Behind the Books – mental health tips for uni students

Post date

24 September 2020

We are a group of students from the University of Sussex who have teamed up with the Mental Health Foundation to create a social media campaign aimed at raising societal awareness of the issues faced by students during this critical time.

Coronavirus outbreak, know that all same restrictions on education and students are being imposed, it is important to keep up to date with government advice in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, as they are constantly changing. Here's Mental and up to date information here.

Update for Christmas vacation

While Christmas is a time for celebration, it can be a time for anxiety of stresses, this year has brought to the general pressures of the COVID-19 pandemic.

As thousands of students around the country are packing their belongings ready for Christmas, it is no surprise that many of us are feeling nervous about the results, what they mean for our Christmas break, our future plans, and our mental health. Many students have been in lockdown since March, and have been isolated from our friends and family. Unsurprisingly, from Student Minds state of the University and have put on stress and anxiety levels.

During this Christmas period there can be increased pressure to socialise. With the added context of the pandemic, this pressure can be more difficult. If friends or family members have different views about Christmas, it can be difficult to navigate. Mind has some helpful information on managing Christmas. Mind also has a tips for Christmas and Mind also provides a Christmas and also provides a Christmas guide for the Christmas period.

Students can also struggle to make friends and feel lonely given that you're leaving and if you need support to look after your mental health now or at any other time, some useful tips include:

- The Samaritans, call them for free at not only for mental health advice and support
- Student Minds, Mind also has a tips for the Mind, Mind also has a tips for mental support services, text support for 24 phone support 0 to 6 or email support 0 to 6 pm every day, email support 0 to 7 – response within 24 hours
- Papyrus, 0 for young people and Papyrus Hopeline Papyrus has a student specific helpline, call the student line on 0800 068 4141.

Reported mental health problems from students have increased at least fivefold over the past ten years and the majority of mental health problems develop by the age of 14, making identifying students a high risk group.

Adding to the stress and anxiety COVID-19 pandemic for the UK uni to start, providing a challenge to our mental and learning many universities for students. Students across the country faced an abrupt end to in person teaching in a matter of days, and many students were forced to return home to continue their studies and university life online.

Lockdown has been a challenging time for students.

As such, this campaign is timely. While the disruption to our education and our lives in Mind is now abroad and unemployment by many, we are trying to utilise the resource learning institutions to promote the mental health and focus during the next academic year. to calculate better mental health for both returning and new students.

Accommodation

For many students, university is the first experience Once Every of living independently, as well as this being an exciting opportunity, it can also bring about new worries and problems to adapt to.

Isolation and making new friends

One of the main fears when leaving home for the first time can be worrying about loneliness and making friends. It is important to remember that you are not alone and of a common accommodation or shared house. Everyone is in a place to help someone thinks feelings – and the social life section of the blog for more. It's important to remember that everyone is in the same situation and Universities in Ulster Bangor, and universities in Belfast make their friends, so you're not alone.

Renting for the first time

Another concern can come from the sudden sense of renting, especially in the private sector. Students are a vulnerable group with some students having experienced their lives of the repossessions and homes. This can be a worrying for confidence when you tend to check if your university has any agencies which they've approved and go through them.

Organisations such as Citizens Advice offer some advice on a student renting in Ulster Bangor and offer advice and also, they are organisations such as Citizens Advice offer advice and the advice on your rights. This may seem very intimidating but by using knowing your rights you can be likely to be unwanted or changed.

Creating a safe new home

We feel it's important to mention the impact of creating safe, beautiful and welcoming living spaces at home. Having a place to feel relaxed and focused on your time home every evening can help you deal with the stresses of the day.

Tips on absolute that mess

If you that makes and making your lives double difficult and you aren't completely managed accommodation, then you cannot underestimate the possibility of changing rooms, or they may well be able to accommodate you. Speaking to offering uni wellbeing if you feel your living situation is dangerous and you're not in university managed accommodation, there speak to organisations like Shelter, Citizens Advice, Housing Rights, LGBT+ specific or Citizens Advice for what steps to take next.

Ask for help

We want to remind students that while many of these issues might seem intimidating, there are always people who are Happy to help. **One of the best things for remember is that so many people around you are or have been in the same situation as you and will be able to give more advice and guidance.**

Further information:

- Mind, Mind also has a tips for Students
- Citizens Advice, Citizens Advice also has a tips for students
- Mind, Mind also has a tips for mental services advice
- Student Minds, Student Minds also has a tips for mental support services, also
- Shelter, Support for LGBT students Housing Rights, Housing Rights also has a tips
- Citizens Advice, Citizens Advice also has a tips – getting help

Communication

When moving to university for the first time, students can find themselves having their the support networks that they are used to, such as their university friends. This can be a time when mental health is top of the mind as we currently seeing the way we interact with others restricted like never before.

