

New Report Outlines How Institutions Can Support Mental Health for Gen Y, Gen Z Students Who Face Mounting Stressors Like Climate Change, Health, and Finances

Student worries have prompted increased academic withdrawals, declining academic performance

Boulder, CO (June 27, 2022) – The Every Learner Everywhere network has released a new report to help postsecondary institutions’ faculty, staff, and administrators better serve students amid mounting concerns over their mental health.

[Caring for the Whole Student: How Faculty and Department Leaders Can Address Their Students’ Mental Health](#) cites multiple surveys and data findings that show Gen Y and Gen Z students are experiencing heightened stress and anxiety as they worry about finances, academic performance, the pandemic, and health care – in addition to bigger issues like the impacts of climate change.

For example:

- In **[The State of Higher Education 2022 Report](#)**, Gallup (2022) found that students pursuing a bachelor’s degree in 2021 were 34 percent more likely to cite emotional stress as a reason they considered withdrawing than those who took the survey in 2020 (76 percent vs. 42 percent). Similarly, 63 percent of students pursuing an associate’s degree cited emotional stress as a reason for withdrawing in 2021 versus 24 percent in 2020 (a 39 percent increase).
- In the 2020–2021 academic year, almost a third of students linked challenges with their emotional and mental well-being to a longstanding decline in their academic performance (Eisenberg et al., 2021).
- A survey of nearly 5,000 students from 14 private and public Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) found that 46 percent lacked sufficient food, 55 percent were housing insecure, and 20 percent were homeless at some point during the year (Weissman, 2022).

“Students are grappling with complex issues like financial insecurity, climate change, and concerns around health care, each with an intersection with systemic racism. As we grieve through a rise in student suicides and countless school shootings, we believe it’s essential to discuss these issues in-depth and highlight areas where faculty and department leaders can help,” said Gentry Croley, M.A., Senior Strategist, Intentional Futures. “While faculty and institutions can’t possibly solve all of these problems, relatively small changes in the classroom can have massive effects on student wellbeing and ability to learn.”



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Caring for the Whole Student provides multiple recommendations to institutions to address these challenges, including:

- Advocating for and implementing culturally relevant teaching
- Restructuring mental health support on campus
- Providing mandatory campus-wide training in crisis intervention
- Reducing police involvement in mental health crises
- Providing options for digital learning
- Better connecting students with the resources they need to thrive

Croley authored the report along with Nolie Ramsey, M.A./PhD(c), Associate Strategist, Intentional Futures, and Tia Holiday, M.Ed. Associate Director, Intentional Futures.

To download the free resource or learn more about Every Learner Everywhere and its collaborative approach to equitize higher education through digital learning, visit everylearnereverywhere.org. To contact Every Learner Everywhere, email everylearner@wiche.edu, or call (303) 541-0206. Follow Every Learner on Twitter @EveryLearnerNet.

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Every Learner Everywhere (Every Learner) is a network of twelve partner organizations with expertise in evaluating, implementing, scaling, and measuring the efficacy of education technologies, curriculum and course design strategies, teaching practices, and support services that personalize instruction for students in blended and online learning environments. Our mission is to help institutions use new technology to innovate teaching and learning, with the ultimate goal of improving learning outcomes for Black, Latinx, and Indigenous students, poverty-affected students, and first-generation students. Our collaborative work aims to advance equity in higher education centers on the transformation of postsecondary teaching and learning. We build capacity in colleges and universities to improve student outcomes with digital learning through direct technical assistance, timely resources and toolkits, and ongoing analysis of institution practices and market trends. For more information about Every Learner Everywhere and its collaborative approach to equitize higher education through digital learning, visit everylearnereverywhere.org.

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