Strategic Implementation of Mental Health Training on College Campuses

Presented By:

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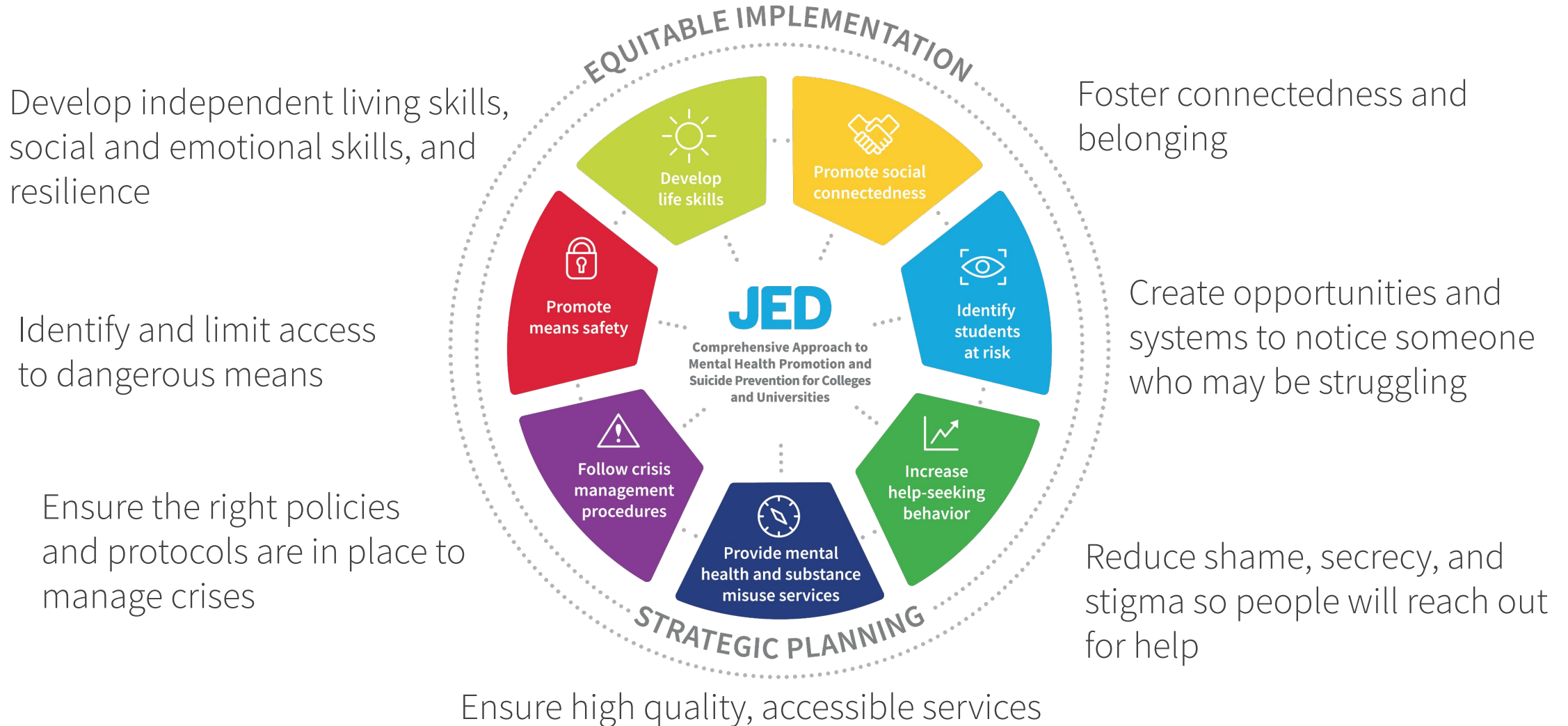**Nicole Mullis, LPC, NCC**
JED Campus Advisor

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Introductions

- Name (Pronouns if you wish)
- Role
- School
- What are you hoping to learn during today's workshop?

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Our Comprehensive Approach for promoting mental health and creating sustainable change guides our work.

