

SHOW ME THE MONEY: USING DATA-DRIVEN STRATEGIES TO ADVOCATE FOR COUNSELING CENTER RESOURCES

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LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We would like to acknowledge the land on which the University at Buffalo operates, which is the territory of the Seneca Nation, a member of the Haudenosaunee/Six Nations Confederacy. This territory is covered by The Dish with One Spoon Treaty of Peace and Friendship, a pledge to peaceably share and care for the resources around the Great Lakes. It is also covered by the 1794 Treaty of Canandaigua, between the United States Government and the Six Nations Confederacy, which further affirmed Haudenosaunee land rights and sovereignty in the State of New York. Today, this region is still the home to the Haudenosaunee people, and we are grateful for the opportunity to live, work, and share ideas in this territory.



INTRODUCTIONS

CONFLICT OF INTEREST STATEMENT

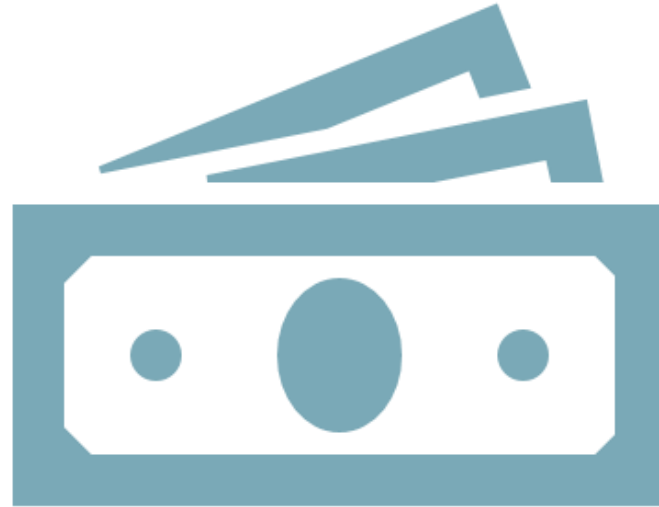
THE PRESENTERS
HAVE NO ACTUAL OR
POTENTIAL
CONFLICTS OF
INTEREST IN
RELATION TO THIS
PROGRAM.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

-
- Identify 3 national trends regarding college student mental health needs
 - Define and discuss the role of advocacy in counseling center leadership
 - Learn strategies for identifying local and national data that can be used in advocacy efforts
 - Name 3 potential funding sources; both internal and external to campus
 - Practice developing data-driven talking points to enhance the impact of advocacy



RAISE YOUR HAND IF YOU DON'T NEED ADDITIONAL FUNDING FOR YOUR
COUNSELING CENTER



STEP 1 – IDENTIFYING FUNDING NEEDS



IF YOU HAD ADDITIONAL FUNDING, WHAT WOULD YOU DO WITH IT?

NATIONAL TRENDS IMPACTING COLLEGE COUNSELING CENTERS' NEEDS

-
- Changes in service expectations post-Covid
 - Teletherapy
 - Extended service hours
 - Greater sensitivity to and responsiveness diversity on campus
 - Changes in staff expectations post-COVID
 - Remote work
 - Work/Life Balance
 - Dissatisfaction with pay/compensation




ROLE OF ADVOCACY IN COUNSELING CENTER LEADERSHIP

- On a scale of 1 to 10, how comfortable are you with requesting funding?
- On scale of 1 to 10, how skilled/effective are you at requesting funding?
- What are some barriers that impact your comfort level and skill level as an advocate?
- What has helped you lean into your advocacy role more?

DEVELOPING AN ADVOCACY MINDSET

- It is my job to advocate to for counseling center resources
 - Beneficence is embedded in our ethical codes as professionals
- Nothing ventured, nothing gained.
 - If I don't ask, there is a 100% chance, I won't receive. If I do ask, there is a 50% chance, I will receive
- Social justice means holding those in power accountable to do better
 - Action is needed to protect the most vulnerable and to create a more equitable environment
 - It is not my job to protect others from doing their jobs





How have you used internal pep talks or other strategies to promote a funding advocacy mindset?



STEP 2: GATHERING DATA

IT IS IMPORTANT TO TALK ABOUT THE NUMBERS

Local Data

- Clinical Utilization
- Outreach
- Consultation
- On call contacts
- Hospitalizations
- Online mental health screenings & other online tools (Togetherall, TAO)
- What other local data do you have?

