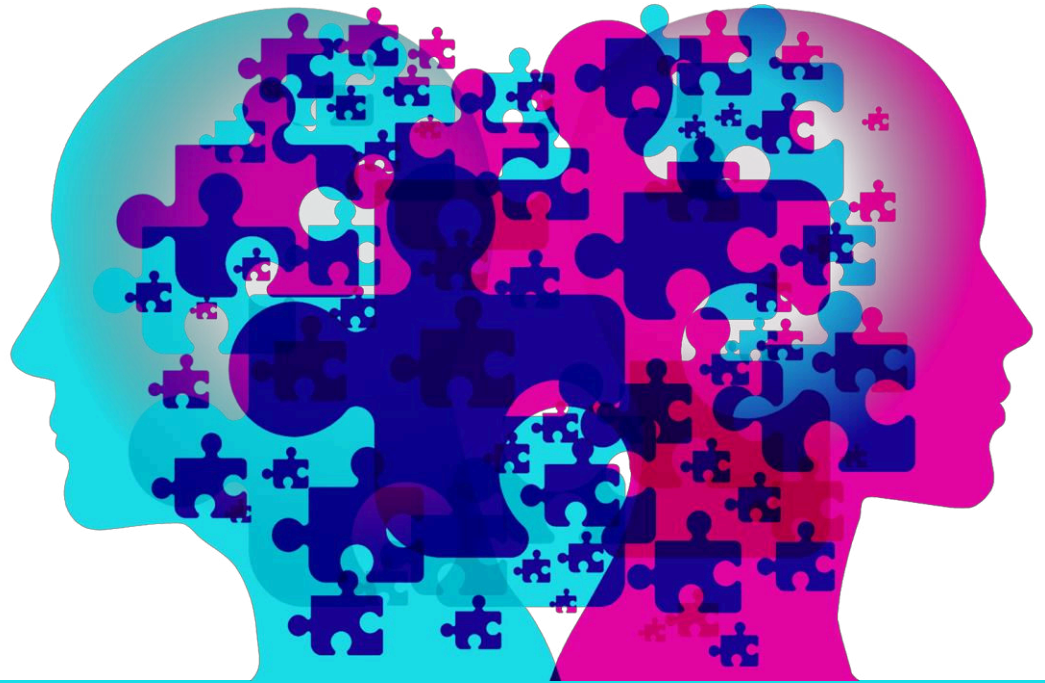# The Impact of Pervasive Technology

On the Emotional Wellness of International Students

Presenters

Patrick Parnell
Director - International Services
Missouri State University

Bryanna Davis
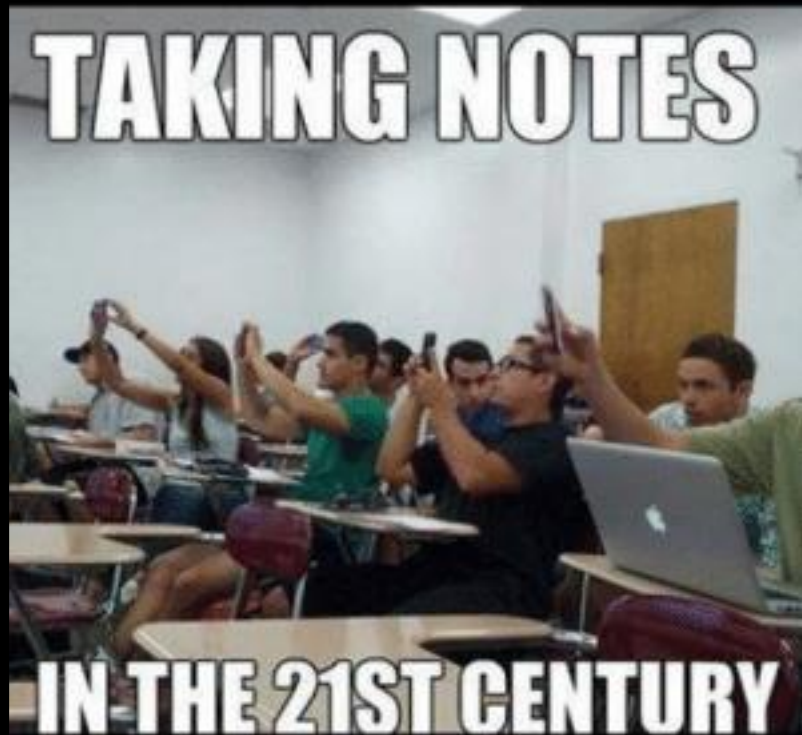International Student Insurance

