

AGM

MARCH 2024



A REPORT BY VICE PRESIDENT WELLBEING





MANIFESTO

- Creating awareness about free counselling and therapy
- Workshop and seminar on mental health and stress management
- Student network group for better social life
- Meditation sessions for students to help them managing stress and anxiety.
- Collaboration with student buddies and course representatives
- Bringing external/internal speakers for personal development
- Continuous support for government campaign "ENOUGH"
- Helping students through Solent Union Blogs- Blogs regarding Mental health and stress management
- Contribution to SU Exchange

CREATING AWARENESS ABOUT FREE COUNSELLING AND THERAPY



- **Mental Health Disclosure Training:** Acquired specialized training to effectively support students dealing with mental health challenges, enhancing the ability to provide appropriate assistance and guidance in such situations.
- **Collaborative Meetings:** Engaged in frequent meetings with the Deputy Head of Student Success (Wellbeing) and Therapy and Mental Health Manager to strategize, plan, and share progress on collaborative initiatives aimed at enhancing student well-being and mental health support within the academic environment.
- **Wellbeing Café Promotion:** Actively participated in and promoted the Wellbeing Café initiative among students, fostering a culture of well-being and mental health awareness within the student community.
- **Event Planning with Senior Therapist:** Held regular discussions with the Senior Therapist to plan events effectively and develop strategies for promoting social prescription projects, focusing on innovative approaches to mental health promotion.
- **Involvement of Therapy Team:** Extended invitations to the therapy and mental health team to participate in events, facilitating direct engagement with students and promoting their services, thereby increasing awareness and accessibility to mental health resources on campus.
- **Promotion of Student Assistance Program:** Advocated for and promoted the Student Assistance Program during student talks, raising awareness about available support services and resources to empower students in seeking help for their mental health needs.

WORKSHOP AND SEMINAR ON MENTAL HEALTH AND STRESS MANAGEMENT



Conducted regular meetings with the Therapy and Mental Health Manager and Senior Therapist to discuss the event plan for the mental health workshop. Shared ideas and topics aimed at benefiting students' mental well-being.

Collaborated with the communications team for detailed planning, designing, and promotion of the mental health workshop.

Executed the event on 18th October 2023, a Mental Health Seminar/Workshop, which featured an **external speaker**. The speaker discussed the direct connection between physical health and mental health, emphasising the importance of a holistic approach to well-being.

Worked on the event's logistics, including scheduling, venue arrangements, and materials needed to ensure its success.

Invited Therapy and Mental Health team members to join the event. They promoted free counselling and therapy services available to students. This effort aimed to raise awareness about the mental health support resources provided to the students.

Gained valuable insights and feedback from students who attended the event, collecting their testimonies. Students expressed a desire for more mental health seminars of this nature.

Utilised these student testimonies effectively by showcasing them on the university's social media platforms. This strategy aimed to increase the event's visibility and engagement among the student community.

This approach was intended to expand the reach of the event and encourage more students to participate, as well as inquire about their interest in similar future events.

Next event: Self-confidence talk by an external speaker for personal and professional development of our students. (7th March 2024: TS202 - 12.15pm to 1.15pm)



SELF-REFLECTION WORKSHOP



The November event focused on self-reflection. Through a series of activities, students explored the concept of the reflection cycle and practiced applying it to their own lives. This included:

- **Self-reflection practice tasks:** These exercises encouraged students to identify their strengths, weaknesses, and areas for growth.
- **Understanding the Reflection Cycle:** We presented the different stages of the cycle (experience, reflection, learning, action) and their significance in personal development.
- **Opportunities to reflect on positive experiences:** This helped students recognize their accomplishments and cultivate gratitude.

This event provided valuable opportunities for students to engage in self-discovery, goal setting, and stress management. I believe these skills are crucial for success in academic and personal life, and I'm glad to have contributed to their development.

STUDENT NETWORK GROUP MEETING



Consulted with the Therapy and Mental Health team and shared the core concept behind intent of creating a Student Network Group.

The purpose of this group is to provide students with a safe space to share their needs and concerns. Outlined the structure of the Student Network Group, including monthly meetings where Therapy and Mental Health team members will be invited to promote their free counselling and therapy services.