EQUITABLE IMPLEMENTATION

STRATEGIC PLANNING

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Comprehensive Approach to
Mental Health Promotion and
Suicide Prevention for Colleges
and Universities

Develop life skills

Promote social connectedness

Identify students at risk

Increase help-seeking behavior

Provide mental health and substance misuse services

Follow crisis management procedures

Promote means safety

Develop independent living skills, social and emotional skills, and resilience

Foster connectedness and belonging

Identify and limit access to dangerous means

Create opportunities and systems to notice someone who may be struggling

Ensure the right policies and protocols are in place to manage crises

Reduce shame, secrecy, and stigma so people will reach out for help

Ensure high quality, accessible services

Source: JED / SPRC Comprehensive Approach to Mental Health Promotion and Suicide Prevention

Equitable Implementation Framework

- JED's **Equitable Implementation Framework** ensures that the needs of students who are potentially marginalized and/or underserved due to societal and structural inequities and campus-specific community demographics are considered deliberately and intentionally

- We have conducted research and developed recommendations and promising practices to support the following populations:

  - Students of Color - [Equity in Mental Health Framework](#) with The Steve Fund

  - Students who are Parents - [Improving Mental Health of Student Parents Framework](#) with Ascend at the Aspen Institute

  - Graduate/Professional Students - [Recommendations to Support Graduate and Professional Student Mental Health & Well-being](#) with the Council of Graduate Schools

  - LGBTQ+ Students - [Proud & Thriving Framework for LGBTQ+ Student Mental Health](#) with the Consortium of Higher Education LGBT Resource Professionals

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Identifying Students at Risk

- Early detection and effective response

- Identify and support students with mental health and substance use histories

- Implement mental health and substance use screenings in multiple ways

- All members of the community should be to trained to

  - Recognize warning signs

  - Ask questions and engage in a conversation

  - Effectively respond and/or refer

- Have a robust process and protocol for reporting and responding to people of concern

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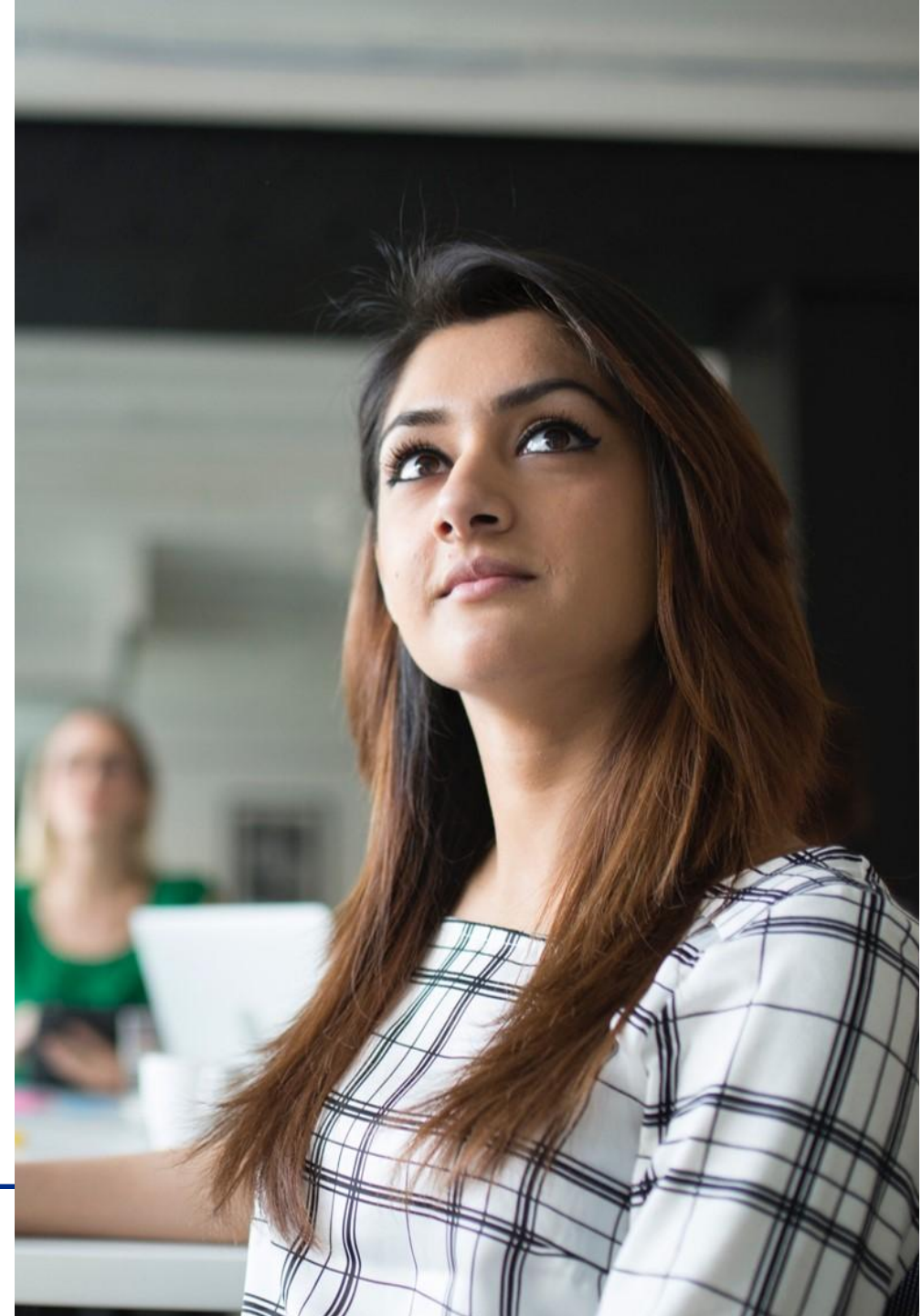
Identifying Students at Risk in 2022

