

Mental Notes

A Monthly Newsletter

Volume I, Issue 9, September 2007

Shameless Self-Promotion Month *and other interesting September observances*

by Adrian C. Péré, MSW

CAN YOU BELIEVE IT?

Someone actually saw a need to set aside an entire month in honor of "shameless self-promotion!" September is also the month in which we are asked to commemorate Waffle Day (9/3), International Chocolate Day (9/13), Talk Like a Pirate Day (9/19), and Elephant Affection Day (9/22---also Hobbit Day), among a myriad of other things and events. Of course, there are observances of a more serious nature during the month of September. It's also College Savings Month and National Campus Safety Month. In this issue of our newsletter, I'd like to focus attention on observances specifically related to mental health.

NATIONAL ALCOHOL & DRUG ADDICTION RECOVERY MONTH

In a recent survey of 26 college campuses in Louisiana (Core Alcohol and Drug Survey, 2007), 36.3% of respondents reported binge drinking in the previous two weeks and 22% reported using marijuana and/or other illegal substances in the past 30 days. Of those reporting alcohol or drug use, 31.4% reported some form of public misconduct (e.g., trouble with police, vandalism, DUI, fighting) in the past year as a result of substance use. The results of survey also suggest a higher incidence of sexual assault, non-sexual assault, and harassment associated with alcohol and drug use and abuse.

Obviously, the results of this survey do not suggest that everyone who uses alcohol or illegal drugs is addicted to those substances. The results do suggest, however, that substance use and abuse may be problematic on college campuses in Louisiana. If you're concerned about your substance use habits, visit our Website for a link to a free online screening and other related resources (<http://counserv.uno.edu/advice.cfm>).

FALL WORKSHOPS

Relationship Enrichment

Tuesday September 18, 2007
2:15 - 3:15 PM Kirschman Hall 335

Public Speaking

Monday September 24, 2007
12:30 - 1:30 PM Kirschman Hall 301

Time Management

Wednesday October 17, 2007
12:30 - 1:30 PM Kirschman Hall 335

Relaxation & Stress Reduction

Thursday October 25, 2007
2:15 - 3:15 PM Kirschman Hall 301

Couples & Finances

Thursday November 6, 2007
2:15 - 3:15 PM Kirschman Hall 301

**For disability related accommodations, please contact Adrian Péré at 280-6683.*

SUICIDE PREVENTION WEEK

The week of September 15 has been designated Suicide Prevention Week. According to the American Association of Suicidology, suicide is the 3rd leading cause of death among college students, with frequent users of alcohol and other drugs at highest risk. Kisch, Leino and Silverman (2005) report that 1.5% of college students admitted to attempting suicide and 9.5% seriously considered it.

So what can be done? In addition to creating a welcoming and supportive environment for all students, friends, faculty, and staff should watch for warning signs of suicide including depressed mood, change in eating habits, isolation, change in appearance, loss of interest in activities and friends, substance abuse, and deterioration of academic and/or professional performance, to name a few. When in doubt, seek help from a professional counselor or other mental health professional. Additional information on helping distressed students can be found on the Counseling Services Website at <http://counserv.uno.edu/referrals.cfm>.

SHAMELESS SELF-PROMOTION MONTH

In honor of Shameless Self-Promotion Month, Counseling Services would like to shamelessly promote our upcoming workshops. We're offering a variety of workshops this semester, including a special "mini-series" for couples. For more information on these or any of our workshops, please check out our Website at <http://counserv.uno.edu/workshops.cfm>.

ONE FINAL NOTE

If you're not particularly pleased with the content of this month's newsletter, please be kind. It is, after all, Be Kind to Editors and Writers Month!

Tell Us What You Think!

Take a few minutes to complete a
Needs Assessment Survey at
<http://counserv.uno.edu/surveys.cfm>