

# WELLNESS CONNECTION

*Your health, your well-being, our priority!*



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

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### LETTER FROM MAK

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### BOOST YOUR WELL-BEING: HOW YOU CAN REDUCE STIGMA SURROUNDING MENTAL HEALTH

---

### FEATURED RESOURCES: JOE'S PEERS, MINER SUPPORT NETWORK, HELPHYOURSELFHELPOOTHERS.ORG, SANVELLO, PRESCRIPTION DRUG DROP BOX, LGBTQ+ SUPPORT GROUP

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### DATA BRIEF: USING DATA TO HELP BREAK THE STIGMA

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### MINDFUL MOMENT: HALLOWEEN JACK-O-LANTERN STRING CRAFT

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### THIS MONTH'S EVENTS

## LETTER FROM MAK

Dear Reader,

In this newsletter, we focused on one main goal: help reduce stigma surrounding mental health on campus. When we are informed, talk more openly, and have the resources to help, we make our campus safer and more comfortable for everyone on it.

28% of students with any mental health concern(s) don't seek help because they are afraid of judgement\*. 24% of students with a history of suicidal attempts and ideation don't seek help because they feel shame\*. This fear and shame is potentially life threatening for some of our students, but the important thing to note is this fear and shame is preventable and reversible depending on how we move forward to reduce stigma.

In this edition, we cover the ways you can make a difference in reducing stigma surrounding mental health, as well as resources you can use and spread to support well-being.

Please know that if you're struggling, you aren't alone. There are always resources available and people to talk to.

With warm regards,  
Mak the Mole (and *The Student Well-Being Office*)

\*2021 Missouri Assessment of College Health Behaviors

# BOOST YOUR WELL-BEING



## How You Can Reduce Stigma Surrounding Mental Health

*From Nami.org and Psychiatry.org*

Whenever we or someone around us is having mental health concerns or is struggling, the last thing needed is judgement or lack of understanding from others.

Oftentimes, having depression, anxiety, or other mental health concerns are only made worse by feeling like your concerns and emotions are invalidated, "dramatic", "a phase", or that those feelings could go away if we just "tried a little harder".

Sometimes, that judgement can even come from ourselves: feeling embarrassed by your mental health concerns, wishing you could be "healthy", or invalidating our own feelings and concerns.

We **all** have a responsibility to help reduce the stigma surrounding mental health. A more accepting, conscious, educated, and empathetic community allows us all to feel safer and valued.

So, what are some ways we can help reduce the stigma?

### **TALK OPENLY ABOUT MENTAL HEALTH**

There is a myth that talking about or identifying our struggles will only make them worse- this is proven to be untrue! When we speak up about our feelings, we stop carrying that emotional weight alone, and allow others feeling the same way to feel less alone as well.

### **EDUCATE YOURSELF AND OTHERS**

Knowledge is power. Educate yourself (from reputable sources) about mental health conditions, symptoms, and treatments. Being informed is the first step in getting the proper treatment one needs for emotional wellness. Educate others that mental health concerns **are** medical concerns, and that they can be treated just as one would treat any other medical issue. Use factual information to replace rumors or inaccuracies surrounding mental health.

### **BE CONSCIOUS OF LANGUAGE**

How you talk to yourself or someone else about their mental health matters. When describing your own or others concerns, avoid language like "crazy", "mentally ill", "disturbed", etc. As times change, the words people prefer also change. If you need to use a descriptive term but are unsure of the words to use, ask a health education professional or look it up using reputable sources.

### **DON'T EQUATE YOURSELF OR OTHERS WITH MENTAL HEALTH CONCERNS**

No one is their diagnosis- we are more than our mental health. If diagnosed, mental health conditions are only part of a person, and we are not defined by only one aspect of ourselves!

### **CHOOSE EMPOWERMENT OVER SHAME**

Honor and own your story and don't allow others to change your mind. Encourage those seeking support, and honor their story and struggles. Be kind to yourself and others in this process. Acceptance is difficult and takes time, but if we all make an effort in reducing stigma, it will change our community for the better.

