face many challenges. Despite the demands and stress of university life, it is possible to find a balance in your life that will help to promote overall wellness. When you're not feeling your best, there are a number of services on campus that may assist you in getting back on track. The following are just a few suggestions for how you might go about nurturing healthy attitudes and behaviours to support you in achieving your personal and academic goals, as well as information about our health and wellness services.

STRESS

What U of T students say...

35% report that stress negatively impacts their academic performance.*

Why it matters...

Chronic stress can lead to serious health problems, including depression, high blood pressure, sleep problems, and an increased susceptibility to colds and flu. It can also impair your ability to concentrate, retain and recall information.

What you can do...

- **Focus on things you're able to change:** there is little benefit, and lots of stress, worrying about things that are beyond your control.
- **Focus on the positives/challenge negative thinking:** dwelling on negatives can zap what energy we have to deal with the stress.
- **Build a network of social support:** this offers important benefits, both physical and psychological.
- **Self-care:** coping with life's many challenges is more difficult when we are not physically well, so take care of your physical health.

- **Take care of your relationships:** those around us can be affected by our stress and then the relationships can become part of the problem, rather than part of the solution.
- **It's okay to say 'No':** learn to delegate or accept help.
- **Learn to prioritize:** take on one task at a time.
- **Look after your health:** enjoy nutritious foods, get regular moderate exercise and sufficient sleep, cut down on caffeine, alcohol, and energy drinks, and if you smoke, try to quit.
- **Acknowledge your successes along the way:** and remember to reward yourself.
- **Take time to relax and have fun:** be with friends, and enjoy life outside the classroom.

Resources:

- CAPS • Health Service • Health Promotion Programs
- Accessibility Services • Academic Success Centre

SLEEP PROBLEMS

What U of T students say...

22% report that problems with sleep negatively impacts their academic performance.*

Why it matters...

Sleep is key to your health, safety, performance, and quality of life. Research suggests that reduced sleep may be linked to health problems including obesity, depression and anxiety.

What you can do...

Practice good sleep hygiene:

- Try to go to bed and get up each day at the same time, including weekends.
- If you're unable to fall asleep, don't stay in bed. Get up and do something relaxing (read a book, meditate, listen to soothing music) and try to sleep again when you start to feel drowsy. Gradually, as you establish a sleep pattern, you will start to feel tired at the same time each night, and awake at the same time each morning.
- Do not take naps.
- Avoid alcohol within 2 hours of bedtime.
- Avoid caffeine and nicotine within 4-6 hours of bedtime; they are both stimulants.
- Avoid strenuous exercise/activity (other than sex) within 3 hours of bedtime.
- Avoid eating a heavy meal close to bedtime.
- Sleep environment should be conducive to sleep - quiet, dark and comfortably cool or warm.

Resources:

- CAPS • Health Service • Health Promotion Programs
- Academic Success Centre

DEPRESSION & ANXIETY

What U of T students say...

25% report that anxiety, and 15% report that depression, negatively impacts their academic performance.*

Why it matters...

Untreated depression or anxiety can interfere with almost all aspects of your life, including your sleep habits, appetite, energy level, ability to concentrate and memorize, maintain relationships, and perform at work or school. It can also lead to serious physical illness and suicide.

What you can do...

If someone you know is struggling with depression or anxiety:

- Learn about the illness.
- Express your concerns, and listen.
- Facilitate getting professional help, if that's what's needed. If appropriate, approach your friend's family or close friends for support.
- Encourage your friend to avoid unnecessary stress, to strive for a healthy lifestyle (nutritious diet, exercise, adequate sleep), and to avoid the use of substances like alcohol.
- Be supportive, be patient, but know when you need to take care of your own needs.
- If your friend talks about wanting to hurt him/herself or suicide, don't leave them alone, get immediate help. Don't try to handle it on your own, and don't promise to keep it a "secret."

If you think you might be depressed or struggling with an anxiety or panic disorder:

Talk to someone. Depression and anxiety are highly treatable. Get professional help, sooner rather than later. Early intervention may result in better treatment outcomes.

Resources:

- CAPS • Health Service • Health Promotion Programs
- Accessibility Services • Academic Success Centre

COLDS & FLU

What U of T students say...

20% report that colds/flu/sore throat negatively impacted their academic performance in the last year.*

Why it matters...

Colds usually last 3 to 5 days, but a flu can rob you of your energy for up to 2 weeks. There are ways to minimize your risk of experiencing either.

What you can do...

Taking care of your health may help your body fight off a cold or flu virus:

- Get adequate rest (7-9 hours/night).
- Eat a nutrient-rich diet (high in fibre, sufficient protein, including complex carbohydrates, low in saturated fats, 7 to 10 servings of fruits and vegetables each day).
- Minimize stress.
- Limit alcohol intake.
- If you smoke, try to quit!
- Get moderate regular exercise (at least 30 minutes/day or most days of the week).

All of the above will help to strengthen your immune system and help your body fight off a cold or flu virus.

Stop the spread of germs:

- Wash or sanitize your hands frequently.
- Avoid sharing personal items and avoid contact with others who are sick.

Get the flu shot:

The flu vaccine is available free at the Health Service. Because the flu vaccine changes each year, you need to get vaccinated each year, usually in the fall. Check the website in the fall for dates and times.

Resources:

- Health Service • Health Promotion Programs

WORRIES/CHALLENGES

What U of T students say...

Students report difficulty handling the following situations within the last year:

Academics - 53%

Career-related issues - 33%

Finances - 31%

Intimate relationships - 31%

Family problems - 29%

Other social relationships - 23%

Health of family member or partner - 19%

(continued on reverse...)

* Based on results of the National College Health Assessment (ACHANCHA) spring 2009 survey of University of Toronto students. Percentages quoted refer to respondents to the survey. Negative impact includes: received an incomplete; dropped a course; or received a lower grade in a class, on an exam, or on an important project.

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Prepared by Health Promotion Programs