

WELLNESS CONNECTION

Your health, your well-being, our priority!



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THIS MONTH'S EVENTS

LETTER FROM MAK

Hello Miners,

Happy beginning of fall and (maybe more importantly) a short week before fall break!

This edition is all about building social connections and sense of belonging on campus. With the changing temperatures and growing challenges that the semester brings, it's important to find stability and support before we need it.

We are featuring ways you can manage different anxieties, different groups to join for social connection, and of course some fun fall activities with a pumpkin focus.

Check out the Event Spotlight section to learn more about [Mental Well-Being Awareness Week](#), a series of events, trainings, and activities aimed at promoting mental well-being, building social connections, and increasing sense of belonging on campus. We can't wait to see you there and we hope you have a wonderful October!

With warm regards,

Mak the Mole (and *The Student Well-Being Office*)

DATA BRIEF

Building Social Connections

From Student Well-Being

One of the best ways to find social connections and a sense of belonging on campus is to get involved during your time at S&T. Involvement allows us to meet new people while focusing on the things that are important to us or hobbies that we enjoy.

Did you know that 83% of S&T students are involved in at least one ongoing campus activity or organization?*

If you are part of the 17% that's not involved, or if you are feeling like you want to be more involved, fear not! Below are tips from staff on the best ways to reach out and connect with others.



- **Start with your major/degree:** Almost 50% of Miners are involved in professional or academic organizations. These are a great place to start because you may be more familiar with the subject matter and already know some of the people involved. Plus these can be great resume boosters.
- **Figure out what is “missing” from your schedule:** Find what it is that you want to be doing more of and look for organizations or groups that focus on that. Are you wishing you could make new friends to do activities with? Maybe a social organization is the best option. Are you wanting to be more active? Try intramural sports teams (they welcome beginners!). Are you wanting to be more involved in your community? Maybe a political, service, or social justice organization would be a good fit.
- **Don’t be afraid to try something new:** Many organizations offer lower stakes membership (drop in/drop out, no fees associated with membership, etc) and can allow you to try something new with the option to drop if you don’t enjoy it. This is a great way to find new and creative hobbies.
- **Start your own organization:** If you have an idea for a group and have people interested, you can start your own registered student organization! Learn more at involvement.mst.edu/organizations/newrso.
- **Meet with a Peer Involvement Advisor:** if you have no idea what you are interested in and are feeling lost, consider meeting with a Peer Involvement Advisor. They will help you find your home on campus through one-on-one consultations using your interests and personality traits. Learn more about that process at involvement.mst.edu/pia.

**2023 Missouri Assessment of College Health Behaviors*

BOOST YOUR WELL-BEING

Cooler Temps & Mental Health: Fighting Seasonal Affective Disorder

From Student Well-Being

Dealing with seasonal depression, also known as Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD), affects many of us in big ways. Did you know that more than 3 million people a year in the US alone are affected by SAD? SAD is a type of depression in mood that occurs at the same period of time every year because of fewer daylight hours. Symptoms include fatigue, depression, hopelessness, and social withdrawal.

You might be thinking: fall is just getting under way, why are we talking about this now? It's important to know ahead of time that you might be affected and to build in habits that can help before it starts. Below are some friendly tips to help brighten your days during those challenging times.

First off, let's talk about moving your body – regular exercise is your friend! It releases those feel-good endorphins and can really help you fight off SAD. Whether you're up for a nature walk, a bit of yoga, or hitting the gym, getting active can do wonders for your mood.

Now, here's another friendly reminder: embrace the sun! Try to soak up as much natural daylight as you can during the day, even if it means bundling up for a cozy outdoor adventure. Sunlight helps reset your body's internal clock and can give your spirits a lift. And when you're indoors, make your space as friendly and bright as possible with some daylight-simulating bulbs. Additionally, don't hesitate to chat with a therapist or counselor who specializes in mood disorders – they're like your personal cheerleaders on the path to overcoming seasonal blues, offering you support and helpful strategies along the way. You're not alone in this, and there are lots of friendly tools to help you stay sunny even in the winter months!

