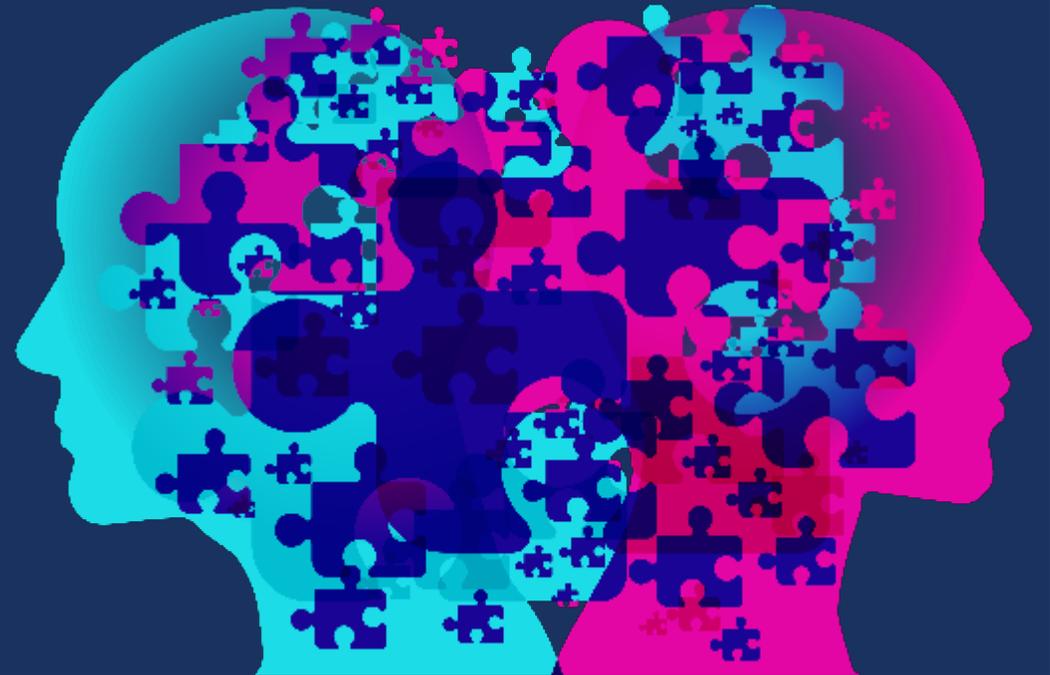

TRAINING YOUR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

EMOTIONAL WELLNESS AND MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS

INTERNATIONAL STUDENT INSURANCE | BRANDEIS UNIVERSITY | UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN MAINE



PRESENTERS

Jodi Hanelt

Director, International Students
and Scholars Office

Deborah Como Kepler

LCPC, LADC
Counselor
Psychologist

Leah Hammond

Customer Service Manager
Licensed Insurance Agent



**Brandeis
University**



**UNIVERSITY OF
SOUTHERN MAINE**



**International
Student Insurance**

CULTURE SHOCK & STRESS VIDEO



Stress & Culture Shock
as an International Student



<https://www.internationalstudentinsurance.com/explained/culture-shock-and-stress-video.php>

AGENDA

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



WHAT'S GOING ON?

WHAT'S GOING ON?

40% of students so depressed they found it difficult to function

61% of students felt "overwhelming anxiety"

13.9% of entering freshman anticipate a "very good chance" of seeking counselling