National Data - Benchmarking

- Association for University and College Counseling Center Directors Survey
- Center for Collegiate Mental Health
 - Clinical Load Index
- Healthy Minds Study
- National College Health Assessment
- Peer reviewed research studies

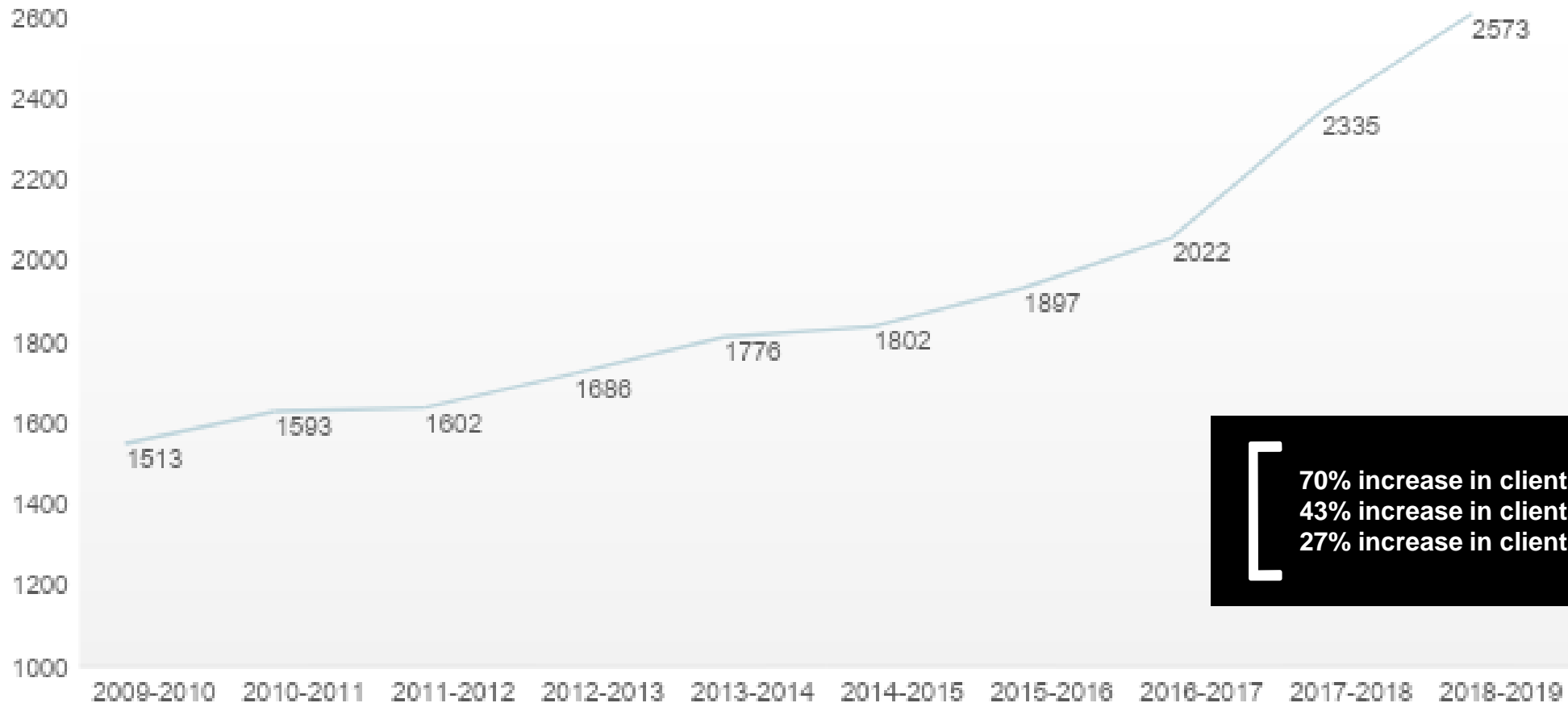
Note: Not all data is good data

3 year-service utilization (2019-2022)

Counseling Services	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022
Total Attended Appointments	12,049	12,011	13,168
Number of Clients	2,165	1,729	2,241

*pandemic years

Pre-pandemic Trends: More students sought help



THE HEALTHY MINDS STUDY (2022)

The Healthy Minds Study is an annual web-based survey examining mental health, service utilization, and related issues among U.S. undergraduate and graduate students.

