

Mental Health and Healthy Lifestyle Behaviors in First Year Health Sciences Graduate Students

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Objectives

- Describe the current mental and physical health concerns of college-aged young adults
- Describe baseline correlations from the Wellness Onboarding study
- Discuss future implications for nursing practice and research.



College Years A Transition



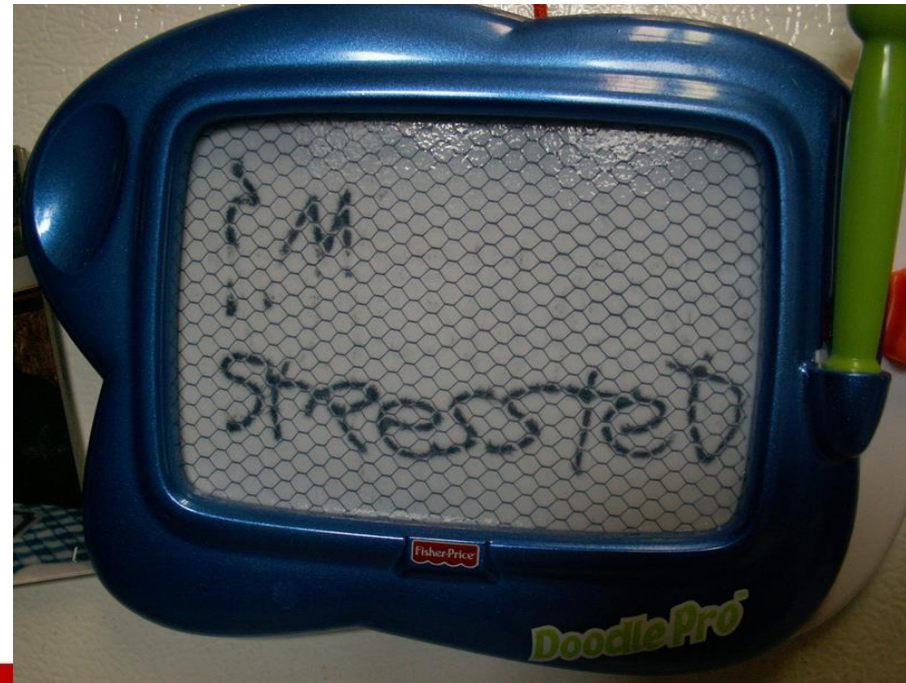
Significance of the Problem

- Mental health disorders account for nearly one half of the disease burden for young adults
- 1 out of every 4 college students suffers from some form of mental illness including depression
- 44% of American college students report having symptoms of depression
- 75% of college students do not seek help for mental health problems



Significance of the Problem

- Suicide is the second leading cause of death among adolescents and young adults aged 25 to 34 years
- Young people diagnosed with depression are five times more likely to attempt suicide than adults
- 19% of young people in the United States either contemplate or attempt suicide every year



American College Health Association National College Health Assessment-II

- Leading impediments to academic success reported by college students:
- Stress - 30%
- Anxiety - 21%
- Sleep problems - 20%
- Depression - 14%
- Combined with poor healthy lifestyle habits and a high degree of burden from mental health



Methods

- Descriptive study of the baseline variables and correlates of **healthy lifestyle behaviors** of first year graduate students participating in a wellness onboarding study
- 7 health sciences colleges (Dentistry, Health and Rehabilitation, Medicine, Nursing, Optometry, Pharmacy, and Veterinary Medicine)
- Randomized to wellness coaching, structured cognitive-behavioral skills building coaching, or online healthy lifestyle resources



Sample Characteristics

- 106 students participated in this study (n=18 COPE coaching, n=27 wellness coaching, and n=61)
- 59% were < 25 years of age
 - 31% were between the ages of 25 and 34
 - 10% were > 35 years of age
- 70% of the participants were White, not of Hispanic origin
 - 10% were Asian/Pacific Islander
 - 7.5% were Hispanic
 - 7.5% were Hispanic
 - 5.7% were non-Hispanic Black



Sample Characteristics

- The majority of the students were never married (80%) and did not have children (92%)
- Participants were from:
 - Nursing (39%)
 - Veterinary Medicine (23%)
 - Medicine (22%)
 - Pharmacy (6%)
 - Health and Rehabilitation (4%)
 - Dentistry and Optometry (2% each).



Sample Characteristics

- How do you view your health:
Excellent Health 19%
Very Good 18%
Good 49%
Fair 12%
Poor 1%
- More than half of the participants saw a consistent healthcare provider (60%).



Participant Health Status

Healthy Lifestyle Beliefs*	
Low (0-47)	50 (48.08)
High (48-64)	54 (51.92)
Healthy Lifestyle Behaviors	
Low (0-44)	82 (78.85)
High (45-60)	22 (21.15)
PHQ9 (Depression) ***	
No (0-4)	58 (56.31)
Mild (5-9)	33 (32.04)
Moderate (10-14)	11 (10.68)
Moderately Severe (15-19)	0 (0.0)
Severe (20+)	1 (0.97)
PHQ9 Score 5+ ***	45 (43.69)
PHQ9 Score 10+ ***	12 (11.65)



Participant Health Status

GAD7 (Anxiety)***	
No (0-4)	59 (57.28)
Mild (5-9)	27 (26.21)
Moderate (10-14)	12 (11.65)
Severe (15+)	5 (4.85)
GAD7 Score 5+***	44 (42.72)
GAD7 Score 10+***	17 (16.50)
BIPS (Stress)	
Low (0-23)	12 (11.76)
High (24-36)	90 (88.24)



Correlations

	Pearson Correlation Coefficients (P-Value)			
	Healthy Lifestyle Beliefs	Healthy Lifestyle Behaviors	PHQ9 (Depression)	GAD7 (Anxiety)
Healthy Lifestyle Behaviors	0.52177 (<.0001)			
PHQ9 (Depression)	-0.37278 (<.0001)	-0.35908 (<.0001)		
GAD7 (Anxiety)	-0.36184 (<.0001)	-0.29976 (0.0007)	0.81363 (<.0001)	
BIPS (Stress)	-0.35520 (<.0001)	-0.21561 (0.0162)	0.60663 (<.0001)	0.65528 (<.0001)



Conclusions

- Understanding similarities in baseline correlations among mental health and healthy lifestyle behaviors among first year graduate students can guide interventions to improve mental health and healthy lifestyle behaviors in this at-risk population.



Questions?

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