Emphasised the desired outcomes of the project, which include giving students the opportunity to network, develop a better social life, and form a student community. Acknowledged the positive impact of improved social connections in helping students cope with stress and anxiety, underlining the project's mission to enhance students' overall well-being

On 29th February conducted first student network group meeting. It was a successful event. I have been working on stress causing factors amongst students and social life is one of the stress factor. Hence in order to create better social life for students this event was arranged so our students have chance to network and make new friends.

Next event: May 2024

MEDITATION SESSIONS FOR STUDENTS

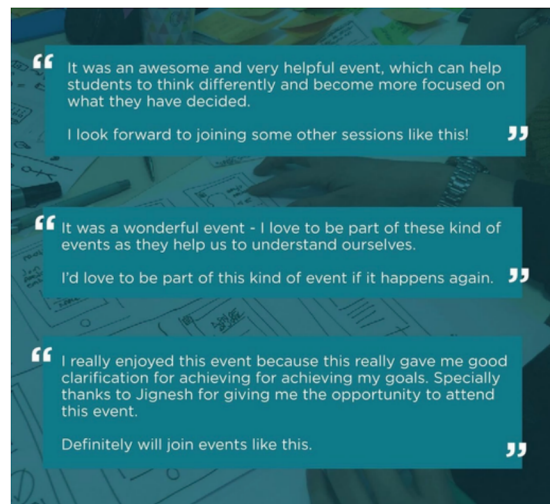


Looking back, I'm grateful for the opportunity to have organised event focused on student wellbeing: Meditation and visualization workshop on October 4th, 2023.

The event itself was a positive experience. To help students manage stress and anxiety, we offered a variety of activities:

- **Vision Board creation:** This allowed students to express their goals and dreams visually, fostering a sense of purpose and motivation.
- **"Letter to Future Self" writing:** This reflective exercise encouraged students to envision their future aspirations and create a roadmap for achieving them.
- **Guided meditation on goals:** This practice aimed to help students focus their intentions and cultivate a sense of inner peace.
- **Educational components:** We explained visualization techniques and introduced the reflective cycle as a tool for personal development.

I was heartened by the positive feedback received from participants. Sharing event highlights and positive testimonials on social media helped reach a wider audience and raise awareness about the importance of mental health and self-care.



STUDENT TALKS & COLLABORATION WITH STUDENT BUDDIES/COURSE REPRESENTATIVES



Regular Student Engagement:

I have been holding regular student talks to proactively address any issues students might have. These talks begin with general discussions about how students are feeling and whether they have any concerns they'd like to share. This open format allows students to feel comfortable with me and freely share their needs and concerns.

Increasing Student Support Awareness:

During these student talks, students are actively informed about the Students' Union (SU) and how we help shape their overall student experience. Additionally, they are informed about the university's free counselling and therapy services, raising awareness of available support resources and how they can access the support.

Collaboration Efforts:

- I have organised various meetings with course buddies to spread awareness about how they can collaborate with the VP of Wellbeing.
- Provided training to the newly elected course representatives.
- A meeting was arranged with the VP of Education to develop a strategy plan for effective collaboration with buddies and course representatives.

Enhanced Event Participation:

Through meetings with course representatives and buddies, I have been able to effectively communicate information about upcoming events, leading to increased student participation.

CONTINUOUS SUPPORT FOR GOVERNMENT CAMPAIGN "ENOUGH"

You can help **STOP** violence against women and girls

Say something
Tell someone
Offer support
Provide a diversion

Even small acts of recognition and support can help. Find out how at gov.uk/enough

 **ENOUGH.** 

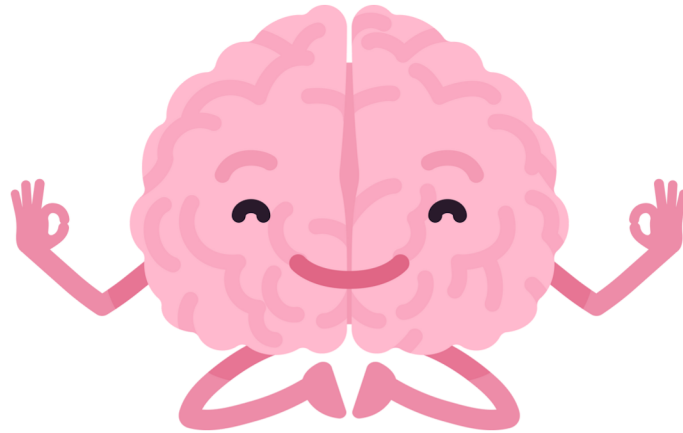
With the help of our Comms team, we've been actively sharing information about the UK government's Enough Campaign, which tackles violence against women and girls (VAWG).