38.5% felt things were hopeless

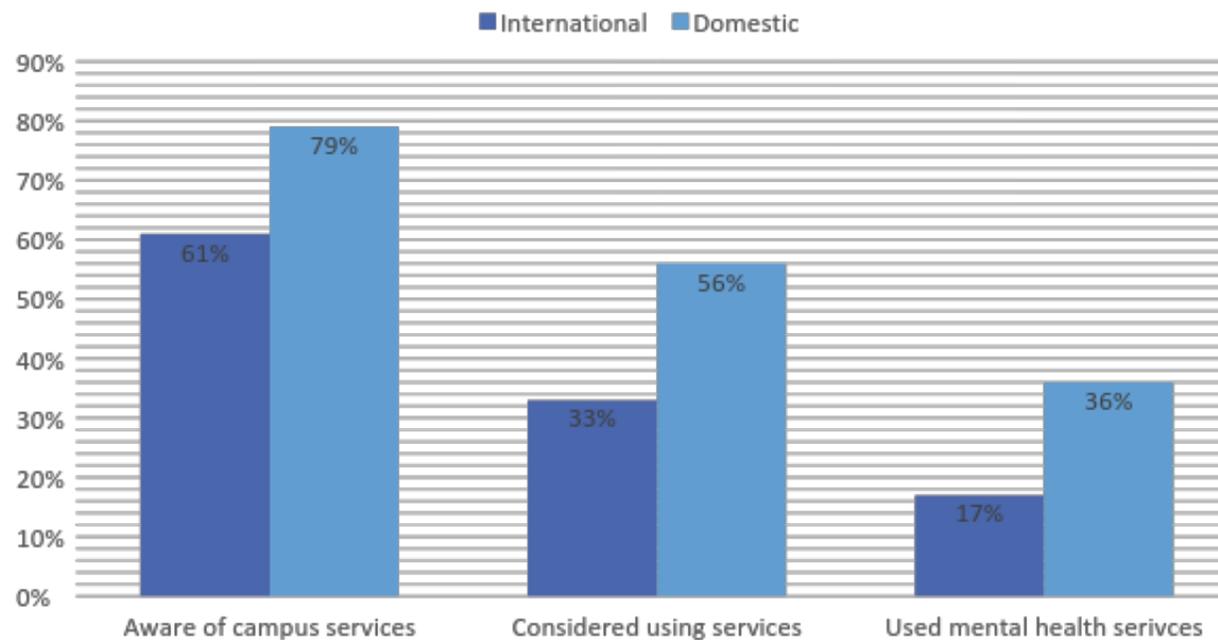


49% of adolescents ages 13-18 experience mental health disorders

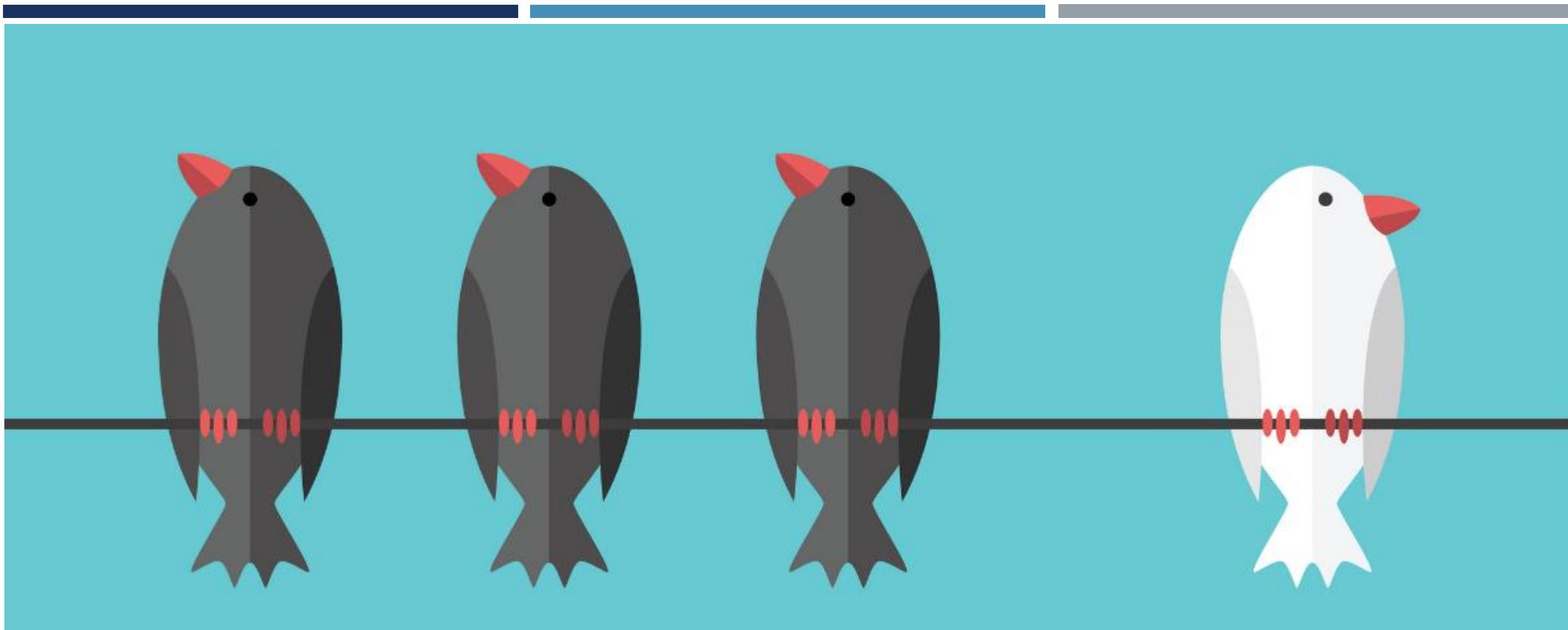
WHAT'S GOING ON? - MENTAL HEALTH CARE UNDERUTILIZED