- Provide updated guidance to faculty, staff, and student leaders about how to recognize warning signs, how to engage in conversations, when to refer, what to do in a crisis, and how to report students of concern
  - Include active listening skills as we may be engaging students online and in-person-content, emotions, behavior
  - There should be no wrong door on campus to get support
- Offering mental health trainings in-person and virtually, and ensure that it is integrated into orientations for faculty, staff, students, and parents/guardians
  - Training programs should be culturally responsive
- Promoting online screening tools (like JED's ULifeline) to students
- Take a moment to review your existing policies and procedures related to early alert and responding to students of concern and update them for the new academic year

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Shift in Language

> *Gatekeeper training generally refers to programs that seek to develop individuals' "...knowledge, attitudes and skills to identify (those) at risk, determine levels of risk, and make referrals when necessary" (Gould et al., 2003)*

Gatekeeper Training → **Mental Health Training**

How To Strategically Implement a Mental Health Training on a College Campus

Let's look at the data

Students feel responsible for, and want to help their peers.

96% of students agree that they are responsible to help if a friend is struggling

98% agree that if they saw someone experiencing significant distress or thoughts of suicide, they would intervene by trying to help.

Students turn to academic advisors and professors for help.

Of the students with a mental health problem they believed was affecting their academic performance,

25% would talk to an academic advisor

24% would talk to a professor from one of their classes

10% would talk to student services staff

Nearly 80% of higher education faculty report having dealt with student mental health issues over the past 12 months, and nearly 90% believe student mental health has worsened since COVID-19.

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Breakout Groups

What support and education needs do you hear from students, faculty, and staff in regards to mental health training?

What are the gaps you're seeing in knowledge and awareness around mental health on your campus?

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What should be included in the training

How to Identify Students at Risk	How to Reach Out	How to Refer

- Warning signs
- Risk factors

- How to start the conversation

- Knowledge of campus resources
- Follow-up resources
  - Red Folder Initiatives

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What are the various modes of delivery?