Another friendly strategy to tackle seasonal depression is to surround yourself with positive vibes. Spend time with friends and loved ones who uplift your spirits. Social connections can be a powerful antidote to the winter blues. Whether it's cozying up with a hot cup of cocoa, hosting a game night, or simply having heart-to-heart chats, nurturing your relationships can bring warmth and joy into your life.

Lastly, make self-care your best friend. Treat yourself kindly by indulging in activities that make you happy and relaxed. It could be reading a good book, taking up a new hobby, or simply enjoying a warm bath. Don't forget to nourish your body with healthy, mood-boosting foods and prioritize quality sleep. A well-rested and well-fed you is better equipped to face the challenges of seasonal depression with a smile.

Remember, it's all about taking small, friendly steps towards maintaining your mental and emotional well-being throughout the year, no matter what the season may bring. You've got this!

For more tips or if you need extra support, reach out to Student Well-Being at any time:

**204 Norwood Hall
wellbeing@mst.edu
573.341.4211
wellbeing.mst.edu**



BOOST YOUR WELL-BEING

Dealing with Test Anxiety

From Student Well-Being

As the leaves begin to change color, we notice another change in our academic life: it's test season. October is the time for midterms to take place, or at least the time where professors will start giving tests. Hence, you have probably already taken one. Whether it went good or bad, taking tests is hard and stressful. Being expected to show your knowledge and abilities in under an hour is overwhelming. So, here are some tips and tricks to prepare you for your midterms or your next exam:

- **Plan Your Study Schedule-** Creating a study timeline in advance to your exam date will help you allocate time to cover all the material without cramming!
- **Stay Organized-** Gather all textbooks, notes, and study materials before you begin. This will allow you to start off on the best foot possible, as you will know you have everything you need. Also, make sure you have a clean and organized study space. Utilize the library or other quiet places where you know you will work efficiently.
- **Break it Down-** Divide your study material into smaller, manageable sections. This makes it easier to focus and ensures you cover anything. This will also allow you to take breaks and refresh your brain.
- **Use Study Aids-** Create flashcards, diagrams, or anything you see fit to help you get the information across. Creating something, let alone just rewriting the material, will help you retain the information better. Also, if available, review previous exam papers and take advantage of reviews and practice questions. These can give you an idea of the format and types of questions that may appear.
- **Set SMART Goals-** SMART is defined as specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound study goals. Setting up little goals through your study process will provide you with a sense of accomplishment and will allow you to manage your time wisely.

Taking tests can also create some anxious feelings. This anxiety is often driven by the fear of the unknown, the pressure to perform well, or concerns about not meeting expectations. The key is to manage test anxiety so that it does not become overwhelming. Here are some strategies you can implement to overcome it:

- **Take Breaks-** Mentioned earlier, after studying for a while, watch a movie, get lunch with a friend, even take a walk. Doing something that you enjoy will help calm you down. Taking breaks will also give your brain time to process the information you studied and give you a fresh mindset when you need to jump back into the material.
- **Modulate Your Breathing-** Anxiety causes shortness of breath and a racing heart. In order to regulate it, try breathing in deeply through your nose and exhaling through your mouth. This will slow your breathing and help control your heart rate.
- **Laugh and Smile-** Did you know laughter is a natural medicine that improves your mood and combats stress? Try watching Youtube videos or listening to a funny podcast to get you laughing. This will also allow yourself to regroup before studying again.
- **Stay Healthy-** Keeping your body healthy is just as important as maintaining your mental health! Make sure you are getting enough sleep in the days leading up to the exam, eating a balanced diet, and drinking plenty of water. Engaging in exercise and physical activity will also reduce stress.
- **Embrace Optimism:** It's beneficial to maintain a positive outlook and focus on your preparation rather than dwelling on the final outcome. Practicing mindfulness, visualizing success, and even trying meditation or yoga are all ways that will help you keep a positive mindset.

