We Listen, We Act: Building Resilience Through Person-Centered Initiatives

Supports for Mental Health in Academic Libraries: Scoping Review

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June 2023
• Anxiety is the leading reason why students seek help. Since 2018, rates have risen 29% (MacDonald, 2022)

• The pandemic has exacerbated the problems faced by post-secondary students including: anxiety, depression, relationship troubles, trauma, substance abuse, among others

• In September 2022, the Mental Health Commission of Canada released the National Standard for Mental Health and Well-Being for Post Secondary Students.
Scoping Review Methodology

Used the method laid out by Arksey & O’Malley (2003)

1. Identify research questions
2. Identify studies (databases searched, dates)
3. Study selection (inclusion, exclusion)
4. Charting (extraction criteria)
5. Collating, summarizing, reporting
Prisma

**Identification**
- Studies from databases/registers (n = 6663)
- References from other sources (n = 1)
  - Citation searching (n = 1)
  - Grey literature (n = 1)

**References removed (n = 403)**
- Duplicates identified manually (n = 1)
- Duplicates identified by Covidence (n = 1)
- Marked as ineligible by automation tools (n = 1)
- Other reasons (n = 1)

**Studies screened (n = 1226)**
- Studies excluded (n = 546)
  - Studies not retrieved (n = 0)

**Studies sought for retrieval (n = 282)**
- Studies not retrieved (n = 0)

**Studies assessed for eligibility (n = 282)**
- Studies excluded (n = 238)
  - Language (n = 3)
  - Duplicates (n = 2)
  - Book Reviews (n = 1)
  - Date limits (n = 22)
  - Cannot locate (n = 2)
  - Not applicable (n = 16)
  - Library Access (n = 23)
  - Conference Summary (n = 1)

**Studies Included In review (n = 44)**
Results: Article Type

- Case study: 18
- Research: 14
- Literature review: 3
- Other (newsletter, interview, editorial, conference proceeding): 7
## Target Populations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population</th>
<th>N=</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not defined</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Students</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Sciences</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Traditional</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate Students</td>
<td>1</td>
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Mental Health Conditions

- Mental health conditions were broadly examined in the literature: anxiety, depression, loneliness, culture shock, stress, digital stress, wellbeing
- Top results were: stress (broadly defined), wellbeing, and anxiety & depression (often grouped together)
- Library anxiety - this was excluded after our first screening round
• Below are the overarching library function where initiatives were implemented and number of mentions in the consulted literature (many articles described several initiatives or programs):
  • Engagement/Outreach/Programming: 28
  • Space Planning and Design: 10
  • Collections: 9
  • Reference/Access Services: 7
  • Instruction: 4
Interventions

• Wellness Workshops (Yoga, health and wellness, digital wellness): 10
• Pet Therapy (dogs, cats, owls): 10
• Special Events (finals week, orientations, author readings): 9
• Displays and activities (games, colouring, crafts, etc.): 7
• Bibliotherapy/book club/leisure reading: 7
• Service Changes (extended hours, staff training): 7
• Space Design (mindfulness rooms, meditation labyrinths, naps stations, signage): 6
• Snacks: 4
• LibGuides/Online learning resources: 4
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The sounds of bubble wrap popping are still fresh in our collective consciousness!

#LongNightAgainstProcrastination was SO much fun. Great to see students enjoying themselves at #UCalgaryLibrary.
Interventions: Emerging Themes

• Lots of partnerships with other units on campus, external organizations focused on health and wellness
• One off events vs. ongoing initiatives
• Informal assessment practices generally, although many articles described surveys, focus groups, and even student participation in planning events.
• Academic libraries play a unique role in connecting students with mental health resources
• Publication years
• Partnerships
• Pandemic specific research
• Barriers to programming (budget, low cost, low effort)
• Spectrum of support (one-off versus sustained efforts)
Limitations

• Library anxiety
• How do librarians define mental health?
• Mental health research is exploding in academic libraries—since the beginning of our process, many similar studies have emerged.
Next Steps

• Potential research areas: MLIS programs, EDIA and mental health, specific user groups and mental health concerns

• Implementing programming: already being more aware of mental health struggles with our populations (Staff development day - neurodiversity - inclusion)
Should we be doing this?
“I have come to understand that my depression is not simply a flaw within me, a solitary problem that must be fixed through therapy, exercise, diet, medication, meditation, journalling. Rather, it is a complex experience that is produced in part by the systems in which I exist. Because of this, I wish to challenge institutions and the individuals within them to see depression as an issue of collective well-being that demands solutions beyond the typical self-care trope.” (Van Beers, p. 39)
Thank you!

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