Modalities

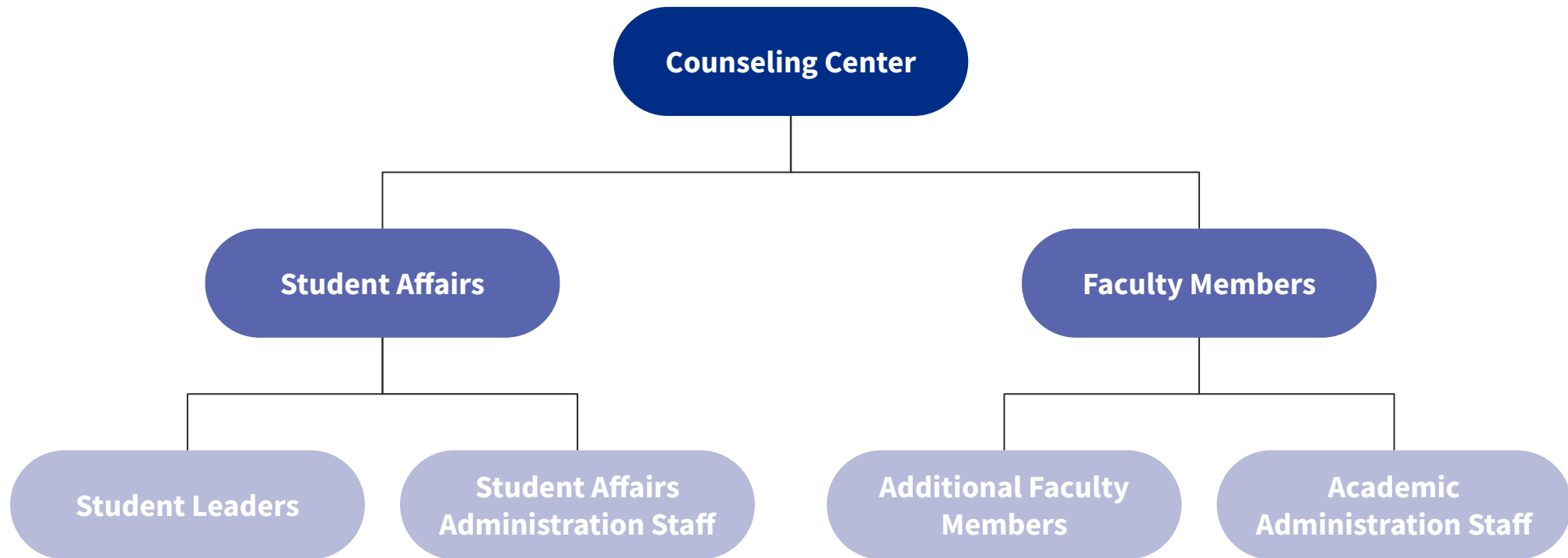- In-person, online, synchronous, asynchronous, passive/independent

Online Learning Modules

- Some schools are embedding asynchronous trainings into online learning platforms

Application

- Role-play, practice, discussion, reflection

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Who should facilitate the training?

Breakout Groups

In what ways/formats are you currently offering training? Who is facilitating those? How are you facilitating role play and discussion?

What obstacles or challenges have you experienced, and how have you navigated them?

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Who should be trained?

FACULTY	STAFF	STUDENTS
Champions in Colleges	Dining Services	Greek Life
Provost Level	Housekeeping/Maintenance	Student Athletes
Adjunct Professors	Academic Advisors	Student Government
TAs	Campus Safety	Graduate/Professional
Administrative Staff	Librarians	Student Orgs

How can my campus increase engagement?

- Advocate for senior leadership to promote campus-wide buy-in
- Partner with Human Resources on your campus
- Partner with student leaders and campus organizations
- Partner with and/or identify faculty champions that are interested in this work
- Integrate training into academic courses (ie: FYS courses)

"Nearly 70% of faculty are motivated to strengthen their role in supporting student mental health and over 60% believe it should be mandatory that all faculty receive basic training in how to respond to students experiencing mental or emotional distress."

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How do we track utilization and engagement?