Steve Rude
International Student Advisor
Des Moines Area Community College

Agenda

- What's Going On With Our Students
- Overcoming the Challenges
- Programming That Works
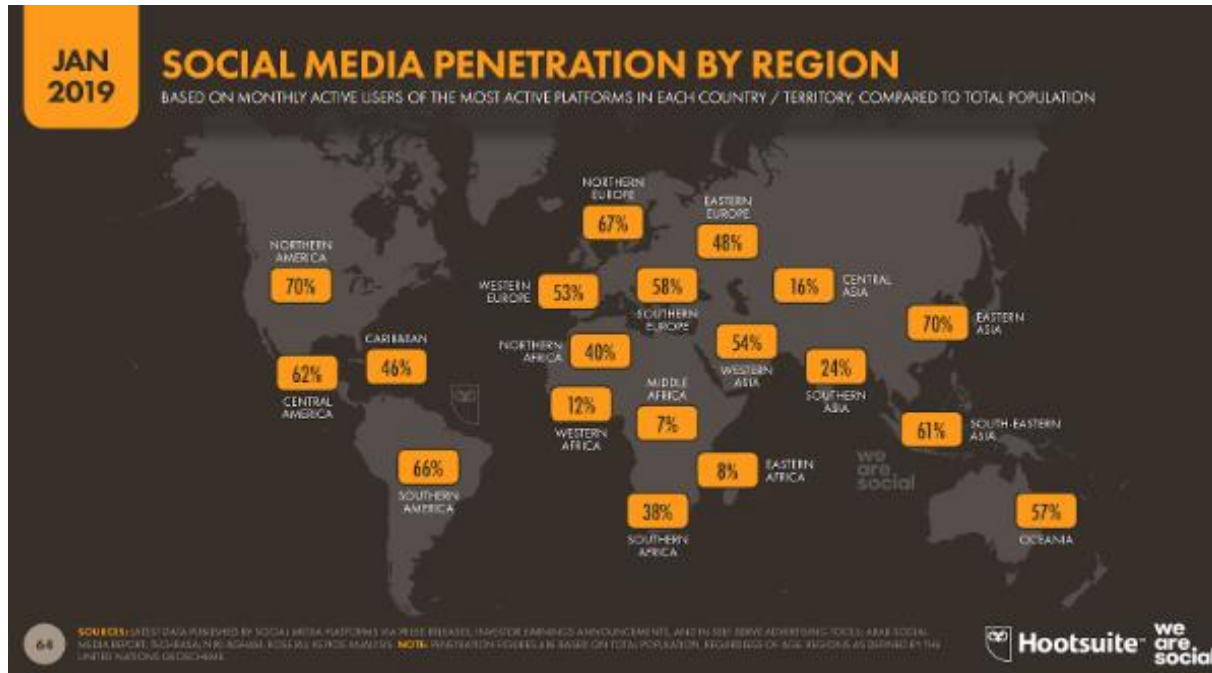- Resources
- Discussion & Questions

What's Going On?

Technology is on the rise

Source: https://blog.hootsuite.com/simon-kemp-social-media/

Stats on Mental Health & Technology

- Individuals who spend more time on social media and less time with others face-to-face report lower well-being and are more likely to be depressed - Lin et al., 2016; Shakya & Christakis, 2017

- People that report using 7-11 social media platforms had more than three times the risk for depression/anxiety that their friends who used only two sites had, even after the study was adjusted for the amount of time spent by members of both groups - *Computers and Human Behavior Journal*

- 54% of college age students said that they use cell phones during class to text friends and browse social media - Student Pulse survey by Top Hat.

