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Mental Health Resource Reflection

Section 1: Problem Identification

For my mental health resource project, I have chosen to make a Mental Health Infographic for college and high school aged young adults, but with an emphasis on the student aspect and the stresses that can come from being a student in today's age. I have chosen to dive into the student aspect because it has been a growing problem that young adults from an age range from 14-23 years old, who are completing classes to earn a degree, have greater levels of anxiety and other things that can alter their lives and studies. Young adults that are in school are under a lot more pressure to have big and exciting lives. In order to accomplish these things, they are required to get good grades in school, get into a good college, and then proceed to get good grades in college to get a good job/career. Students have very busy lives, they are always running around, doing different things, doing homework and studying for exams. A lot of students don't have time to themselves, which can lead to weakening mental health, which can then lead to bigger mental and physical complications. Young adults are the future of this world, and if we do not focus on trying to better their lives, we may not be able to have a future.

One specific lens that I want to focus on is the stigma behind getting mental health help when you are a struggling student. We hear so many messages nowadays that state that they want people to feel comfortable about getting help with their mental health and wellness. But what do we do when we hear those advertisements or see the little pop up that comes up on your phone?

We X out of them without a second look. I want to be able to have students that may be struggling, feel comfortable enough to go out of their way and start looking into their mental health. Many students struggle with depression, anxiety and many other things, but what if a thirty minute counseling session, just to get something out in the open, could help you? We just have to be willing to take the scary step of admitting that we may need a little extra help, and realizing that there is nothing wrong with that. With the format that I choose, I want to be able to get the message to as many people as possible. With the infographic, I believe that this is an easy and effective way for people to get the information that they may need, without becoming overwhelmed by the information.

Section 2: Format

I picked the format of an infographic because it can be placed in many different locations in order for a larger audience to view the information. The infographic will be fairly simple and easy to understand so it is not so overwhelming to a person that may not be in the right headspace. This is a much more laid back way to understand the stigma behind mental health help, and be able to find help if it is needed. I want this infographic to be able to reach a broader audience, and for it to be shareable.

This infographic is very calm, light hearted and easy to understand. When students are looking for help with their mental health, it can be a very scary and nerve racking experience for them to go through. Not a lot of students are going to want to sit down and go through a bunch of paperwork on resources that can help them. With that reason, I have also decided to add QR codes for students to scan that can direct them to more information and resources if they think they might need it. There will also be a QR code for the infographic as a whole so it can be shared with other students easily. With entering this QR code, it will be able to reach a wider

audience which is exactly what I am going for.

Section 3: Recommendations

What are your recommendations you are making for this problem and this audience?

Communication can be hard for a lot of people, but communication about your mental health can be even harder. Students with mental health challenges need to be able to talk to someone to be able to begin the process of healing and work towards their goals in life, which can include their schooling and career path. There are many different things you can do to improve your communication about mental health including, finding an attentive and trustworthy listener, knowing when you are in need of disclosing information about your mental health and also knowing how to support someone else who may be struggling.

One of the most important things when it comes to disclosing information about your mental health as a student is talking to someone that you trust and you feel comfortable around. In addition, that person should be able to show you that they are actually listening to what you are saying, and not just having the words come in one ear and out the other. A key component to disclosing information on your mental health, is knowing when to disclose that information. As a high school or college student, you are under tremendous stress and pressure, so when you are disclosing that personal information, make sure to do it when you are calm, collected and comfortable (National Alliance of Mental Illness, n.d.). This is the time where you are most at peace and have a clear mind to be able to have a difficult conversation like one about mental health struggles. When communicating about your mental health to someone else, try to be as specific and clear as you can. When you are able to communicate clearly with people about a specific problem you may have, they are more likely to understand where you are coming from and have a better understanding.

Make sure when you are disclosing information about your own personal mental health situations it is on your own terms and at your own pace. These things can be very hard for people to understand themselves, let alone telling another person about what is going on inside their heads. When you first sit down with someone and talk about your mental health, make sure you talk about talking and what you want to gain out of the conversation (NAMI, n.d.) Making sure you communicate about what you would like to gain out of the conversation can really help let the listener know how they should respond. Whether that is giving advice about possibly getting some type of treatment, or if you just need someone to listen to what you are saying and just be there for moral support.

“We love stories about spontaneous help, and that may explain why random acts of kindness go viral on social media. But in reality, the majority of help occurs only after a request has been made” (De Witte, 2022, p. 1). This is something that we all have to remember when it comes to wanting help with mental health. You have to be able to talk to a person about what you are feeling and going through in order to get the right help that you need. One of the main things that you can do when talking about mental health is being clear and direct (Peterson, 2009). When a message is given to another person and it is clear and direct, the person receiving that information will be able to have a clear understanding of what is being said.

With that being said, there are many different ways to communicate to other people about mental health and a lot of people understand that it is a very hard and complicated thing for people to have to go through. But if you are able to communicate clearly and directly, make sure that the person you are communicating to knows what you want out of the conversation and you are comfortable with the person that you are disclosing to. You will be able to understand how to communicate about mental health and the struggles.

Section 4: Self-Evaluation

Throughout the semester while working on this project, it has really opened my eyes to the world around me. Communication with another person, no matter what the topic, is such an important component to human life. When it comes to communication about your mental health, it needs to be navigated correctly and efficiently. But it also cannot be overwhelming for the person, otherwise it may turn them away from getting the help that they may need. My thought process for this mental health resource was to make it super easy to read, light hearted and bright. Dealing with mental health is a very scary and long process for some students, and if they are able to quickly glance at my infographic, they will be able to get some information on disclosing mental health troubles.

One detail that I really enjoy about my infographic is the use of bright colors and a QR code system. I was able to enter in a couple of different QR codes that can be scanned and then direct the person scanning them to a website that helps with students and mental health communication. I wanted to implement the bright and calming colors so that it catches the eyes of students that may be walking past the infographic. Another reason I used the bright colors was to make the infographic look less overwhelming and more comfortable for the readers.

I was able to learn a lot throughout the process of this resource project. Including, when the right time to communicate about your struggles, active listening and everything in between. Students are placed under a lot of stress and it is hard for some people to find ways to communicate about their mental health that may be suffering. It is even proven that students in today's age are under more stress than ever so when you are looking for help, remember that it is never as scary as you think.

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