

Final Story- Liz Dick

Maryville, Mo- Mental health within college students has increased over the years.

Northwest Missouri State University offers wellness services such as counseling and peer wellness coaching for students on campus to utilize. There are also organizations, such as Behavioral Science Association (BSA) who associate with helping students with mental health.

With the new school year coming up quick, there are ways that we could improve the knowledge of mental health.

Kristen Peltz, the assistant director of wellness services for student counseling, helps students on campus with issues in anxiety and depression, relationship issues and even LGBTQ+. The question asked was, how would the service provide help for students on campus? Peltz responded with, "I think one of the biggest assets with wellness services is that every student here on campus pays a wellness fee, and so they have access to counseling services as well as clinic services."

Most students at Northwest have little knowledge that these resources are provided for them. With these resources available, it makes it more accessible and beneficial for students who need them.

With the new school year approaching, most of the upcoming students should know what these services are. The question asked was, what should upcoming students know about these resources? Peltz said, "We just want them to know, and know that we are here and that we are really easy to access."

Caitlyn Colter, a peer wellness coach, explains what her job is. "As a peer wellness coach, there's four of us, so we partner up with counselors through a referral and we are partnered up with students." Colter also says, we work with students with a lot of different problems, such as time management or even social skills.

Having peer wellness coaching is substantial for students. Colter explained how having a peer connection on campus is important, because just seeing a counselor is intimidating at first, so having a relationship with a student helps with that issue.

Colter shares her opinion on the resources that are available on campus. "I think Northwest offers a lot, wellness services has a lot of programs and resources that aren't well known," she said.

For getting information about these services out to students, there are different events that are held. Colter said, "It is hard, we have been doing our presentations around campus and I know that some of us do tabling events in the union, but it still doesn't reach a lot of students."

For the upcoming year, having peer wellness coaches and organizations, such as the Behavioral Science Association, putting on more events could help that issue.

Zada Irving, a sophomore in BSA, explained what BSA is and the different organizations they put on for students at Northwest. Irving said, "BSA is an organization that if focused on mental health, basically we do a lot of events and things around campus to promote mental health."

"I Will Listen", is an event that BSA puts on every year for students on campus. The event concludes of an art wall of students from elementary through college. "The main goal for this event is to promote mental health and how people can relate art back into mental health," said Irving.

Irving explained how more students should be educated on mental health on campus for the upcoming years to come. "I think we could work on having more student engagement and organizations," said Irving.

Peltz, Colter, and Irving all agree mental health should be talked about more on campus. Colter expressed, "Everyone struggles with their own things, if you aren't talking about it then it is just a problem." Irving had a similar response. She said, "Its really important, sometimes it feels taboo, if we don't have open conversations with students, people would feel more comfortable."

Broadcast Reader

Northwest Missouri State University should improve their knowledge of mental health for the upcoming years. Services are available on campus, such as wellness counseling, peer wellness coaching, and organizations like B-S-A. Kristen Peltz, Caitlyn Colter, and Zada Irving agree that mental health should be talked about more on campus. They all said it is challenging to get more students to utilize the resources available.