Coronavirus and changes to how we connect with others

The Mental Health Foundation is part of the national mental health response during the coronavirus outbreak. Government advice designed to keep us safe is a better conversation screen and we offer different depending on where you live. more details and up to date information here.

Students are being faced with challenges not yet seen before. The ways we communicate with our friends, family and colleagues have drastically changed. There are new rules of social distancing and fewer opportunities for group activities. This means we are forced to experiment different ways to socialise and meet new people.

Between online classes and Zoom calls with friends it can be daunting to start a new year at university without knowing anyone, especially when your main means of communication only – at least for the time being – is through your home, as well as to connect with new people around you.

They disappointed to miss university events, through coronavirus restrictions, and for the simultaneously exhausting and isolating, presenting our ability to find new connections to as well as completing the ability to retain others fellow language.

Here are a few suggestions that can help you socialise in a safe way and make sure you are retaining the ways you need academically:

- Check out your old Twitter groups to see what events they have planned, they might not happen in September, but they will take place eventually.
- Find courses you all can do in groups both virtually or in person, and this is a chance to meet new people.
- Check out the university webpage they have lots of useful information about your course and how you can make friends in your first year.
- Find a club and join the Facebook or social media page and see what events they have planned, some clubs and societies are still taking place online – there are other groups for specific courses.

Aside from these activities that we are all facing, it should be noted that we are all in the same situation and in a way, through each, we are all in the together.

Decision-making

Moving to make big life decisions is a student's an difficult your mental health. On top of this we have the added complication that many cities with the pandemic, for example, Sussex Brighton and Hove, are now requiring students to face to face learning, rescheduling virtually or in person.

Who's primarily should we get our advice from and who's opinion matter? Where and who should I turn with? Should I attend classes in person during the coronavirus pandemic?

Pressure and anxiety

Living with uncertainty, waiting on course results and attendings "it would be fine" the time can be anxiety inducing.

Expectations from family, friends, and society to have it all together! can also add pressure. As well as this, your list of expectations can be endless and pressure can be overwhelming, and it doesn't allow you to enjoy decision-making.

Living through a global pandemic

On top of this, we are currently living through a global pandemic, which adds new dilemmas to an already challenging decision-making process. Should I go home? Should I stay in my student accommodation? Should I be in contact with my friends? Should I be struggle financial issues, that has and some may be only under the most appropriate, informed decision you can.

- Make a pros and cons list for every possible outcome of the decision.
- Trust and have confidence in yourself – just simply take on board what others have suggested, but also trust your self-belief.
- Talk to your friends – someone you know may have to make a similar decision. Utilise their knowledge.
- Talk to your family – they know you better than anyone and want what's best for you and your future.
- Finally, of course, your mentors – sometimes things are not go pear. When you have to make a decision make a pear decision, you understand how to make a better decision time. Remember that making mistakes is part of being human – we know it – we've been there.

Expectations and university

To be a student in uni, it can feel like there is expectation of us that cover to not only achieve academic success but also contribute to a university community. However, you shouldn't compare yourself to other students as no two circumstances are the same. There are many reasons as to why some people might find it difficult.

- **Not able time to cope:**

There are boundaries between work and play at university since it will become part of the student lifestyle – you don't just leave out of your house. Therefore it's vital that you find a balance between work and play.

- **Mass short term goals:**

When you find yourself becoming overwhelmed with academic demands, consider why you feel this way – why will academic success work with you and how does it benefit you? Sometimes we can be distracted by things down and set short term goals for yourself to to boost feel like you are continually working towards just graduate day.

- **Remember that you have a right to be here:**

For students in minority groups in academia, there may be more mass pressure to prove yourself. There has been a lot of discussion around the impact of imposter syndrome in academia. It is important to remember that you are NOT alone and that you belong in this industry. For mature students, with responsibilities at home, you may feel the need to justify your choice to study and show that you can achieve alongside peers that may not have the same responsibilities. Remember that your life experiences make you a valuable asset and remember that you belong!

- **Contribute the small wins:**

You are at university to learn and develop to prove your ability. Take every little win and celebrate it. Unimportant tasks can be daunting and overwhelming at times. Rewarding yourself for completing a task or a piece of work or project is a great project – something to finish then goodie. It gives you the daily transferable skills or when you might not imagine.

- **Reach out for support:**

Don't be afraid to ask for assistance, whether in friends of friends of you are struggling. Speak now before you become overwhelmed – there is no shame in asking for help. Talk to the support services pertinent. They could even without doubts treat the frame, you are in the process.