Track utilization and assessment from pre-test to post-test, offer evaluation surveys and refresher materials.

Evaluate Outcomes:

- How effective was the training?
- What could be modified?
- What did the participant learn?

Evaluate Implementation:

- Was the training implemented as planned and with quality?
- Was the timing of when the training was offered effective?

Evaluate Utilization:

- What is the demographic make-up and identity breakdown of the participants?
- Who is not being reached?

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Supplemental Information/Refreshers

Red Folder Initiatives

Resource List/Flow Charts

Syllabus Statements

At VCU, the JED Campus Team ask faculty to add the following statement and resources to their syllabi:

At VCU, we acknowledge that you juggle many roles, including being a student. While your academics are a top priority, we know that sometimes finding balance among all the roles you have can be a challenge, especially when dealing with unexpected life events like illness or the loss of a loved one. Please take care of yourself. The best time to practice self-care and manage stress is when you aren't overwhelmed or in distress. You can visit thewell.vcu.edu to learn more about ways to practice self-care of find upcoming programs you can attend. Please take care of each other. If you are concerned about one of your classmates, please share that concern with me or through students.vcu.edu/find-resources/dean-of-students/ so that we can connect that student to additional support. Please ask for help from me, [insert program specific supports here] or from one of the many resources here to help. Being proactive about help-seeking can make sure that you receive the support that you need before your academics are negatively impacted. There are many resources at VCU and in the surrounding community available to assist you with non-academic concerns that you might have, so that you can be successful academically. Visit jed.vcu.edu/resources to learn more about how and when to access these resources.

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Example Mental Health Training Websites

Mental Health First Aid

This program teaches how to identify, understand and respond to signs of mental illnesses and substance use disorders. Training provides skills needed to reach out and provide initial help and support to anyone who may be developing a mental health or substance use problem or experiencing a crisis.

3	**12**	**16**
Certified trainers.	Staff members trained.	Students trained.

Question, Persuade, and Refer (QPR)

People trained in QPR learn how to recognize the warning signs of a suicide crisis and how to question, persuade, and refer someone to help. Each year thousands of Americans, like you, are saying "Yes" to saving the life of a friend, colleague, sibling, or neighbor.

40	*92*	*35*
Faculty	Staff	Students

HCCC MHCW Mental Health Initiatives

Staff and faculty are usually the first people a student will approach when stressed; how one responds can deter or help a student connect with the appropriate resources. We want to challenge the HCCC community to participate in these training opportunities, learn how to use correct language and develop skills to support your students.

Mental health initiatives included:
Training staff, faculty, and students on Mental Health First Aid, QPR (Questions, Persuade, Refer), and JED campus.

Mental Health First Aid (MHFA)

Mental Health First Aider – you will learn how to identify, understand and respond to signs of mental illness and substance use disorders. The skills needed to reach out and provide initial support to anyone struggling or experiencing a crisis.

2	**200**	**24**
Certified Trainers	Staff Members Trained	Students Trained

Question, Persuade and Refer (QPR)

People trained in QPR learn the warning signs of crisis and how to question, persuade and refer someone to get help. Each year thousands of Americans, like you are saying yes to saving the life of a friend, colleague, sibling or neighbor.

2	**72**	**7**
Certified Trainers	Staff Members Trained	Students Trained

Apply
Visit
Info
Donate

Sign up for Trainings

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Breakout Groups

How do you increase overall student/faculty/staff engagement on your campus? (Idea share)

How do you track utilization and engagement?

Do you use Train the Trainer models?

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Training Programs Available

Some common <u>training programs</u>:

- **JED's "You Can Help A Friend/Student"** (60-90 minute powerpoint presentations with a facilitator guide for students, and faculty/staff)
- **QPR** (Question, Persuade, Refer)
- **Mental Health First Aid** (4-8 hour program delivered by trained instructor)
- **AFSP's "Talk Saves Lives"** (presentation by an AFSP volunteer)
- **Active Minds "VAR - Validate, Appreciate, Refer"** (peer to peer conversation training)
- **Campus Connect** (3 hour session for campus personnel, 6 hour train-the-trainer session)
- **Kognito** (45 minute interactive role play online modules for faculty and staff and a 30 minute session for students)
- **Student Support Network** (6-week session for students developed by WPI)
- **Design your own**

What Mental Health Training Is Being Used On Your Campus?