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BOOST YOUR WELL-BEING

Dealing with Test Anxiety (continued)

From Student Well-Being

- **Seek Support-** You are not alone while prepping for an exam. Work with classmates and lean on your support systems during this time. Give a call to your parents or text a friend about it. Remember, your professors and instructors want to help too; reach out to them if you have questions or concerns about the exam.
- **Reward Yourself-** Celebrate your efforts and achievements, no matter the outcome. Get yourself a little sweet treat or a nice dinner! Treating yourself to a small reward can provide motivation for future study sessions.

Remember that tests are just one way to measure your understanding of a subject. Do not let them define your self-worth. Stay focused, stay calm, and trust in your preparation. With these test-focused and self-focused strategies, you can navigate the test season with success. Good luck on your midterms!



BOOST YOUR WELL-BEING

Overcoming Social Anxiety - What Happens Now?

From Student Well-Being

If you struggle with social anxiety, you are not alone. If you feel as though your social anxiety is limiting you from daily life, we have some ideas that may help.

- **Practice breathing exercises:** before going into a social setting, calm your mind with deep breaths (breathe in for 5 seconds, hold for 5 seconds, then breathe out for 5 seconds; repeat as needed!)
- **Use positive self talk:** understand that social anxiety is very common and it's not your fault. Every day or before social settings, say a few positive things to yourself and about how you're working to overcome something. Giving ourselves praise is a great way to boost confidence.
- **Gradual exposure:** start off by practicing conversation techniques with a single person, then a small group, eventually working up to a larger crowd. Make small conversation based on what's around you, shared interests, or start off by complimenting something they have or are wearing.

Overcoming social anxiety is a significant achievement, but what happens now, once you've taken those courageous steps towards a more fulfilling and confident life? Well, the journey continues, and it's filled with opportunities for growth and self-discovery. The first thing to acknowledge is that setbacks can happen, and that's perfectly normal. Social anxiety may not disappear overnight, but the progress you've made is worth celebrating. If you find yourself facing moments of anxiety, remember the coping techniques and strategies you've learned - these are your allies in these moments.

Now that you're on the path to overcoming social anxiety, consider setting new goals and challenges for yourself. Perhaps it's joining a club or group that aligns with your interests, or volunteering for a cause you're passionate about. Expanding your social circle in a supportive and gradual manner can help you build your confidence and continue your journey towards a more socially fulfilling life. Keep in mind that self-compassion is crucial. Be patient with yourself and recognize that growth takes time. Seek support from friends, family, or a therapist when needed, and don't hesitate to celebrate your successes, no matter how small they may seem. Your journey to overcoming social anxiety is a testament to your resilience and strength, and the path ahead is filled with endless possibilities for personal and social growth.



FEATURED RESOURCES

LGBTQ+ Consultations and Group

In a world that is constantly evolving, finding a safe space to explore your identity is essential. We understand that the journey of self-discovery and self-acceptance can be both empowering and challenging. That's why we at Student Well-Being are here to offer you a supportive environment where you can explore your identity, discuss important topics, and access valuable resources.

Our LGBTQ+ consultations consist of 1-on-1 private conversations to discuss identity labels, coming out, and more. This can just be a chat about how you are feeling or it can be an informational session to learn about resources. You can schedule a consultation at [LGBTQ+ Consultation](#).

If you are looking for encouragement from others in the LGBTQ+ community, group counseling is also available. These group sessions are a genuine safe space where you can connect with others who understand your journey. Some possible group activities include navigating college issues, sharing local and nationwide support, practicing healthy self-care habits, processing stress, practicing coping skills, discussing healthy dating practices, and so much more. This fall, these group sessions are led by a staff member (non-counselor) every Thursday.