# BOOST YOUR WELL-BEING



## Safely Using Prescription Medications

*From Student Well-Being staff*

For those of us who need prescription medications for various needs, it's vital that we get them from trusted health care providers and use them in the appropriate ways.

While it can be easier to buy a lot of things online, buying prescription medications online can be dangerous if you are not doing so through a safe or provider-recommended site. The DEA (Drug Enforcement Administration) is warning of counterfeit prescription pills containing deadly amounts of fentanyl and methamphetamine after a recent uptick in drug overdose deaths. Counterfeit pills purchased online or through social media or other unregulated websites pose a serious public health and safety hazard. The DEA states that these pills may contain the wrong ingredients, contain too little, too much, or no active ingredient at all, or contain other, potentially life-threatening hidden ingredients, such as fentanyl or methamphetamine.

The DEA is urging people to get prescription drugs from state-licensed pharmacies in the U.S., where the Food and Drug Administration and state authorities can assure the quality of drug manufacturing, packaging, distribution, and labeling.

### WHAT ARE THE WAYS FOR SAFELY USING PRESCRIPTION MEDICATIONS?

- Getting a prescription from your off-campus health care provider(s) or other trusted sources
- Getting a prescription and medications from Student Health: Student Health dispenses a large variety of medications based on student need, and very few students need to go to outside pharmacies. Students can get medications at time of visit.
- Always using the medication as prescribed (dosage, taking at certain times, etc)
- Never sharing medication with others or taking medication from others
- Keep prescription medications safe

### WHAT ARE UNSAFE WAYS FOR USING PRESCRIPTION MEDICATIONS?

- Buying online from social media platforms and unregulated or untrusted websites
- Buying from friends, family members, community members, or any other unlicensed individuals
- Buying and using prescription medications that you are not prescribed to use
- Sharing medications with others
- Using medications in manners not prescribed
- Keeping medications in unsafe or unmonitored places

For any questions or concerns regarding prescription medications, contact **Student Health Services** Monday-Friday, 9am-3pm:

[mstshs@mst.edu](mailto:mstshs@mst.edu)

[573.341.4284](tel:573.341.4284)

910 W. 10th Street

## FEATURED RESOURCES



### Joe's PEERS

Joe's PEERS is a student leadership organization providing education, encouragement, and resources to fellow students. Members of Joe's PEERS promote health and well-being on campus through tables, outreach, fun events, and more!

Some of the health and well-being topic areas covered in Joe's PEERS are alcohol and drugs harm reduction, general mental well-being promotion, public health, nutrition and fitness, sexual health, sexualized violence, healthy relationships, bystander intervention, and anything else related to health and well-being that students are interested in pursuing.

The time commitment for members is about 3-4 hours per week, and students can sign up to be in the organization at any point in the semester.

Apply and learn more at [wellbeing.mst.edu/peer-education/joes-peers/](http://wellbeing.mst.edu/peer-education/joes-peers/).

### Miner Support Network

The Miner Support Network is a campus organization that works to de-stigmatize mental health through confidential, weekly, peer-facilitated groups throughout the entirety of the semester.

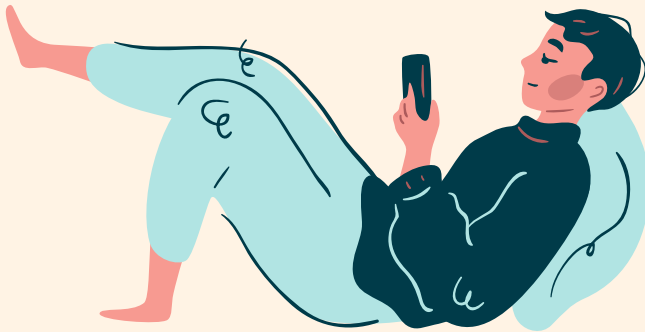
The weekly groups are led by students who have been trained with holistic health and well-being resources to create a refreshingly accessible space and facilitate inclusive and engaging dialogue.