Major Trends

- Communication
- Sleep
- Physical Activity
- Cyberbullying
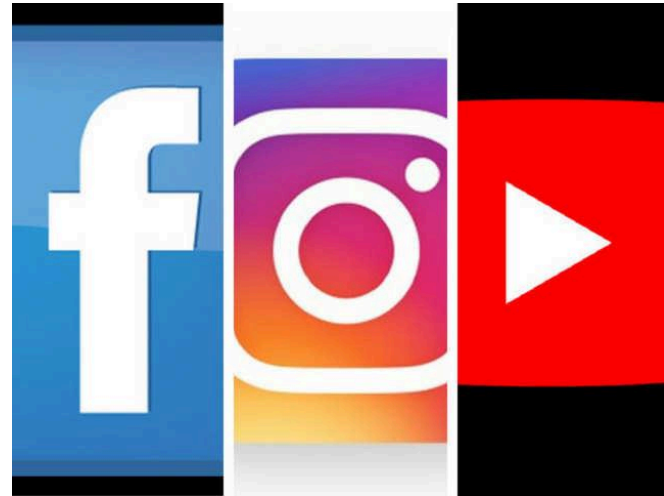- Depression & Anxiety
- Self-Esteem
- Body Image

1 in 5
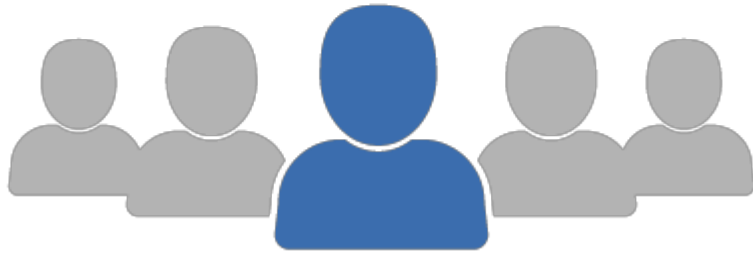
College students have anxiety or depression

Which social media platform was the most negative and positive for users?

A. Facebook
B. Instagram
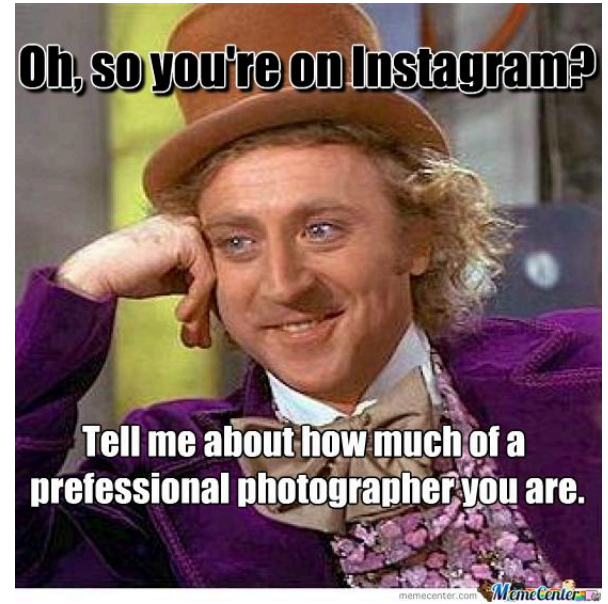C. Youtube

Instagram

- Instagram has the most negative overall effect on young people's mental health.
  - body image and sleep, increases bullying and "FOMO", and leads to greater feelings of anxiety, depression, and loneliness
  - \+   self-expression, self-identity, community building, and emotional support

Source: https://www.psychalive.org/worst-mental-health-instagram-facebook-youtube/

Facebook

- Facebook was found to have similar negative effects to Instagram in the categories of bullying, "FOMO", body image, anxiety, depression, and loneliness.
  - Major negativity on sleep
  - + Emotional support and community building.

FACEBOOK IS LIKE THE FRIDGE.

IF YOU'RE BORED YOU KEEP OPENING & CLOSING IT EVERY FEW MINUTES TO SEE IF THERE'S ANYTHING GOOD IN IT.
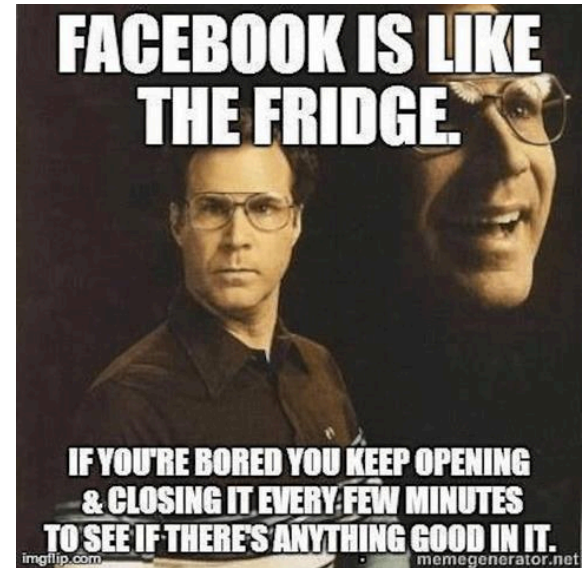
YouTube