The most vulnerable students are low income/first generation students of color.

Students who are financially struggling or identify as poor exhibit higher levels of depression and anxiety.

LatinX students exhibit higher levels of depression, than Asian, Black, Multiracial, or White students.

Those who identify as LGBTQ+ exhibit higher levels of depression and anxiety



IT IS ALSO IMPORTANT TO TELL THE STORY

Since 2021 we have seen a 15% increase in BIPOC students, who are struggling with financial problems that are impacting their academic success

1. Reporting food insecurity
2. Obligations to help their families out financially
3. Unable to paying recurring bills, lack financial literacy skills
4. Working 20+ hours and attending school
5. All of the above have led to more stress, anxiety, and difficulty completing school work



STEP THREE: IDENTIFYING POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES



If you have successfully advocated for additional funding in the past, where did the additional funds come from?

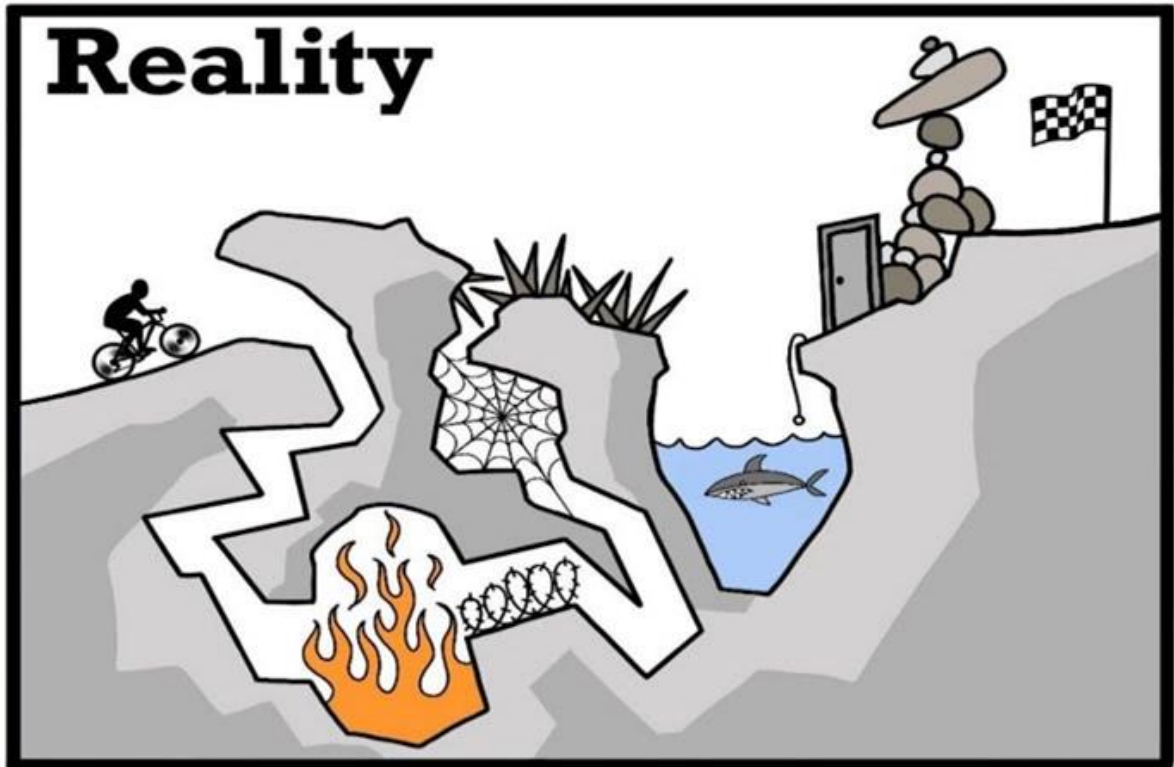
Potential funding sources

- Increase in student health/wellness fees
- Increase in general fees
- Campus grants
- State grants
 - <https://www.health.ny.gov/funding/>
- Federal grants & funding (ex. HERFF, SAMHSA, Dept of Justice- Violence Prevention grant)
 - Grants.gov
- Private foundation grants
 - <https://fundsnetervices.com/new-york-grants-and-foundations>
- Donors (ex. Alumni, parent groups, class gifts, crowd-sourcing)
- Professional organizations (ACHA, ACCA, NASPA)
- Other???