Groups are kept small (less than 10 students) and discussion is open to anything that students want to talk about. Groups are held on campus in 1-hour time slots.

Learn more and sign up at [thesupportnetwork.org/miner](http://thesupportnetwork.org/miner).



## FEATURED RESOURCES



### Help Yourself Help Others

Everyone experiences stress, sadness and anxiety from time to time—it's part of life.

But if you are feeling overwhelmed, depressed, or unable to do the things you once enjoyed, it may be time to assess your emotional health. If you are concerned about yourself or someone you love, take a few minutes to complete an anonymous self-assessment.

Help Yourself Help Others is a website with brief screenings covering a variety of topics which can help determine if you or someone you care about should connect with a behavioral health professional. Think of these as a checkup from the neck up!

This program is completely anonymous and confidential. Immediately following the brief questionnaire you will see your results, recommendations, and key resources.

Take a screening and learn more at [helpyourselfhelpothers.org](https://helpyourselfhelpothers.org).

### Sanvello

Sanvello is an app to help manage stress, anxiety, depression, and build resiliency.

The app has multiples modules/sections that can help you with specific concerns, such as:

- Guided Paths: a series of self-help learning tools that combine an audio lesson with a related activity to help you learn different skills related to cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT) and mindfulness
- Personal tracking: self-rate daily on whatever you care to track: for example, your mood, hours of sleep, exercise, substance abuse, sources of anxiety, even menstruation
- Thoughts: helps you understand your thinking patterns, challenge the thoughts to reduce your anxiety, and develop more balanced perspectives
- Community/Chat Group with other users
- Guided visualizations

Access the premium app for free with your @mst.edu email. Learn more at [sanvello.com](https://sanvello.com).



# FEATURED RESOURCES



## Prescription Drug Drop Box

New to S&T this semester, the University Police Department now has a permanent disposal site for expired, unwanted, or unused prescription medicine! This option is available year round, 24/7, and any campus community member can use it judgement free with no questions asked. Please follow all disposal instructions on the drop box and do not dispose of unaccepted materials, like needles, in this box. The box is currently located at the University Police Department in G10 Campus Support Facility.

Student Well-Being also offers Detera Bags which can be used to safely dispose medications at home. Get a bag and learn more by visiting Student Well-Being at 204 Norwood Hall, Monday-Friday 8am-5pm.

## LGBTQ+ Support Group

Student Well-Being is excited to offer a new support group for LGBTQ+ students, starting this semester.

Experience the encouragement of others in the LGBTQ+ community and support each other on the journey through college and beyond.

Possible group activities include navigating college issues, sharing local & nationwide supports, practicing healthy self-care habits, processing stress & practicing coping skills, role-playing difficult conversations, discussing healthy dating practices, and much more.

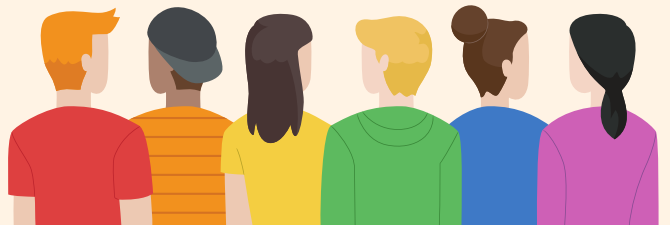
All support groups are led by trained Student Well-Being staff or licensed counselors, and are free, confidential, and private.

To learn more and sign up for the support group, contact Student Well-Being today!