- YouTube was by far the most positive of the social media platforms
  - Major negativity on sleep
  - + Scored high on awareness, self-expression, and community building. YouTube was also the only social network where anxiety, depression, and loneliness lessened with use.
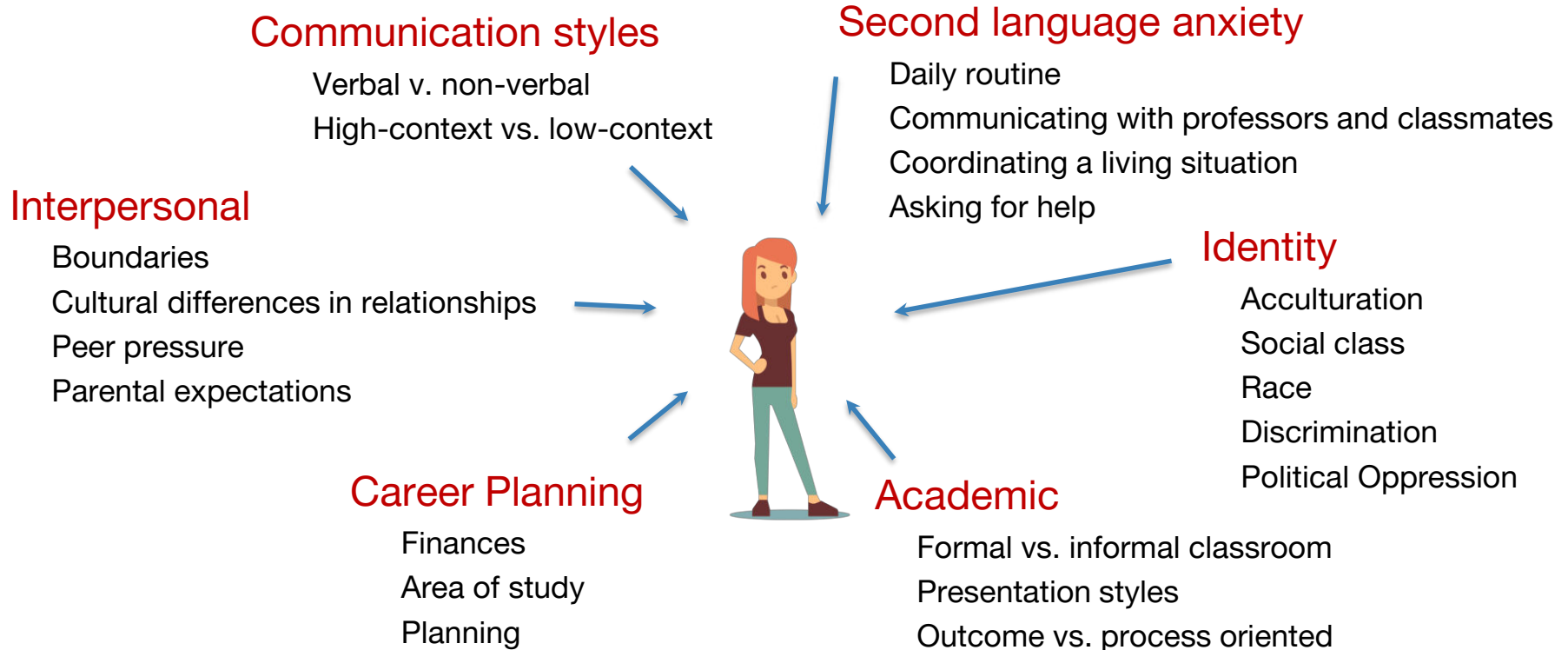

spider-bih   FOLLOW

YouTube being down is wack. What am I supposed to do now?
Go outside????

Source:

Common Adjustment Issues

Communication styles

Verbal v. non-verbal

High-context vs. low-context

Second language anxiety

Daily routine

Communicating with professors and classmates

Coordinating a living situation

Asking for help

Interpersonal

Boundaries

Cultural differences in relationships

Peer pressure

Parental expectations

Identity

Acculturation

Social class

Race

Discrimination

Political Oppression

Career Planning

Finances

Area of study

Planning

Academic

Formal vs. informal classroom

Presentation styles

Outcome vs. process oriented

Overcoming the Challenges

Use Technology to Your Advantage

Create Community

Connect students to each other, to your staff, and to your school prior to their arrival in the U.S.