QPR **A**

Mental Health First Aid **B**

Kognito **C**

Campus Connect **D**

JED's You Can Help **E**

We created our own training **F**

We use more than one of these **G**

We use one, but it is not listed **H**

We do not have mental health training opportunities on campus **I**

Powered by ⬛ **Poll Everywhere**

You Can Help a Friend - Demo

When and How to Reach Out
To a Friend in Distress

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The Jed Foundation

Learning Objectives

- Understand current trends in mental health among college students

- Understand your role as a help-giver

- Identify signs of distress in a friend

- Discuss barriers to helping

- Apply strategies to engage in conversation with a friend in distress

- List places and resources that can be used to support a friend

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Mental Health and Young Adults

Your Role as a Help-Giver

Signs to Notice

Engaging in a Conversation

Concern about a friend who may be feeling suicidal

Know Your Resources

Creating Your Own Training Program Using JED's Free Resources

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Faculty Guide to Supporting Student Mental Health

How to create a culture of care on campus

The Jed Foundation

How to Support Mental Health in the Classroom

A proven way to prevent suicide is to teach young people how to ask for help when they need it. It is a skill that will help keep them safe, build their emotional resilience, and serve them well their whole lives. Below are steps you can take to send students the powerful message that there is help and you can support them in finding it.

Talk About It

Begin your semester by telling the class that students can come to you when they are struggling, and reiterate that message during high-pressure times, such as exams or charged political or campus events.

Know Your Campus Resources

The Office of Student Affairs or the Dean of Students office are good places to ask if your school has:

- A campus counseling center or relationships with off-site counseling centers or mental health providers

- A Behavioral Intervention Team (BIT) or Community Assessment Response and Evaluation (CARE) team

- Providers at the health center who can treat mental health issues

- Academic services and support

- Disability or accessibility offices or services

- Specific supports for BIPOC, LGBTQ+, or other underserved groups

- A protocol to follow when a student may be at risk for harming themselves

Put Resources in Your Syllabi

Here is some sample language to accompany them:

"If you are feeling stressed, worried, or down during the semester, or if you notice signs of emotional distress in someone else, please feel free to stop by my office or consider reaching out for support. Here are some campus resources:" [list campus resources]. "If you or someone you know needs to talk to someone right now, text START to 741-741 or call 1-800-273-TALK (8255) for a free, confidential conversation with a trained counselor 24/7."

Encourage Self-Care

Consider incorporating meditation, breathing, or other mindfulness practices into the classroom and adding self-care activities—such as getting exercise, spending time in nature, or talking with a friend—to assignments. You can also model self-care by sharing with students what you do to manage stress.

Make Thoughtful Deadlines

Avoid making assignments due late in the evening, so that students can prioritize sleep, which is foundational to emotional well-being.

Allow Mental Health Absences

Consider allocating excused absences for both physical and mental health reasons, and include this policy in your syllabi.

How to Recognize a Student Who Is Struggling

You know your students. If something concerns you, trust your gut and err on the side of checking in. It may turn out that nothing substantial is going on, but showing students you care is also a part of supporting mental health. Students—like all of us—fare better when they feel seen, cared for, and part of a community.

These are important signs to pay attention to, because they may indicate a student is struggling and needs support:

- Missed assignments
- Repeated absences
- Decline in academic performance
- Reduced participation in class
- Excessive fatigue
- Poor personal hygiene
- Inappropriate or exaggerated behavior
- Alarming or worrisome content in assignments

How to Reach Out to a Struggling Student

✓ DO

- Find a way to speak privately to the student, for instance after class when other students have left, or in your office.

- Tell them what you are observing that makes you concerned.