Join us in creating an inclusive and empowering community on campus and beyond. Your identity matters and so do you! For more information email wellbeing@mst.edu, call 573.341.4211, or stop by 203 Norwood Hall.



Let's Talk Program

Want to talk to a counselor, but don't want to schedule an appointment just yet? Let's Talk is a program that provides easy access to informal, private conversations with trained Student Well-Being staff at various spots around campus. No appointment or fee necessary. Let's Talk offers resources for concerns, a listening ear from a trained professional, or simply a place to relax and chat. Confidentiality cannot be guaranteed for Let's Talk, as they are held in public spaces, with some sessions led by [Mandated Reporters](#). Below are the Fall 2023 Let's Talk locations. Sessions are held throughout the entirety of the semester, with the exceptions of any campus closures and holidays. Staff will be available in the listed spaces below from 12:00pm - 1:00pm.

- Mondays: Student Success Center (198 Toomey)
- Tuesdays: Library Miner Oasis
- Wednesdays: Student Health Services
- Thursdays: Centennial Hall
- Fridays: Miner Oasis (201 Norwood Hall)

Outside of these times, Student Well-Being staff like to be available to students around campus. If you see a Student Well-Being staff member wearing a shirt with the design above on it, that means they are ready and able to chat with you! Feel free to stop them to learn more about the resources and services available to you.

FEATURED RESOURCES



ProjectConnect

Want to enhance your college experience and create meaningful connections with fellow students? Check out ProjectConnect!

ProjectConnect is a fun, student-led program offered through Student Well-Being! It's aimed at helping you build a stronger community on campus. Students will meet in small groups of 4-6 over the course of the semester, and engage in a series of thought-provoking questions and fun activities, ending with a group event. Come form lifelong friendships, enhance your social skills, gain new perspectives, and broaden your horizons. ProjectConnect happens Thursdays 1-2:30! Learn more at [ProjectConnect-Student Well-Being](#) and sign up [here](#).

Society of Hispanic Engineers Study Group

Want to ace your exams while making new friends? Join SHPE's Study Nights, which are held twice a week! We understand how difficult and lonely college life can be at times, which is why SHPE's Study Nights are the ideal balance of productivity and companionship. Study Nights are about more than simply studying; they're about building a friendly and motivating environment where you can work on your academic goals while making lifetime friends.

Schedule:

Tuesday at BCH 312 from 7pm-9pm

Sunday at SDI House from 7pm-9pm

Grit and Resilience Workshop Series

Are the challenges of college life overwhelming you? Do you want to learn how to bounce back from setbacks and achieve your goals with determination? Workshop sessions are held each week on Thursdays from 1pm-2pm.

Sign up on bit.ly/gritworkshopseries or email simran.bhatia@mst.edu

STOPP Anxiety Group

In this counselor-led group offered by Student Well-Being, you will learn the mechanisms that start and stop anxiety. Engage with a support network of peers sharing similar experiences, learning ways to STOPP (Stop, Take a break, Observe, Pull back, Practice) anxiety. In this group you will additionally create a personal toolbox of coping skills that will help you grow personally and professionally when facing stressful situations. This group will encourage experiential activities, creative expression, mindful based activities, humor, and connection with your inner self.

To learn more about the group or to sign up, visit 204 Norwood Hall or call [573.341.4211](tel:573.341.4211).



MINDFUL MOMENT

Trendy Non-Carving Pumpkin Decorating Ideas

From Student Well-Being Staff

Carving pumpkins is a traditional fall activity, but it can be challenging for students living on campus due to limited access to tools and the mess it creates. There is a wide range of possibilities to make your pumpkins stand out during the fall season and Halloween that eliminate the need for carving and the associated cleanup hassle. Check out our ideas!

Painted Pumpkins: Use paints to create intricate designs, patterns, or scenes on your pumpkins. You can paint anything from spooky faces to colorful abstract designs. Consider glow-in-the-dark paint or doing the drip-paint technique on your pumpkin to add light and texture!