- Make it helpful: pre-F1 visa interview tips, pre-arrival school materials, online orientation session, etc.
- Make it practical: arrival info, roommates, items for sale,
- Make it personal: feature current students so they identify

Use Technology to Your Advantage

Connect Students to Events and Services

- Advertise face to face meetings and events starting at orientation
- Post photos so students see themselves having fun and feel included (be realistic, though!)
- Employ Tech in your programs
- Link students via technology and media to other resources on campus such as tutoring, clubs, teams and organizations by cross-posting on your social media channels

Advocate for Students

Be Proactive!

- Make sure staff/faculty/advisors on campus understand that you are a resource for issues involving international students
- Inform campus and community of top international concerns
- Go to bat for students across campus and in the community so that they know you are there to help them!
- Link to Counseling Center events and services via social media

Intervene

Be Approachable/Accessible!!!

- Be available: have some open office hours
- Learn student names or at least how to pronounce them!
- Listen actively, empathetically, and without judgment to students
- Try to work with counseling services to improve their accessibility as well!

Intervene

- Work with campus and community to identify students in trouble: residence life staff, housing, academic advisors, faculty, clubs, community organizations, etc.
- Train advising staff and others to recognize and actively look for red flags: such as changes in dress, appearance, demeanor and Withdrawal/changes in normal behavior
- Find ways to establish regular check-Ins for your environment.
- Work specifically with counseling services to figure out best methods to refer students and to ensure students don't fall through the cracks!
- Take students physically to see counselors/advisors - "warm handoff"

Missouri State University
Counseling Center Statistics

	Period 8/19 - 10/15					
Year	FY18 (2017-18)		FY19 (2018-19)		FY20 (2019-20)	
Unique Clients	Unique New	265	Unique New	282	Unique New	352
	Unique	106	Unique	154	Unique returning	252
	TOTAL UNIQUE	371	TOTAL UNIQUE	436	TOTAL UNIQUE	604
Crisis Appointments	45		49		60	
TOTAL SESSIONS/VISITS	701		931		1,279	

Total Sessions
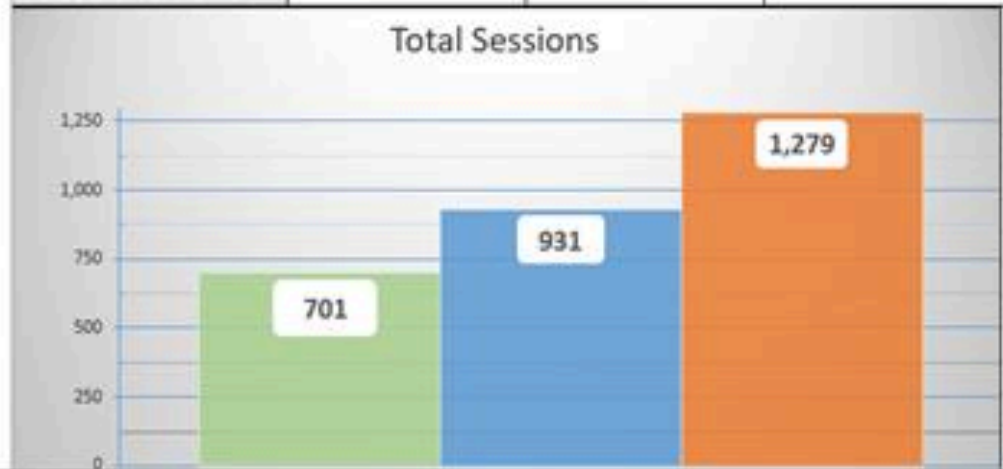
Programming that works

"...the quality of the social support system can have both a direct and a buffering effect when international students undergo psychological stress."

Meirong Liu, "Addressing the Mental Health Problems of Chinese International College Students in the United States," Advances in Social Work Vpl. 10 No. 1 (Spring 2009), p. 74.

Creating the Connection

- Testimonials from current students about homesickness, culture shock, stress, anxiety, and depression (face-to-face & virtual)

- Campus-wide approach: faculty, ResLife, athletics, student affairs, etc… **everyone is a stakeholder**

- Early Alert Systems - Starfish, etc.