Mental Health Need, Awareness, and Use of Counseling

Services Among International Graduate Students, Journal of American College Health



Source: Hyun, Quinn, Madon, & Lusting, 2010



UNDERSTANDING THE CHALLENGES

CULTURE IMPACTS - ALL ASPECTS OF ILLNESS



- Expression of symptoms outwardly and inwardly
- Experience of symptoms
- Coping
- Where to seek care
- Management of symptoms
- How they seek help

UNDERSTANDING THE CHALLENGES – COMMON ISSUES

Seeking Care

- Location of counseling center
- Cultural understanding

Second language anxiety

- Daily routine
- Communicating with professors and classmates
- Coordinating a living situation
- Asking for help



Interpersonal

- Cultural Boundaries
- Differences in relationships
- Peer pressure
- Parental expectations

Identity

- Acculturation
- Social class
- Race
- Discrimination
- Political Oppression

Career planning

- Finances
- Area of study
- Planning

Academic

- Teaching styles in other countries
- Presentation styles
- Academic pressure

“
“
**ONLY SOMEONE
FROM MY HOME
COUNTRY WILL
UNDERSTAND MY
PROBLEM.**
”
”

“
“
**counseling
is for
“crazy”
people**
”
”

“
“
**I can handle
my own
mental health
problems. If I
can't, that
means I'm
weak.**
”
”

COMMON MYTHS

“
“
**Everyone will know
I saw a counselor**
”
”

“
“
**I COULD
LOSE MY
VISA STATUS**
”
”



OVERCOMING THE CHALLENGES

SUPPORTING YOUR STUDENTS



1. Help Create A Community
 - Connecting students prior to their arrival in the US
 - Awareness of clubs, teams and organizations on campus
 - Scheduling events regularly, and especially during holidays
2. Regular Check-Ins
 - Being able to identify students who are struggling
 - Noticeable changes in dress, appearance, demeanor
 - Being available to talk, and to speak with others in the community
3. Internal Training
 - Identify and respond to students in distress
 - When to connect students to resources
 - How to listen actively, empathetically, and without judgement

CULTURE OF CARE: PLAN AHEAD

In difficult conversations:

- Consider student's reaction when responding
- Consider how you will handle discomfort delivering/receiving information
- Don't avoid subject because it's uncomfortable (ex: suicide)
- Avoid minimizing their feelings/situation (Be positive)
- Know when to refer
- Connect with on and off campus resources

Planning Ahead:

Have a plan, know who to call and connect with resources



HOW TO REDUCE STIGMA



Dispel the myths: What is mental health and counseling



Know the facts about cultural differences around counseling



Invite on-campus counselors/psychologists to orientation and meet & greets



Educate counselors/psychologists on how to communicate across cultures



Give testimonials even anonymously, and perhaps in their native language



Normalize students' concerns and stress



Creative ways of introducing counseling



Demystify seeking treatment (i.e., types of providers, where to go, what to expect)

WELLNESS APPS

There are over 165,000 wellness apps available today, according to Flurry analytics. According to Flurry's recent study:

- 96% of smart phone users are using one health and fitness app
- Over 75% of active users open their favorite health app at least 2/week
- 25% of users access their fitness apps more than 10/week

Apps for the **Body**:

- Physical Activity
- Nutrition
- Habit Changing/Wellness Planning

Apps for the **Mind**:

Mental Health App Resourcing Websites:

- Zur Institute
- Apps4Counselors
- YellowBrick Program
- Reachout.com

Apps for Wellness

University Health & Counseling Services
University of Southern Maine
Portland, ME 04104-0000 | Tel: 756-2200
Bangor, ME 04401-1408 | Tel: 756-5111
Fax: 756-2200

Apps for Anxiety Reduction

University Health & Counseling Services
University of Southern Maine
Portland, ME 04104-0000 | Tel: 756-2200
Bangor, ME 04401-1408 | Tel: 756-5111
Fax: 756-2200

The infographic displays a grid of wellness and anxiety reduction apps. Each app card includes an icon, a brief description of its features, and a website link. Apps shown include: HeadSpace (meditation), Calm (relaxation), MyFitnessPal (nutrition), and others. A circular diagram at the top right of the 'Apps for Wellness' section lists categories: Physical Activity, Nutrition, Habit Changing/Wellness Planning, and Mental Health.

