

Counseling and Wellness Services

Garret Lee Smith Memorial Act
College Suicide Prevention Program

Glen A. Martin, Ph.D.

Project Director

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Five program activities:

- 1) Gatekeeper Liaison Network: SIREN Training, Kendra Smith, Ph.D.
- 2) S.U.P.E.R Peer-education program, Kendra Smith, Ph.D.
- 3) Webpage Resources, Dan Darnell, Ph.D.
- 4) E-mail Screening, Beth McElhinny, LCSW
- 5) Parent Alliance, Glen Martin, Ph.D.

E-mail Screening

- Developed by the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention
- Pilot Results at UNC, and Emory recently published in Journal of American College Health
- Invites students to complete an on-line questionnaire that screens for depression and other suicide risk factors
 - Respondents receive a personalized assessment and are able to communicate anonymously with a therapist using an on-line dialogue feature

E-mail Screening Project: Fall '06- Spring '07

- E-mail invitations were sent to the entire junior and senior class (n=8,512)
 - 219 (2.6%) students completed the questionnaire
 - 70% are moderate to significant risk
 - 62 students had one or more on-line contacts
 - 90 students contacted CWS directly by phone or e-mail about their concerns
- 87 (1%) students came to CWS for in-person evaluation and/or therapy
 - 75% say they would not have sought help without the invitation

E-mail Screening:

Theme: Thanks, when can we meet?!

- Hi Elizabeth,

Sorry for taking so long to respond to your e-mails. I have had a hectic few weeks. I had mid-terms, then my computer crashed and I couldn't remember my passwords so I couldn't check my emails until today and have been playing catch-up since then. I read your response and appreciate it, and I would love to meet with you to discuss some of the things I've been dealing with in further detail. I'm free tomorrow (Friday) before 3, so if you can fit me in any time during the day I'd be glad to come by CWS.

Thanks,

E-mail Screening

Theme: Unexpected results

- Hi Beth:
- I'm taking a communications class and I was hoping you could answer a couple of questions I have about the email below.

(1) Approximately how many people received the email?

(2) Is this a targeted email? (eg. is some criteria such as having previously received counseling from CWS used to limit who gets this email?) Please note that I don't need to know what the specific criteria are, just whatever you can give me.

I will use this information in a paper I am writing for my communications class. The paper would not be distributed or presented to anyone other than the professor, Dr. Smith.

Thanks,

P.S.

>

I received two copies of the email below. Also, it would be nice if the final page of the survey (after entering an email and pressing "submit") had a button to log you out of the site. I had to manually delete a cookie to make it so that the site did not identify me. This could represent a potential privacy risk to some people.

E-mail Screening

Theme: The cynic

- Elizabeth, Thank you for your assessment. I am glad the University has decided to start giving a @#%\$ about its students. The Professors here seem to enjoy making students miserable. I only wish they had started this when I was a freshman and could have used a heads up about depression and how a learning disability can make college *%\$* hard—a lot harder than high school! Oh well. In addition, you may want to make the assessment response sound a little less computer-generated. I mean, I know it is, but at least change the programming up a little bit. As far as helping me goes... yeah right. Don't worry though, apparently I can do anything except graduate, so I'll just finish failing out this semester and get on with my life. Good luck with the assessment program. Hopefully someone will get a raise or promotion or something for it.

Email Screening

Barriers and Challenges

- Increases duties and client load in time of tight budgets and increasing demand for services.
- Inadvertently invites students who we have referred out back into the system.
- Requires 24/7 attention.
- Confidentiality issues with e-mail communications.
- Overcoming the cynicism of students who have been taught to be suspicious of e-mail communications pretending to be genuine and personalized.
- Who has training in text-based therapy?

E-mail Screening Value Added....

- Creates an immediate, positive connection with parents.
- Reaches students who have not used CWS before, as well as those who have, and need to do so again.
- May appeal to students who would not use traditional counseling—anonymous, student responds when he/she feels like it, easier access.
- Provides another mode for delivering our message—
“You are not alone--We can help.”
“We are here—and we care.”

Questions and Discussion