Campaign Aims:

- Raise awareness of different forms of violence against women and girls, beyond just physical violence.
- Empower individuals, including bystanders, to safely intervene if they witness abuse.
- Encourage victims to seek help by providing information about available support resources.

Upcoming event: Reclaim the night- 8th March 2024

BLOGS ON MENTAL HEALTH & STRESS MANAGEMENT



One of my key goals, outlined in my manifesto, was to equip students with the best practices for managing stress and anxiety. Recognising the vast reach of blogs, I saw them as an ideal platform to connect with as many students as possible.

These informative blog articles not only discuss effective techniques for managing stress and anxiety, but also provide valuable information on readily available support resources within Solent University. This ensures that students are aware of the support systems readily available to them and encourages them to seek help if needed.

Stress and anxiety are common challenges for students, stemming from factors like social change, financial pressure, academic demands, and career uncertainty. These can lead to negative impacts on academic performance, well-being, and mental health.

However, effective coping mechanisms can empower students to manage these challenges. This includes:

- Identifying stress triggers and developing coping strategies
- Prioritizing tasks and practicing time management
- Maintaining healthy habits like exercise, sleep, and nutrition
- Utilizing mindfulness and relaxation techniques
- Building strong social connections and seeking support

The university provides free talking therapy and access to the Student Assistance Programme (SAP) for students struggling with stress and anxiety.

Scan the following to read the blog in detail.



CONTRIBUTION IN SU EXCHANGE



Supporting Students Through the Cost-of-Living Crisis:

Took several steps to assist students facing the cost-of-living crisis, primarily through the SU Exchange, a student-run shop offering affordable essential goods.

Securing Donations: Actively contacted various major grocery companies to solicit donations for the SU Exchange. This proactive approach resulted in a generous £500 donation from Southern Co-op, highlighting the positive impact of collaboration.





CAMPAIGNS AND PROJECTS

International Handbook:

I collaborated with the SU President and VP Education to develop a handbook for our international students, guiding them as they embark on their journey at Solent University. This comprehensive guidebook outlines all the essential steps international students should take to ensure a smooth and successful student experience.

Drink Spiking Campaign:

In response to the concerning issue of drink spiking, I launched a multi-faceted campaign aimed at enhancing student safety. The campaign focused on raising awareness about the dangers of drink spiking through various channels, equipping students with practical strategies for staying safe. Additionally, I secured budget allocation from the university, enabling the purchase of anti-drink spiking covers, which will be distributed to students through the SU Exchange, providing them with a tangible means of personal protection.

Go with the Flow Campaign:

Building upon the existing "Go with the Flow" campaign, I actively advocated to address the financial challenges students face due to the cost-of-living crisis. This campaign focused on securing essential resources to support student well-being. I am pleased to announce that, through successful campaign efforts, the university allocated funding to provide free period products through the SU Exchange. This initiative ensures that these essential items are readily accessible to all students, regardless of their financial situation.

Stress Assessment Survey: (Upcoming project)

To understand the challenges faced by our student body, we've launched the "Stress Assessment Survey." This research project aims to identify the key factors contributing to student stress and assess their impact on mental health, social life, academic performance, and overall well-being.

Project Description and Expected Outcomes:

The survey delves into various aspects of student life, specifically focusing on academic workload, financial pressure, exam anxieties, and post-graduation concerns. By identifying the most prevalent sources of stress and understanding their impact on well-being, we aim to develop targeted events and initiatives to help students effectively manage stress. This data-driven approach will ensure that our support efforts are tailored to the specific needs of our student community.

Safe Southampton Project: (Upcoming Project)

In collaboration with the local police force and the SU President, we're actively involved in the Safe Southampton project, an initiative dedicated to enhancing student safety in our city.

Our Approach: We are working diligently to gather comprehensive data on locations and situations where students feel unsafe in Southampton. This data will be invaluable in pinpointing specific areas and scenarios that pose safety challenges.

Impact and Collaboration:

The collected data will not only reveal areas of concern within our student community but also serve as a bridge between students and law enforcement agencies. By sharing this data with the police, we aim to foster a proactive partnership, ensuring authorities are well-informed about areas where interventions are needed. This collaborative effort emphasises the importance of student safety and well-being and is ultimately dedicated to creating a safer and more secure environment for all students, enhancing their overall experience and peace of mind.