WELLNESS APPS



Reach Out Editions helps connect college students to both in-house and community resources, such as rape crisis centers, helplines, legal aid services, medical care providers, counseling services, and emergency responders.





PROGRAMMING THAT WORKS



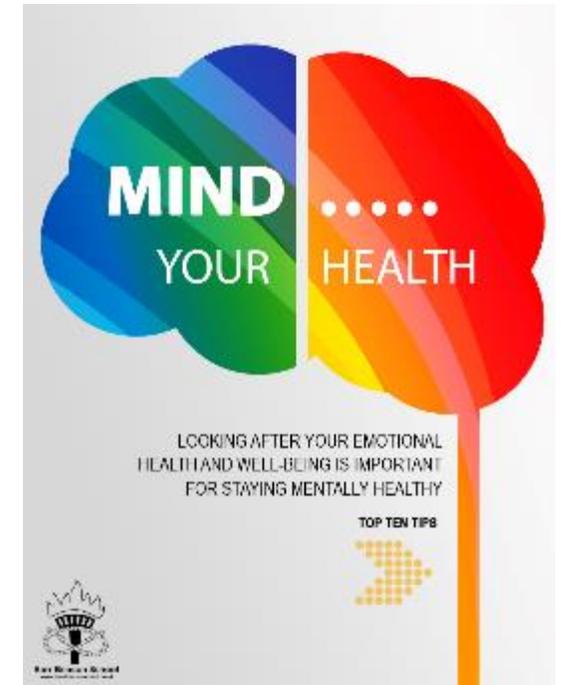
“...the quality of the **social support** system can have both a direct and a buffering effect when international students undergo **psychological stress.**”

PRE-DEPARTURE PROGRAMMING

Prior to student's arrival, think of ways to prepare students or address the topic in pre-departure materials:

- Introduction materials about the Counseling/Wellness initiatives available on campus with pictures and phone numbers/emails
- Testimonials from current students about homesickness, culture shock, stress, anxiety, and depression (perhaps in video format)
- Quotes about acceptance of mental health and counseling (like “Common Myths”)
- Create Buddy programs
- Collaborate in residence halls on outreach programming

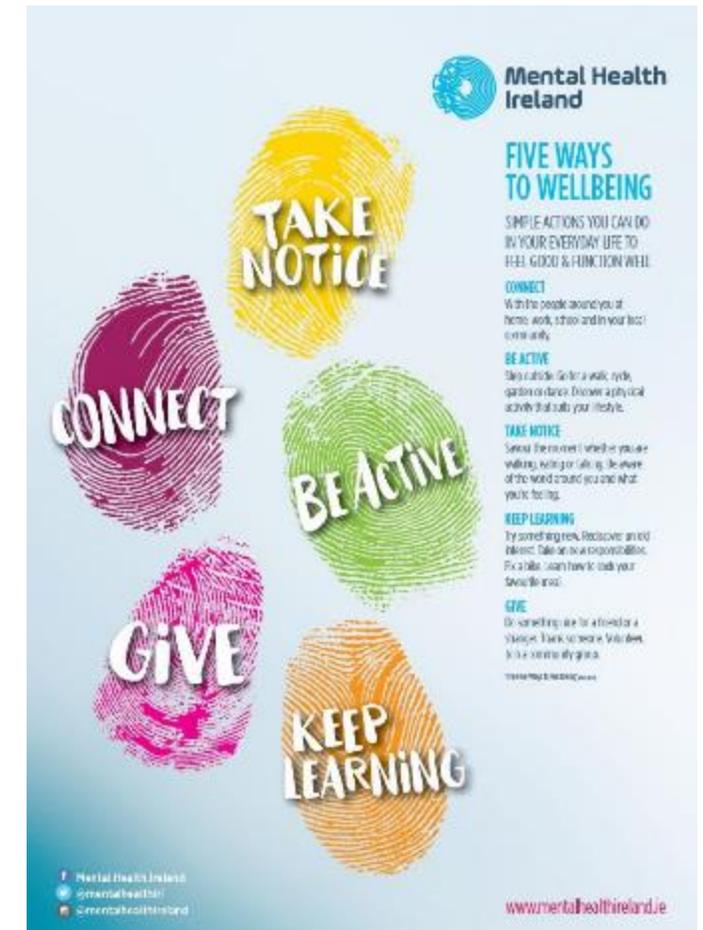
At Brandeis: inSTEP International Student Experience Project