[wellbeing@mst.edu](mailto:wellbeing@mst.edu)

[573.341.4211](tel:573.341.4211)

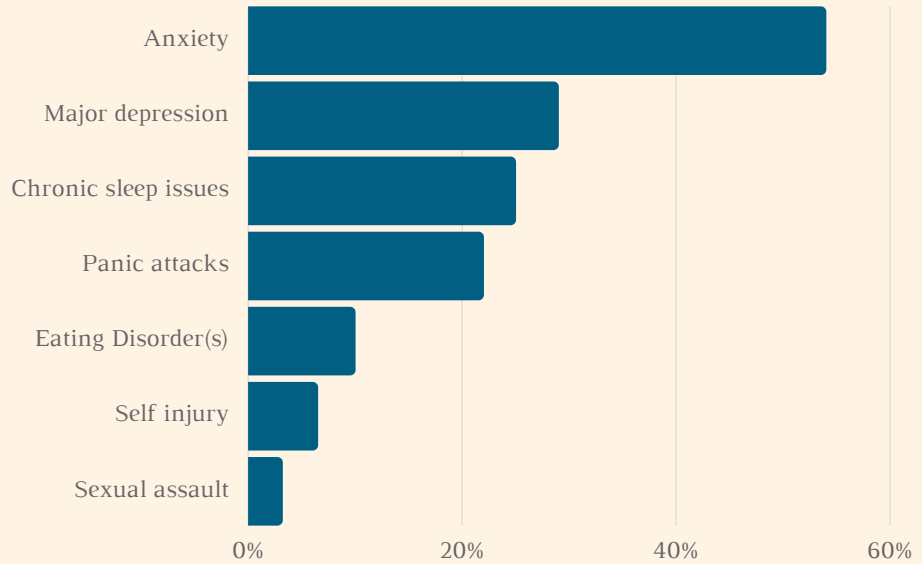
204 Norwood Hall, Monday-Friday 8am-5pm



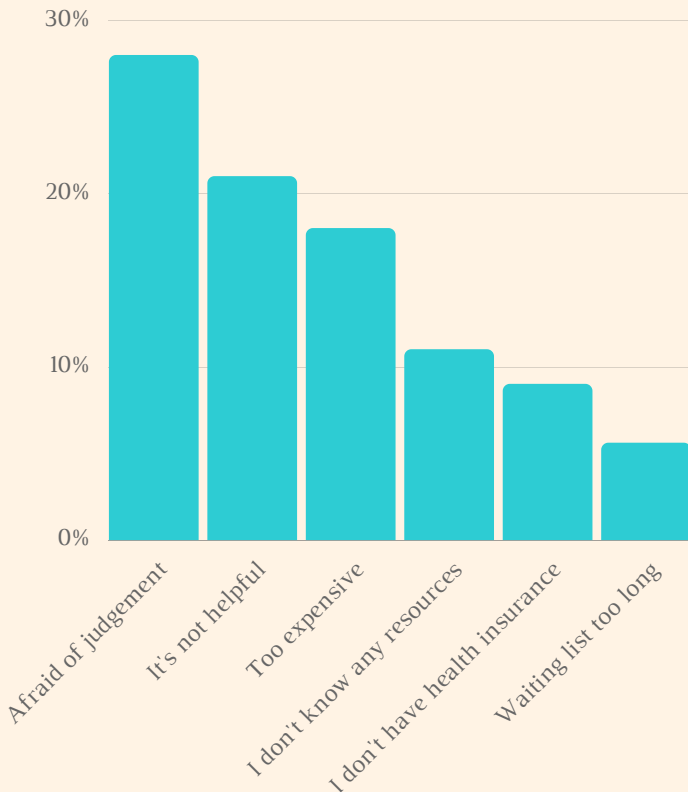
# DATA BRIEF

## Using Data to Help Break the Stigma

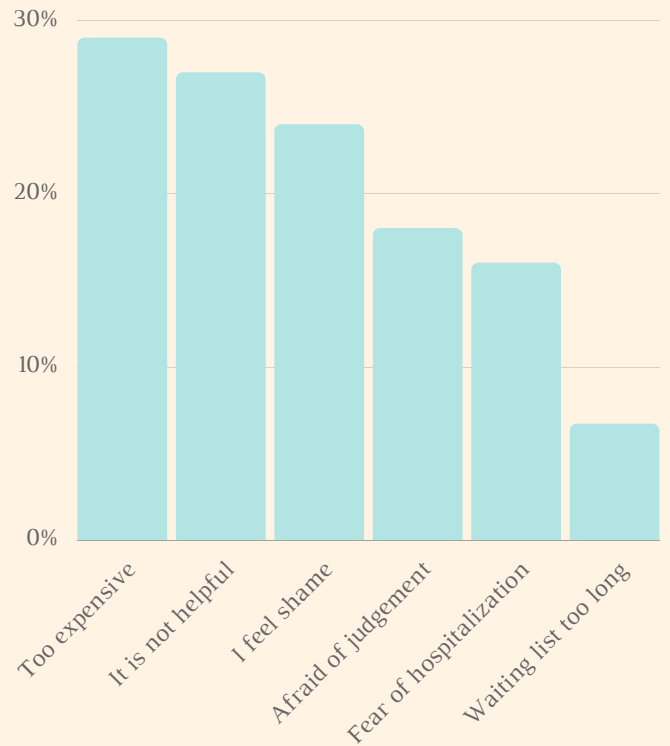
Which of the following have you experienced in the past year? (check all that apply)\*



What are the barriers that stop you from seeking assistance for **all mental health concerns** experienced in the past year?\*



What are the barriers that stop you from seeking assistance for **suicidal attempts/thoughts** experienced in the past year?\*



\*From 2021 Missouri Assessment of College Health Behaviors

## DATA BRIEF (CONTINUED)

Looking at the above data, we can see there is quite a stigma on campus attached to seeking assistance for mental health and suicidal concerns, as well as some very real barriers. We know that one of the best ways to reduce stigma is to educate ourselves and others, so let's break down these assumptions and barriers to ensure there's no misinformation when seeking help for mental health concerns.

***Too expensive:*** While some off-campus services are expensive, Student Well-Being offers free counseling for all students, as well as a multitude of free non-counseling services and resources.

***No health insurance:*** You don't need insurance to use any health/well-being related campus services.

***It's not helpful:*** Actually, 88% of S&T students said the assistance they received was effective\* (for both on and off campus services). Seeking help from a mental health professional can give you tools to manage mental health concerns and give a new perspective on your experiences.

