

Building a Culture of Well-Being at Pace University: How the College of Health Professions is Promoting Self-Care Education

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Background/Significance: College students are reporting increasing levels of stress, anxiety and depression. This problem is compounded in health professions programs where students learn how to care for others, but rarely learn how to care for themselves.

Purpose/Aims: Given healthcare providers' high propensity for burnout and compassion fatigue, students need to learn evidence-based health promotion strategies for self-care. The goal of this initiative was to increase opportunities for students to engage in health promotion activities and learn about self-care.

Methods: Using a health promotion framework, we pursued a multi-prong strategy to enhance student knowledge of self-care including workshops on mindfulness for first year undergraduate and graduate students, undergraduate elective courses, and wellness workshops offered to all students throughout the academic year.

Results: Freshman and graduate students exposed to mindfulness practices express the need for additional exposure and experiences. Participation in the elective courses has been robust, suggesting these courses are meeting a student need for information on self-care.

Implications: Initial evidence suggests there is a need for more opportunities for health professions students to learn how to engage in health promotion activities that support their wellbeing and teach self-care strategies. Research is needed to measure the effect of these strategies on student self-care education.

Learning Objectives:

1. Discuss the data supporting the need for self-care training and education in health professions education.
2. Using a health promotion framework, describe the development of strategies to support student self-care education.