MENTAL HEALTH IN ORIENTATION

These are a few things you can keep in mind for your international student orientation:

- Educate students on challenges and cultural adjustment issues that may arise
- Invite Counseling Center or other mental health professionals to introduce mental health service/host a luncheon
- Educate students about campus/community resources
- Train your peer leaders and mentors to be knowledgeable enough about these issues to help guide students
- Collaborate in residence halls on outreach programming



ORIENTATION AT BRANDEIS

- International Pre-Orientation: Introducing students to Brandeis Counseling Center
- 2016 Pre-Orientation included three 30 minute sessions:
 - Tour of the Brandeis Counseling Center
 - Art Therapy
 - Presentation by Counselors
- Broke large group up into 30-40 students each and rotated them through each session.
- RISE: Resilience, Information, Skills, and Experiences
 - Pre-Orientation designed for students who previously experienced depression and/or anxiety. New this year, open to all students.



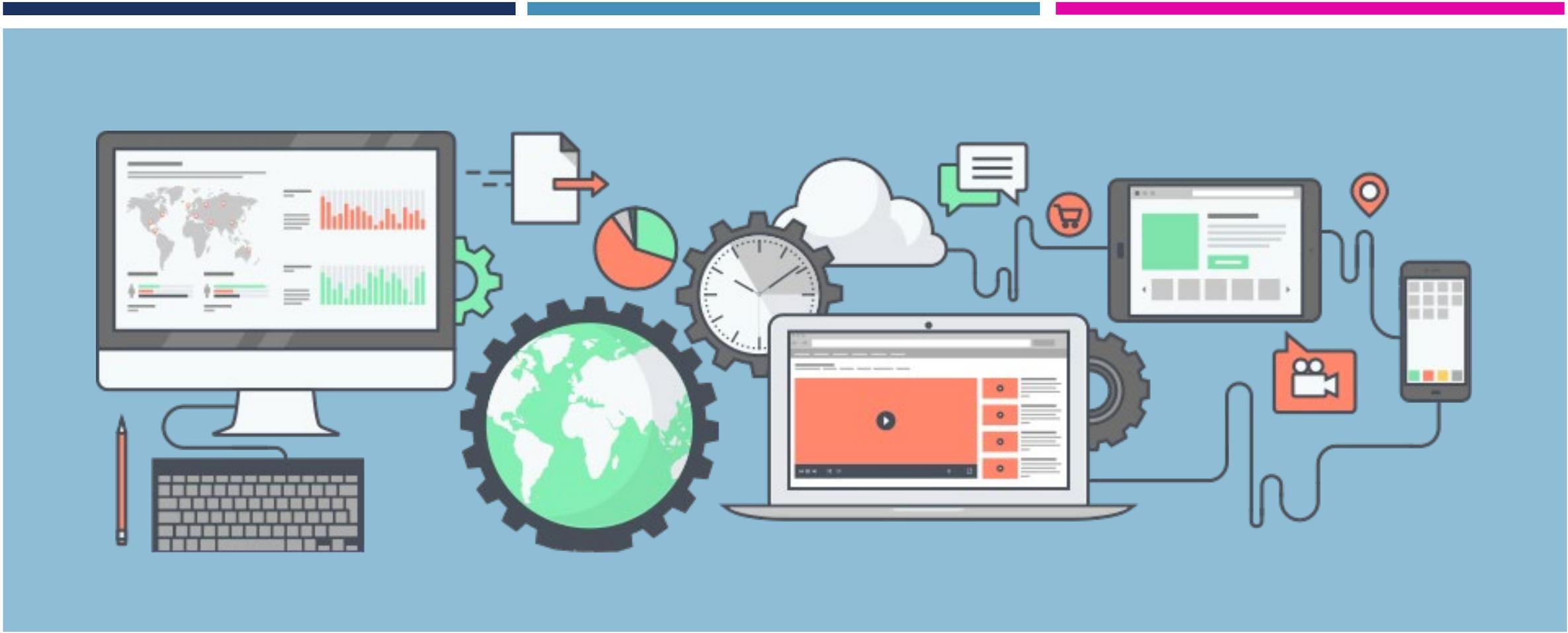
PROGRAMMING THAT HELPS



- Buddy/Peer mentor programs
- Workshops (e.g., “Decoding U.S. Culture”, “Lost in Translation”, “Culture Shock”)
- “Let’s Talk” Drop-in Hours
- University 101-type courses
- Social organizations/student clubs
- Summer/Holiday programs
- Friendship family programs
- Discussion/Support Groups
- Creative initiatives (e.g., “Welcome to My World Photo Exhibition”)

SPECIAL OUTREACH AT BRANDEIS

- **Our Global Campus** – Annual training, all faculty and staff invited
- 2018 Training: Cross Cultural Understanding of Student Mental Health in the US
 - More than 100 attendees
 - Partnered with **International Student Insurance** and **MGH Center for Cross-Cultural Student Emotional Wellness**
- **Care Team** (Behavioral Intervention Team)
 - Members: Between 10-12 members
