

MISSOURI COLLEGE STUDENT MENTAL HEALTH 2012

The results below will provide insight to the mental health concerns among students at 21 universities and colleges in Missouri. Results are from the 2012 Missouri College Health Behavior Survey (MCHBS). The MCHBS is an online, anonymous survey covering issues related to college student health implemented at 21 Missouri campuses.

MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS EXPERIENCED IN THE PAST YEAR:	2012 (n=9151)
Any mental health concern	45%
Anxiety	33%
Sleep issues	15%
Suicidal thoughts	14%
Depression	13%
Eating disorders	5%
Self-injury	4%
Alcohol abuse/dependence	3%
Suicide attempt	1%
Other experiences affecting student mental health	
Abusive relationship	3%
Sexual assault	1%

DISCUSSION

More than half of Missouri college students have experienced a mental health concern in the past year, with anxiety, sleep issues, and depression being the most common concerns. Each of these concerns is a risk factor for suicide, and 14% of Missouri college students have experienced suicidal thoughts in the past year.

The MCHBS data shows that 31% of students who experience suicidal thoughts and behaviors seek assistance. Fifty-three percent (53%) of those students initially seek help from friends or family, while 35% of students initially seek services from a university counseling center. With 53% of students seeking help from friends or family as a first resource, it is important that friends and family understand how to recognize the risk factors for suicide and how to respond appropriately. With the appropriate response, college students can be directed to a university counseling center or another professional for assistance.

Data from the MCHBS indicates a need for early mental health intervention among Missouri's college students.

To address this need, Partners in Prevention offers an online suicide prevention education program, called Ask Listen Refer. This program is designed to help individuals recognize the risk factors and warning signs of suicide and respond appropriately. This 15-20 minute interactive training program can be found at AskListenRefer.org.

SUMMARY

Our data collection indicates a high need for mental health prevention efforts at Missouri campuses. Encouraging students, faculty and staff to learn more about mental health and how to respond to those who need assistance is a first step in improving the mental health of Missouri college students.



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