***The wait list is too long:*** While we can't speak for non-campus related services, Student Well-Being has walk-in availability everyday, and the wait-time for an appointment is less than a week. There are [after-hours and crisis resources](#) available 24/7.

***I don't know any resources:*** Many resources are available online and in-person in various campus departments. A good place to start is the [Well-Being Quick Reference Guide](#), a one-page document with services and departments related to a specific topic of concern (isolation/loneliness, financial concerns, illness, etc). While it is still being built out fully, you can also visit the [Student Well-Being resource database](#) where you can find on-campus, off-campus, and online resources related to specific topics. Follow [@sandtwellbeing](#) on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter for daily content from all the health and well-being departments on campus.

***Fear of hospitalization:*** Hospitalization is only used for a student's protection when they have immediate intent and take actions to end their life and are unable to reduce that risk through crisis counseling with a licensed counselor. Hospitalization is not the goal when working with students expressing mental health concerns, and is usually a final intervention.

***Afraid of judgement and feeling shame:*** We all play a role in making sure every student on campus feels safe, validated, and comfortable to support their mental health. There is nothing wrong or shameful about understanding your emotions and finding appropriate ways to heal and cope.

For any questions, concerns, or if you want to talk, contact Student Well-Being using the contact information on the last page of this newsletter.