- Community and area resources

Mental Health in Orientation

- Challenges/opportunities associated w/ cultural adjustment

- **Highlight Counseling Center!** Incorporate into activity or event

- Educate students about resources

- Peer leaders competent in cultural adjustment, emotional awareness
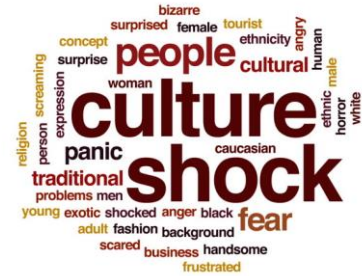
Programming that helps

On-Campus @ Missouri State

- Health & wellness fairs (Fresh Check)

- Voluntary depression/anxiety screenings

- Regularly scheduled opportunities for personal

  wellness: meditation, yoga, exercise, etc.

- JED Campus initiative

National Depression Screening Day

Unusually Sad?

Feeling Hopeless?

No Energy?

Wondering which way to turn?

National Depression Screening Day can help you find the way back.

The Counseling Center is offering educational screenings for a range of common emotional conditions that are often misunderstood.

Take a free, anonymous depression screening, and talk with a mental health professional.

Thursday, October 17, 2019
PSU Room 312
10:00 AM – 3:00 PM

Screenings for:
Depression   Bipolar Disorder
Anxiety   Post-Traumatic Stress

Screenings are free and confidential

If you need a special accommodation due to a disability, contact our office prior to the event.

Yoga Zen

**RHONDA LESLEY , RYT-200, LVYCT
GENTLE HATHA YOGA**

Thursdays at 4pm-5:15pm
Starting August 29th
Mats and Supports Provided
Magers Health Center Room
100

A Collaboration Between:

Missouri State.
COUNSELING CENTER

MISSOURI STATE STUDENT WELLNESS

Programming that helps

Community Based @SGF

- Connect with care providers and understand options

- Faith based & community organizations with a vested interest in your students

- Community Service & Volunteer opportunities (change of scenery and purpose)

International Survivors of Suicide Loss Day

https://afsp.org/survivor_day/springfield-missouri-2/

Marketing Your Program

How many of your international students want to go to a special event where they are going to talk about mental health?

Instead, think about ways to approach the topic indirectly:
- Making friends in the US
- Managing stress
- Time management
- Eating healthy
- Staying fit on campus

Resources & Hotlines

Pre-departure, Orientation, Online

Emotional Wellness Training

Powerpoint Presentation

Video Content

Student Handout

Download online at https://www.internationalstudentinsurance.com/school-resources/mental-health-awareness-training/

Interactive Activities

Proctor Guide

In partnership with:

The MGH Center for Cross-Cultural Student Emotional Wellness

International Student Insurance

Student Info Page

www.internationalstudentinsurance.com/explained/mental-health.php

Resources

NAFSA Resources

Addressing Mental Health Issues Affecting International Students
https://shop.nafsa.org/detail.aspx?id=202E

Crisis Management in a Cross Cultural Setting: ISSS
http://www.nafsa.org/wcm/Cust/Custom_Cart/Product_Detail.aspx?prodid=450

Other Resources

Massachusetts General Hospital Center for Cross-Cultural Student Emotional Wellness (MGH CCCSEW) https://www.mghstudentwellness.org/consortium

Addressing Mental Health Issues Affecting International Students
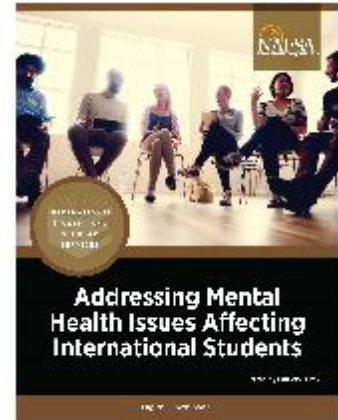
Services & Hotlines

Hotlines

- National Suicide Prevention
    1-800-273-TALK
    www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org

- The National Domestic Violence Hotline
    1-800-799-SAFE
    http://www.thehotline.org/

- It Gets Better Project (LGBTQ)
    1-866-4-U-TREVOR
    www.itgetsbetter.org/pages/get-help

Services

- Crisis Text Line
    http://www.crisistextline.org/
    Text 741-741

Time to Share Your Experiences!