- Ask open-ended questions about how they are doing.

- Let them know you are here to listen and connect them to support if they need it.

- Share campus resources and ask if they need support or help in accessing them.

- Report any concern that a student is at immediate risk (see next page) to campus authorities (BIT or CARE teams, counseling center, or campus security).

✗ DON'T

- Underestimate the student's struggles. It is far better to check in unnecessarily than to dismiss a potentially harmful situation.

- Promise confidentiality—school guidelines might require you to report a student who is at immediate risk of harming themselves (see next page).

- Leave the student alone if you feel they are at immediate risk.

How to Know When a Student Needs Immediate Help

A student may be at immediate risk and should be connected to professional mental health services right away if they:

- **Express despair.** "Sometimes it feels like I'd be better off dead."

- **Express hopelessness.** "No matter what I do, nothing gets better. Sometimes I wonder if it's even worth being here at all."

- **Talk about leaving their family or friends.** "I feel like I'm such a burden to them. They'd be better off without me."

- **Mention self-harm.** "It seems like the only thing that makes me feel better is cutting myself."

- **Show signs of self-injury,** including wearing long sleeves in warm weather to hide injuries.

What to do:

- **Stay calm.** This will help you think clearly about how to respond and can help reduce the student's anxiety.

- **Let them know you hear them and want to help.** (See wording examples on next page.)

- **Walk the student to the campus counseling center** for an urgent consultation.

- **Call campus security and/or 911** if your campus does not have a counseling center, it is closed, or the student refuses to go.

- **Stay with the student** until help arrives.

How to Start the Conversation

Ways to approach a struggling student.

"I've noticed you've seemed a little down lately, so I wanted to check in with you. What's been going on?"

"I noticed you missed class a few times. What's going on for you?"

"You seem really tired in class lately. How are you doing these days?"

Ways to respond when a student shares their struggle with you.

"I'm so glad you told me about this. Let's brainstorm how we can get you some support."

"Thank you for sharing this with me. There's good support on campus—I'll help connect you to it."

"Wow, that sounds really hard. It makes sense you are struggling. Let's figure out what on-campus supports can help you right now."

Ways to talk with a student who needs immediate help.

"I understand that you are hurting right now. I am here to help you and connect you to good support on campus."

"I hear that you feel hopeless right now. I've worked with the counseling center, and I think they could help. Let's walk over together."

"I can tell that you're very upset, and I'm concerned about you. I'm going to connect you with someone who can help you stay safe."

If a student declines support, call campus security or 911.

Find a way to reach out to a friend about their mental health.

Learn more at **seizetheawkward.org**

SEIZE THE AWKWARD ad COUNCIL | American Foundation for Suicide Prevention | JED The Jed Foundation

SEIZE THE AWKWARD

Campus Toolkit

- Campus event/activation ideas and planning template

- Campaign posters that can be downloaded and printed on campus

- Video content on YouTube including interviews from celebrities like Billie Eilish, Lauv, Noah Cyrus, Aminé, and more

- Stickers, filters, and other engagement options on Instagram and Snapchat

ad COUNCIL

American Foundation for Suicide Prevention

JED

KNOW THE SIGNS

IS YOUR FRIEND GOING THROUGH A TOUGH TIME? There's a number of signs to watch out for. But you know your friends best, so trust your gut. And if something seems wrong, ask.