Glitter Pumpkins: Apply glue to the surface of your pumpkin and then sprinkle it with glitter for a sparkling effect. Go crazy with designs, colors, or cover it entirely!



Ribbon and Yarn-Wrapped Pumpkins: For our sewing and crochet fans! Wrap ribbon or yarn around your pumpkins in different colors and patterns to add texture and visual appeal!



Thumbtack or Push Pin Art: Create patterns by pushing thumb tacks or push pins into the surface of the pumpkin. This can result in a beautiful, textured design.



Chalkboard Pumpkins: No need to stick to one design while having a chalkboard pumpkin! Paint your pumpkin with chalkboard paint and use any color chalk to draw and decorate it!



MINDFUL MOMENT

Pumpkin Chocolate Chip Cookies

From Student Well-Being Staff

Fall puts us all in the baking mood, and nothing is better than utilizing pumpkin and spice in a fun recipe! After a long day too, there is nothing better than having cookies ready to snack on once you get home. So, check out these pumpkin chocolate chip cookies! They're a soft, cakey, melt-in-your-mouth kind of cookie and very easy to make. This recipe is writer tested, and writer approved! Two thumbs up! For reference, follow this link: [Pumpkin Chocolate Chip Cookies](#)

You will need:

- 2 cups flour
- 2 tsp baking powder
- ¾ tsp baking soda
- 1 ½ tsp cinnamon
- ½ tsp ground ginger
- ½ tsp ground nutmeg
- ⅛ tsp ground cloves
- ½ tsp salt
- ½ cup granulated sugar
- ½ cup packed brown sugar
- ½ cup vegetable oil
- 1 large egg
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 1 cup canned pumpkin puree
- 1 ½ cups chocolate chips

Instructions:

- Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Line baking sheet with parchment paper
- In a mixing bowl, whisk together flour, baking powder, baking soda, cinnamon, nutmeg, ginger, cloves, and salt. Set aside
- In another bowl, mix together granulated sugar, brown sugar, and the vegetable oil until combined
- Mix in egg, vanilla extract, and pumpkin puree with the sugar/vegetable oil mixture.
- Slowly add in the flour mixture and mix just until nearly combined
- Fold in chocolate chips while folding the batter
- Drop dough size of 2 tbsp onto the baking sheet, 2 inches apart
- Bake until cookies are nearly set, 11-13 minutes
- Allow to cool for a tad, then bon appetit!



MINDFUL MOMENT

Must-Watch Halloween Movies

From Student Well-Being Staff

Halloween is the perfect time to indulge in some spooky and family-friendly fun movies to get into the spirit of the season. And guess what? Our team has its own beloved picks to share! So, here's a list of the movies we consider absolute must-watches!!