STEP 4: ASKING FOR MORE FUNDING



Rinse, wash, repeat

- Broken record technique - Keep asking
- Capitalize on changes in leadership - Some people may be hearing this for the first
- Be unapologetically opportunistic. Ex. Post-crisis ask
- Continue to add more or new data to make your case
- Always put it in writing
 - Some people are visual learners vs. verbal.
 - Serves as a record of what was said.
 - Allows you to refine your ask
- Identify potential advocates
 - The secret weapon? Students!!!!
 - Tailor your narrative to the interests and values of your audience



A STONE

IS BROKEN BY THE LAST
STROKE OF HAMMER. THIS
DOESN'T MEAN THAT THE 1ST
STROKE IS USELESS.

**SUCCESS IS THE RESULT OF CONTINUOUS
AND PERSISTENT EFFORT**



Outcomes Also Known as Return on Investment

- How have students benefited as a result of this investment?
- How has the staff changed or improved as a result of this investment?
- What is the data to support your assertions?
- Were the gains worth it?
- What else is needed based on the outcomes of this investment? Next steps?

CASE STUDIES





ON CALL SERVICE: PROTOCOL

Behavioral Health Telephone Services



Protocall: Making the case to the VP for Student Life

■ STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM/NEED

- Given the demand for mental health services, there is a need for greater access to care outside of our normal hours of operation
- In 2018-19 there was a total of 99 on-call after hour counselor contacts
- Currently, there are two counselors on call (primary and backup) for a week at a time, 365 days a year.
- Counselors receive 1 comp day for being on call a week at a time and can earn up to an additional 1.5 comp days depending on how many calls they take.
- Even if on call counselors did not receive any calls all year, 104 comp days would be used by staff.
- At a minimum, this means 104 fewer days where face-to-face counseling could occur.

Protocall: Making the case to the VP for Student Life

- **WHY OUTSOURCING AFTER HOURS CRISIS INTERVENTION IS A BETTER SOLUTION**
 - More time available for clinical services during the day
 - Likely to reduce counselor burnout, low morale, and departures
 - Rested counselors are more effective counselors.
 - Protocall counselors have more training/experience responding to mental health crises over the phone

Protocall: Making the case to the VP for Student Life

■ Costs

- Annual costs (\$18K) for 50 calls per month
- Do your research. May have to do a competitive bid.

■ Outcomes

- In the first year, UBCS counselors contacted only 2 times!!
- Adjusted coverage hours as needed at no additional cost (e.g., inclement weather, staff or Student Life retreats)
- Counseling staff elated and relieved
- Campus police elated and relieved
- Real time and monthly reports regarding the nature of the calls and disposition
- Communicating with vendor to personalize procedures
 - Flagging frequent flyers
 - Providing accurate information about our response

Embedded counselors: Meeting students where they are at

- Athletics (2017)
- Medical School (2018)
- Law School (2020)
- Dental School (Feb 2021)
- Engineering (Aug 2021)
- School of Pharmacy (Oct 2022)





Benefits of an embedded counselor

COMMUNITY-CENTERED SERVICES

- Works within a community (in place or virtually)
- Has (or over time develops) specialized knowledge about that community
- Reduces stigma by normalizing mental health help-seeking within a community
- Convenience – no travel involved for in person appointments*
- Is “a” mental health consultant to students and faculty/staff in the department
- May, along with others at Counseling Services, provide groups or educational programs specific to the population

OUTCOME SNAPSHOT



- *On average, the embedded counselors provided individual counseling to 46% of the students in their department. Range: 22% - 68%*
- *This means the other 54% were seen by other counselors*
- *Our data shows that the number of students utilizing our services increased compared to the year before an embedded counselor was assigned to their department.*

The Embedded Counselor supplements EXISTING services and eases access for in person appointments.

Sharing Ideas



Is there a request or initiative that you need help with right now?

What questions do you have that haven't been addressed yet?

Please share any other tips or suggestions you have with your colleagues?

THANK YOU

A corkboard with the words "THANK YOU" spelled out using colorful paper letters pinned with pushpins. The letters are: 'T' (pink on white), 'h' (black on white), 'A' (white on red), 'N' (white on blue), 'k' (red on white), 'y' (teal on white), 'O' (white on red), and 'u' (white on blue). Each letter is pinned with a pushpin of a different color: blue, yellow, green, red, purple, blue, green, and yellow respectively.