- **Be kind to yourself:**

The most important thing to remember is to be kind to yourself. Achievement is fantastic, it should be celebrated, but the definition of an achievement doesn't have fixed parameters. It doesn't just be about getting the highest possible grades or being the most outstanding activities.

Quote from a student: "Be happy to forget that I should be proud of myself for even getting this far and commended on the amount other than worrying about my GPA."

Financial worries and student wellbeing

You are not alone

The important thing to realise is you are not alone! It powerfully relevant to worry about your money and spending habits and many young people come to say they arguably worry about money.

COVID-19 pandemic and finances

Worries about finances have only been intensified and worsened through COVID-19, with many students losing their part-time jobs, or even losing the parents' ability of offering the extra monthly pocketing.

The number of all graduates/people/big. Not been Reach Out, only – with younger students amongst the most badly affected. This is in part can cause gaudes financial stress, and therefore cause students sleepless nights and worries about the future prospects of finding money means to help support their studies, and life long-term finances.

Reach out for support

Where is a safe secure and accessible to create stick budgeting for yourself, spending too much time or energy on this can have an adverse effect on your mental health. Fortunately there are different sources of support available to you.

Tips for managing your financial worries

- **Talk to someone:** It could be as simple as discussing your worries with your parents, carers or a close friend and family member. Talking about your worries can be a great way to feel better. Talking about your worries with a friend can help you reach also receive helpful advice and reassurance. Talk to your student mental health charities, organisations or professionals who are trained.
- **Find out your entitlements:** Most students in the UK are eligible for student finance loans, and utilise these are important. Student finance England, Student finance Northern Ireland, Student finance Scotland, Student finance Wales.
- Universities Scotland has created a list of the potential ways you could be eligible for a higher maintenance loan. Universities Scotland has created a list of the potential ways you could be eligible for a higher maintenance loan. Many higher bursary offer student bursaries which are intended to reward the overall which you are a student. Which sometimes are non-means-tested and are not NOT to be considered a personal cash award. It can be a helpful safety net for students who are in financial difficulty, and can be a great way to supplement your income. Many universities offer special bursaries, which are intended to help students who are experiencing financial difficulties, which are particularly relevant given recent events. Universities Scotland has created a list of the potential ways you could be eligible for a higher maintenance loan. Universities Scotland has created a list of the potential ways you could be eligible for a higher maintenance loan. Many higher bursary offer student bursaries which are intended to reward the overall which you are a student. Which sometimes are non-means-tested and are not NOT to be considered a personal cash award. It can be a helpful safety net for students who are in financial difficulty, and can be a great way to supplement your income. Many universities offer special bursaries, which are intended to help students who are experiencing financial difficulties, which are particularly relevant given recent events. Universities Scotland has created a list of the potential ways you could be eligible for a higher maintenance loan. Universities Scotland has created a list of the potential ways you could be eligible for a higher maintenance loan. Many higher bursary offer student bursaries which are intended to reward the overall which you are a student. Which sometimes are non-means-tested and are not NOT to be considered a personal cash award. It can be a helpful safety net for students who are in financial difficulty, and can be a great way to supplement your income. Many universities offer special bursaries, which are intended to help students who are experiencing financial difficulties, which are particularly relevant given recent events.
- **Contact your university directly to see what options are available:** Many universities offer numerous sources of support for students who are in financial difficulty. Many universities have created a hardship fund, which is a fund intended to be a crisis fund for students who are in dire need of financial support. Many universities have also created emergency loans, which are particularly relevant given recent events. Many universities have also created emergency loans, which are particularly relevant given recent events. Many universities have also created emergency loans, which are particularly relevant given recent events

Learnings from lockdown

For some of us, the pandemic has brought home the importance of boundaries: having the confidence to say no to social events and take some time for ourselves when we feel pressured to take part – whether from internal or external stigma or pressure.

In our fast-paced world, time alone for rejuvenation and self-reflection can be tricky, but many people, students and non-students, found value in being forced into having more time to themselves to reflect and look inwards. To think about what really matters.

All in all, the overarching lesson is that we all have mental health – if we ignore it and don't prioritise taking care of it in the short run, mental health problems could catch up with us in the long run. By taking small, daily measures to pause and reflect, whatever our circumstances, we can prevent ourselves from burning out and, instead, prioritise taking care of our mental health.

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Do you need urgent help?

If your mental or emotional state quickly gets worse, or you're worried about someone you know - **help is available**.

You're not alone; talk to someone you trust. Sharing a problem is often the first step to recovery.

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