

UW-Stevens Point: Utilizing Peer Educators to Implement the Make It Okay Program

SUMMARY

UW-Stevens Point used peer-to-peer education to implement the *Make It Okay* program for student leaders. Goals included reducing stigma related to mental health treatment seeking, increasing awareness of self-care resources, reducing barriers to using mental health services, and creating a culture of support for mental health and well-being. Peer educators were trained as Make It Okay ambassadors and implemented program content to student leaders in housing, Athletics, Greek Life, and student organizations. Peer educators also advertised the campaign through tabling, promotions, and outreach events.

Mini-grant funds were used to pay for program incentives including food and t-shirts, swag and giveaways, and promotional materials. UW-Stevens Point provided funding for the peer educators and coordinated their training.



OUTCOMES

The program reached hundreds of students directly through participation in in-person programs, events, and tabling, and many more through passive marketing. Outcome surveys for in-person events showed that 95% or more of participants felt more confident about what to say to students who talk about their mental health, how to recognize signs of concern, and what resources were available for self-care and treatment. They also reported improved ability to manage their own stress.

Student-reported benefits:

Learned how to rejuvenate after daily stress	Learned how to slow my thinking	Learned how to relieve stress
Learned how to disconnect from stressful things	Learned how to get myself in a better state of mind	Learned strategies to calm my mind and body
Learned it is okay to take care of myself on a busy day	Learned a new way to relax	

NEXT STEPS

UW-Stevens Point has committed to a one-year pilot program for mental health initiatives. They will hire a full-time professional staff person as a Mental Health Education Coordinator for the 2024-2025 academic year. They will also continue to fund the peer education program.

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