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\*From 2021 Missouri Assessment of College Health Behaviors



# MINDFUL MOMENT

## Halloween Jack-O-Lantern String Craft

From [eighteen25.com](http://eighteen25.com)

(pictures continued onto next page)



Needed Supplies:

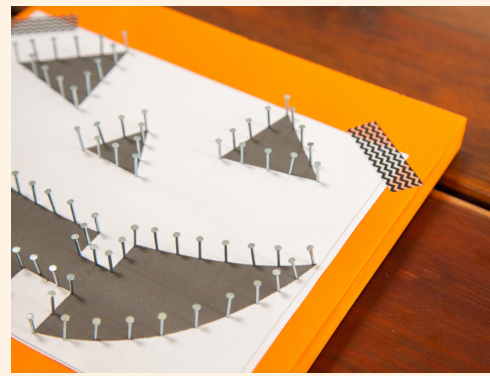
- printed jack-o-lantern pattern of choice
- wood board (pictured left is 9"x9") at least 1/4" thick
- orange paint (or preferred color)
- paint brush
- tape
- hammer
- thin nails
- black string
- scissors

1. Paint wood and let completely dry. Multiple coats may be necessary depending on wood and paint.
2. Once the paint is dry, print out your jack-o-lantern pattern and tape to the wood (picture #1)



#1

3. Carefully hammer nails into the perimeter of each part of the face (picture #2).



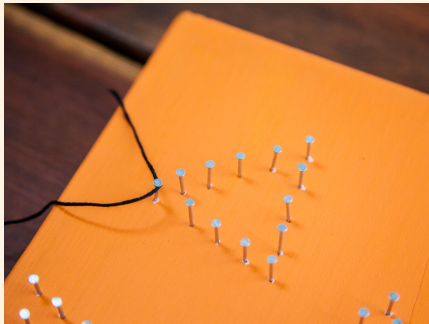
#2

- Once completed, pull paper out (picture #3)
4. With the string, tie onto a nail at the corner of a face shape (picture #4). Then wrap string around each nail in the design (picture #5). From here, wrap the string around the nails randomly/as desired, until the shape is mostly black. Repeat this step for each shape (picture #6).
  5. Use scissors to remove any excess string (from tying), and repaint any sections if removed by tape or nails.
  6. Decorate your space and have a happy and spooky Halloween!

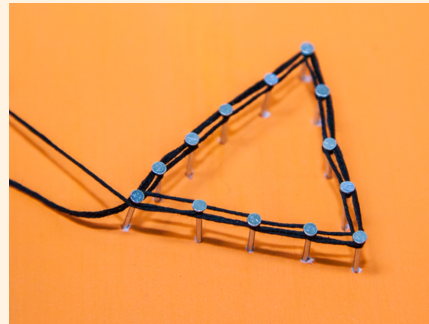


#3

# MINDFUL MOMENT (CONTINUED)



#4





#5





#6


## GET IN TOUCH

 [wellbeing@mst.edu](mailto:wellbeing@mst.edu)

 [\(573\).341.4211](tel:(573).341.4211)

 [@sandtwellbeing](https://www.instagram.com/sandtwellbeing)

 [@sandtwellbeing](https://www.facebook.com/sandtwellbeing)

 [@sandtwellbeing](https://twitter.com/sandtwellbeing)

## THIS MONTH'S EVENTS

Have an event you want featured? Submit to [wellbeing@mst.edu](mailto:wellbeing@mst.edu)

October 4th-8th: [Mental Well-Being Awareness Week](#)

October 16th: [Gold Rush 5K](#)

October 22nd: Rx Take Back, Havener, 12-2pm- bring unwanted prescription medications to dispose properly

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Want to be featured in the Student Spotlight section? Submit original content, such as a personal piece, poem, short story, photographs, recipe, or other form of content to [wellbeing@mst.edu](mailto:wellbeing@mst.edu). Content must be submitted as a Microsoft Word document or Google doc, no longer than 1000 words. Content may be edited for clarity and length. Pictures must be submitted as a JPEG or PNG. All submissions must follow University policy. All submitted content will be used at the discretion of Student Well-Being. Content can be published credited to you or anonymously, whichever you prefer.