CRITICAL CONVERSATIONS:
PREPARING YOUR STUDENT FOR COLLEGE LIFE
Our programs and services are designed to help students:

- Recognize how their health impacts their personal & academic success
- Become actively involved in their own wellness
- Contribute to creating a safe and healthy campus for all

Visit us online at [wwu.edu/pws](http://wwu.edu/pws)
Peer Health Educator Program

- Excellent volunteer opportunity
- Intensive training process
- Experience providing educational programs & support services to their peers.

BECOME A PEER HEALTH EDUCATOR

2017-2018 PEER HEALTH EDUCATOR PROGRAM
College is an exciting, important time of huge transition!

- What is one of your greatest hopes you have for your student?
- What is one of your biggest concerns?
OUR GOALS FOR TODAY

- Discuss perceptions & realities of student life at WWU
- Share key messages & tips for having the important conversations with your student
- Review & answer questions about resources on campus
EXPECTATIONS OF COLLEGE LIFE?
### REALITIES OF STUDENT LIFE AT WWU

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Substance</th>
<th>% Used in Past 30 days</th>
<th>Perceived Use</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alcohol</td>
<td>69.4%</td>
<td>98.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cigarettes</td>
<td>11.7%</td>
<td>75.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marijuana</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
<td>96.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methamphetamine</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>21.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other amphetamines</td>
<td>2.4%</td>
<td>30.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cocaine</td>
<td>1.8%</td>
<td>34.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ecstasy</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
<td>40.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Perceived peer norms have a powerful influence on students’ behavior (for better or worse).
What WWU students actually do:

- 31% report no alcohol in past 30 days (20% don’t drink at all)
- 67% haven’t used marijuana in past 30 days (42% have never used it)
- 30% haven’t been sexually active in the past 12 months
- Of those sexually active, 75% have had only 1-2 partners in the past year
## TOP 10 BARRIERS TO ACADEMIC SUCCESS

WWU students report being impacted by these issues to the extent that they had to drop a course, receive a lower grade, or receive an incomplete.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>% of WWU students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Stress</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Anxiety</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Sleep problems</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Depression</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Cold/flu</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Work</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Internet/computer games</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Concern about friend/family</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Relationship difficulties</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Roommate problems</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Other common issues:
- Extracurricular activities (11%)
- Death of friend/family member (9%)
- Finances (7%)
- Alcohol (6%), drugs (4%)

*data from WWU National College Health Assessment survey, Spring 2016
“When I was a boy of 14, my father was so ignorant I could hardly stand to have the old man around. But when I got to be 21, I was astonished at how much he had learned in seven years.”

- Mark Twain

- Your influence is powerful!
- Your kids are still listening!
WHY CAN THESE CONVERSATIONS BE DIFFICULT?

- Your kids are pulling away & becoming their own independent beings
- Adolescent development = risk-taking, prioritizing short-term rewards over consequences/long-term implications
- You are hugely invested in this (financially, emotionally)
- Some of these issues may feel uncomfortable to talk about
Mental health
- Normalize difficult feelings
- Share any big concerns you have
- Encourage involvement in positive activities & getting help when needed
- Remind them that you love them no matter what
MENTAL HEALTH PROMOTION ON CAMPUS

LET’S TALK ABOUT STIGMA:
MENTAL VS. PHYSICAL

You wouldn’t say these things to people suffering physically, so why would you say them to someone suffering mentally?

Everyone experiences mental illness differently. The way we talk about mental illness can have a significant effect on someone’s well-being, both positive and negative.

BE KIND AND EMPATHETIC, NO MATTER THE DIAGNOSIS OR DISORDER.

IT’S OKAY TO ASK FOR HELP.

No one experiences depression or anxiety in exactly the same way. But that does not mean you are alone in what you’re feeling. If you or someone you know is struggling and wants to learn more about mental health resources, visit IT'SOKAY.INFO.

LET’S TALK ABOUT STIGMA:
IT’S OKAY TO TALK ABOUT
OUR MENTAL HEALTH

Everyone experiences mental illness differently. That doesn’t mean you are alone in what you are feeling. Take a moment to check in with each other—and be honest about how we are really doing! It’s okay to ask for help when you need it and reach out to others when you can offer support.

BE KIND AND EMPATHETIC. NO MATTER THE DIAGNOSIS OR DISORDER.

Sometimes we need help. Start the conversation.
CRITICAL CONVERSATIONS

Alcohol & drugs

- Share relevant personal/family issues & your values/expectations
- Info about laws, safety & moderation
- **AlcoholEdu** (online training, voluntary but strongly recommended!)
  - To access demo version, go to [http://www.everfi.com/login](http://www.everfi.com/login), register a new user account and use the registration code PSNS.
- Individual consultations available on campus (**ADCAS**)
Sex & relationships

- The most important thing: CONSENT (clear & sober YES)
  - Sexual activity should only ever happen when there’s mutual desire & agreement

- Nationally among college undergrads, 23% of females & 5% of males report that they experience sexual assault. Highest risk time: 1st half of their 1st year.
  - Discuss how to listen & respond respectfully to others; How to communicate what you want & don’t want.
  - It’s important to look out for others too – discuss how to be a helpful bystander.
  - Victims are never to blame. Listen, believe, offer support.

- HAVEN (mandatory online training re: sexual assault prevention)
- CASAS – sexual assault support services
Sex & relationships (cont’d)

- Share what you DO want for them in this part of their life!
- Info about protection & safety (contraception, STD prevention, recognizing abuse)

**CRITICAL CONVERSATIONS**

- One-on-one sexual health *info sessions*
- Educational programs on campus
CRITICAL CONVERSATIONS

Talk about health insurance!

1. What coverage they have
2. How to use it
3. What you want them to use it for
   - Without your explicit permission, they may be afraid to seek certain types of healthcare
IMPORTANT SELF-CARE PRACTICES

- Get enough sleep
- Healthy eating
- Be active
- If you get sick...take care of it early!
- Use the “buddy system” & campus safety resources
- Get involved – try new things, stretch your comfort zone
- Reach out for help when you need it
TIPS FOR ENCOURAGING HEALTHY CHOICES

- Provide honest, accurate INFORMATION
- Discuss MOTIVATION
  - What are you hoping to get from ____?
  - Connect your messages to what you know is important to them, not just what’s important to you
- Share STRATEGIES & SKILLS
  - Imagine you’re in a situation where ____ is happening…. What could you do?
- Be POSITIVE & EMPOWERING
  - I believe in you!
WHAT IS RESILIENCE?

The capacity to NAVIGATE our way to the resources that sustain our well-being & NEGOTIATE for those resources to be provided.
It is not what you do for your children but what you have taught them to do for themselves that will make them successful human beings.

— Ann Landers

⇒ Please help us make sure students know what resources are here that they might need!

⇒ Remember – these resources are a part of what you’re paying for!
Thank you for being here & supporting your kids!