 - Co-chaired by Dean of Students and Residential Life plus CARE Team Case Manager
 - Includes: Public Safety, Residential Life, Dean of Students, Graduate Student Affairs, Spiritual Life, Academic Services, ISSO
 - Meets weekly for 1 hour – and numbers are growing



RESOURCES & HOTLINES

PRE-DEPARTURE, ORIENTATION, ONLINE

EMOTIONAL WELLNESS TRAINING



**Powerpoint
Presentation**



Video Content



Student Handout



Interactive Activities



Proctor Guide

In partnership with:



The MGH Center for
Cross-Cultural Student
Emotional Wellness

 **International**
Student Insurance

MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS VIDEO



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

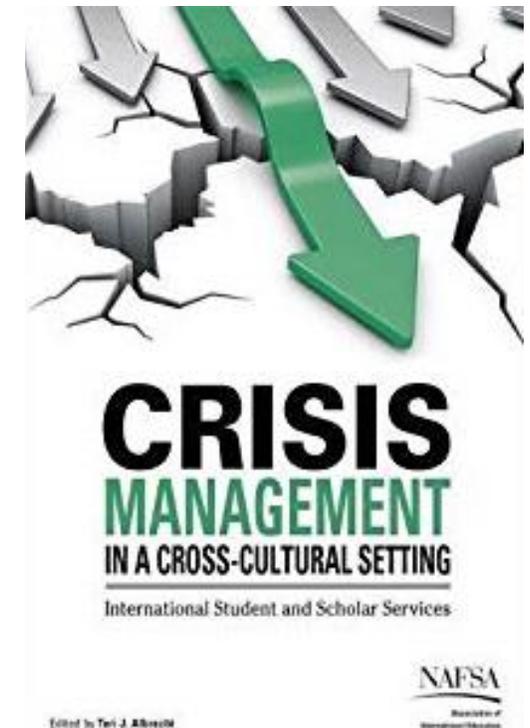
RESOURCES – FOR PROFESSIONALS

- **NAFSA Resources**

- Best Practices in Addressing Mental Health Issues Affecting Education Abroad Participants shop.nafsa.org/detail.aspx?id=102E
- Crisis Management in a Cross Cultural Setting: ISSS shop.nafsa.org/detail.aspx?id=992
- NAFSA Book/E-book: Mental Health Issues and International Students - AVAILABLE DECEMBER 2018

- **Other Resources**

- Massachusetts General Hospital Center for Cross-Cultural Student Emotional Wellness (MGHCCCSEW) www.mghstudentwellness.org/consortium-landing



SERVICES & HOTLINES – FOR STUDENTS



Online and phone counseling services

- Hotlines and services
 - National Suicide Prevention - 1-800-273-TALK
www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org
 - The National Domestic Violence Hotline - 1-800-799-SAFE
www.thehotline.org
 - It Gets Better Project (LGBTQ) 1-866-4-U-TREVOR
www.itgetsbetter.org/pages/get-help
 - Trans Lifeline (transgender specific)
www.translifeline.org
 - Crisis Text Line - Text 741-741
www.crisistextline.org



“International students who reported a **more functional relationship with their advisors **were less likely** to report having an **emotional or stress-related problem** in the past year.”**



QUESTIONS?