



32% of College Students Are Not Comfortable Asking for Mental Health Assistance

However, the Majority of Students Are Comfortable Helping Peers With Their Mental Health Needs

May 23, 2022 (Seattle, WA) - According to a new college mental health survey to be released Monday from BestColleges.com, 32% of undergraduates are not comfortable asking for assistance with their mental health needs. The survey of 1,000 students currently enrolled in a bachelor's or associate degree program found that 45% are worried about one or more of their student peers' well-being. The majority (60%) of students say they are comfortable helping student peers address their mental health needs.

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<https://www.bestcolleges.com/research/college-students-mental-health-assistance/>

Most undergraduates (53%) report they spend time and make an effort to improve or maintain their mental health nearly every day. Nearly half (46%) of college students rate their mental health as "poor" or "fair" compared to 32% who rate it as "good," and less than a quarter (22%) who rate it as "very good" or "excellent."

An overwhelming majority (75%) consider themselves to be self-aware and can often recognize when their mental health is suffering. However, only 41% say they take immediate steps to improve their mental health when needed. Most students (52%) are comfortable telling a student peer when they feel their peer needs to address their mental health.

When asked what has had the biggest impact on improving and maintaining their mental health, 35% of students say engaging in self-care activities makes a difference. The top five forms of self-care students engage in include spending time on hobbies (53%), treating

themselves to something they find enjoyable or pleasurable (49%), physical activity (43%), social interaction with other people (42%), and spending time outdoors (41%).

"Social interaction as self-care wasn't much of an option this time a year ago, and social isolation was experienced by many students due to circumstances caused by the pandemic," said Melissa Venable, Ph.D., education advisor for BestColleges.com.

"Opportunities for socialization are such an essential part of the traditional, on-campus experience, and they were nonexistent for a portion of these students' time in college. The return of events, dropped mask mandates, and warm weather have helped facilitate this important self-care activity in 2022."

Consistent with last year's study, students overwhelmingly consider friends (65%) and parents or guardians (56%) to be part of their support systems. Less than 1 in 5 students (17%) say a mental health professional or therapist is included, and 12% say a counselor at their school is someone they can turn to for support.

To improve overall college student mental health, 36% of students said they would be willing to receive or encourage the offering of educational seminars or training on mental health issues, and 33% would advocate for student needs in this area using their personal platform.

Over a quarter of students (31%) said they would be willing to participate on a student advisory committee to explore student mental health needs and develop school programming to address them. Additionally, a quarter of students said they would be willing to work to identify and secure new mental health funding sources (26%) and become a peer counselor (25%).

Methodology

The survey was conducted from April 28-May 3, 2022. Student respondents were fielded by Lucid LLC. Survey participants included 1,000 currently enrolled undergraduate students nationwide. Respondents were 18-26 years of age, enrolled at a college or university, and pursuing a bachelor's or associate degree. The respondents for the survey were screened by various quality checks, including systems like Relevant ID, and responses were manually reviewed to ensure consistency and accuracy.

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