They dont feel like hanging out as much

Their mind seems to be somewhere else

They're so anxious, they can't relax

They've gotten negative about life

They're not acting like themselves and are more irritable than usual

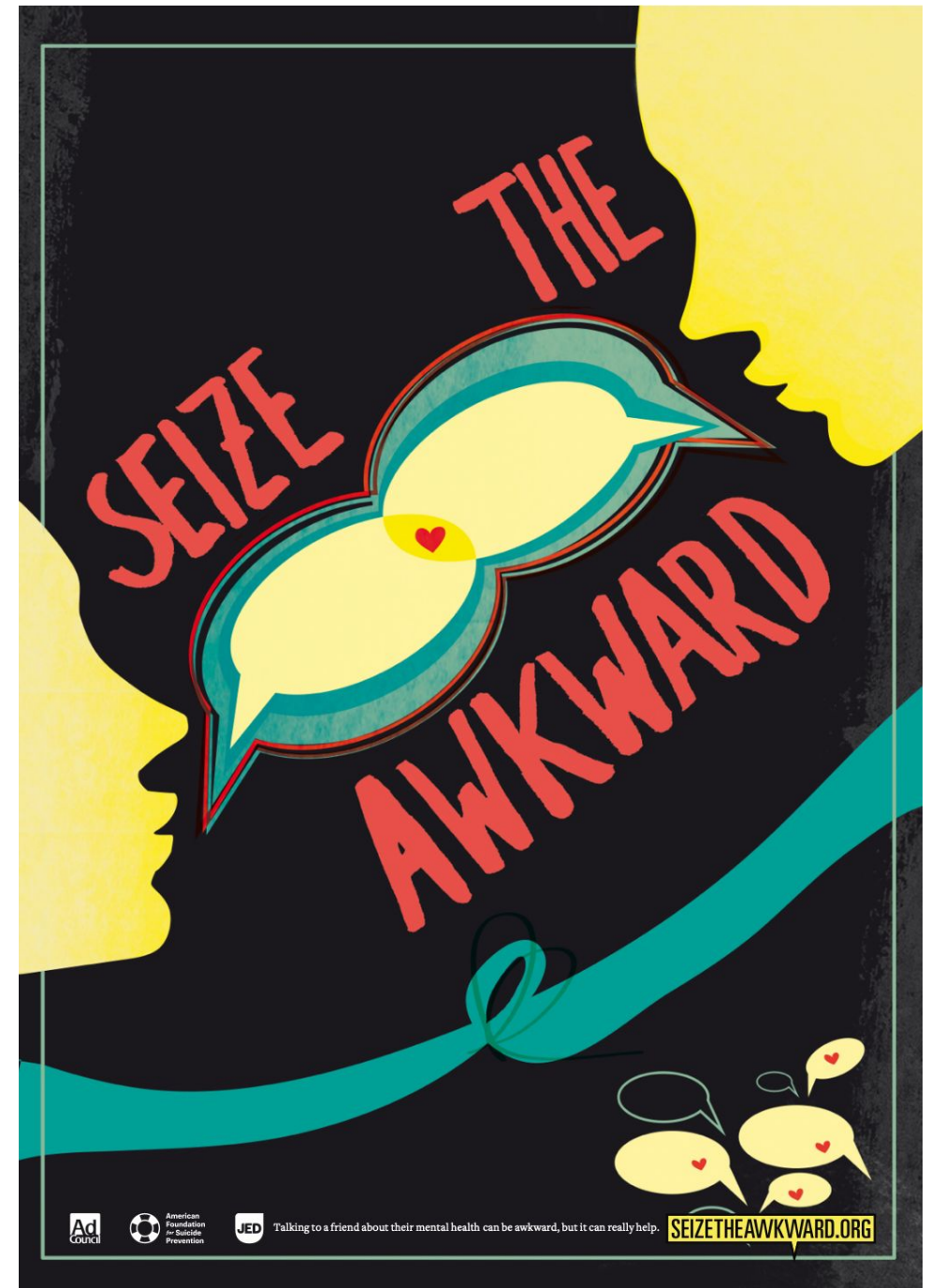They're taking more risks than usual

They talk about feeling hopeless

They're taking more drugs or drinking more

They're harming themselves

SEIZE THE AWKWARD

SEIZE THE AWKWARD

Ad Council · American Foundation for Suicide Prevention · JED · Talking to a friend about their mental health can be awkward, but it can really help.

SEIZETHEAWKWARD.ORG

Call to Action

What is one goal you have regarding mental health training for your campus as you leave the workshop today?

What is one resource or example that you will use?

Connect with @jedfoundation!

The Jed Foundation

Thank You!

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