- **Edward Scissorhands** - Directed by the creative genius Tim Burton and released in 1990, this film is like a quirky and heartwarming fairy tale for the big screen. This movie is all about embracing our unique quirks, the importance of acceptance, and how it feels to be different in a cookie-cutter society. Edward Scissorhands is a heartwarming and thought-provoking movie that'll leave you with a smile and maybe a few tears. It's a must-watch for anyone who loves a good dose of quirky charm and a reminder that being yourself is pretty darn cool. Available to stream on MAX.
- **Practical Magic** - The film, directed by Griffin Dunne and released in 1998, is like a cozy, magical hug that explores love, friendship, and the supernatural in the most heartwarming way. Sandra Bullock and Nicole Kidman's sisterly bond is pure movie magic and is something we all secretly wish for. With a sprinkle of humor, a dash of romance, and a lot of witchy charm, "Practical Magic" is that feel-good movie that'll leave you believing in the power of love and family, with a side of delightful whimsy. Available to stream on HULU.
- **Halloween Town**- This Disney Channel original movie follows a young girl, Marnie, who discovers she comes from a family of witches. She and her siblings journey to Halloweentown, a magical realm inhabited by supernatural creatures, to save it from an evil force who wants to stop Halloween forever. Available to stream on Disney+ or rent/buy on Youtube and Amazon Video.
- **It's The Great Pumpkin, Charlie Brown**- It may be a TV special, but it's a timeless classic that I do not want to overlook. Revisit your childhood as you witness Snoopy's adventures as the Flying Ace, Linus patiently awaiting The Great Pumpkin's arrival, and rooting for Charlie Brown to collect more than just rocks in his trick-or-treat bag. Available to stream on Apple TV+.
- **Coco** - For lovers of beautiful and vibrant animation, celebrating cultural holidays, and musical mysteries, Coco is the halloween movie to watch. Follow Miguel and his family during Día de los Muertos and the ensuing adventure. Available to stream on Disney+ or to rent/buy on Youtube and Amazon Video.
- **Spirited Away** - While this isn't traditionally thought of as a Halloween movie, it does feature ghosts, fun creatures, and a grand adventure, which we think qualifies it for this list. This Studio Ghibli anime film focuses on Chihiro and her parents who are moving to a new town but end up getting trapped in the spirit world along the way. Available to stream on Max (formerly HBO Max) and to buy/rent on Amazon Video.



EVENT SPOTLIGHT

Mental Well-Being Awareness Week (Oct 9-13)

Join us for a series of events, trainings, and activities aimed at promoting mental well-being, building social connections, and increasing sense of belonging on campus.

Monday, October 9th

- Wellness Resource Fair, 11am-2pm, Havener Atrium
- Build Your Own Thriving Kit, 6pm-8 pm, BCH 121

**Learn more at
wellbeing.mst.edu/mwbaw23**

Tuesday, October 10th

- We Care About You A Latte: Coffee Social, 11am-12pm, Havener St. Pat's A
- Pop the Stigma and Hydration Station, 11am-2pm, Outside Library
- Connection Evening, 6pm-8pm, Puck (dinner provided)

Wednesday, October 11th

- Craft Station, 11am-1 pm, Havener Atrium
- National Coming Out Day, 11am-1 pm, Havener Atrium
- Creative Arts Workshop, 3pm-5pm, Havener Missouri Room (waffles provided)
- Donut Stress, Reach for Success, 5pm-6:30pm, TJ Hall South Lounge

Thursday, October 12th

- Mental Health Screenings, 11am-1pm, Havener Atrium
- Well-Being Ambassador Training , 6pm-8pm, Toomey 254 (dinner provided)
- Fitness Bingo, all day, Fitness Center

Friday, October 13th

- Dog Days, 10am-2 pm, Toomey Lawn
- Family Night, 6pm-8pm , BCH 121 (dinner provided)

GET IN TOUCH



wellbeing@mst.edu



[573.341.4211](tel:573.341.4211)



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



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

Want to be featured in the newsletter? Submit original content, such as a personal piece, poem, short story, photographs, recipe, or other form of content to [Laura Woods-Buchanan](mailto:Laura.Woods-Buchanan). Content may be edited for clarity and length. All submissions must follow University policy and will be used at the discretion of Student Well-Being.

UPCOMING DATES

October 5-6: Fall Break

October 9-13: [Mental Well-Being Awareness Week](#)

October 16-20: National Collegiate Alcohol Awareness Week

- Tabling Event: October 16, 11am-1pm, Havener Atrium
- Tabling Event: October 17, 5pm-7pm, TJ Hall
- Blast From The Past - Neon Night: October 19, 7pm-10pm, The Field between University Commons and Residential Commons
 - This event will have food, yard games, and activities from your childhood! Wear neon and have a night filled with food, laughter, and fun!

MEET OUR WRITERS

Unless otherwise stated, all articles are written by one of the Student Well-Being staff members below. We thank you for your continued readership!

Debora Andrade - Student Employee

Abigail Krimmel - Student Employee

Laura Woods-Buchanan - Health Communications Specialist