

September 30, 2014

A Message to Penn Students, Families, Faculty, and Staff  
Regarding Mental Health Support at Penn

From

Amy Gutmann, President  
Vincent Price, Provost  
Craig Carnaroli, Executive Vice President

We write today to remind everyone within the Penn community of the things we can all do to look out for the emotional well-being of our student community. We have a very extensive network of support services on campus, and it is important that faculty, staff, students and families alike are all familiar with this range of offerings.

Last year we established the Task Force on Student Psychological Health and Welfare. This year-long commitment has brought together experts across campus. Due to the vital importance of this issue, we have been implementing their recommendations as they are developed. We expect the Task Force to issue a final report in January and will be incorporating additional recommended measures then.

In recent months, we have increased support to our Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS), adding a number of clinical staff members and extending the hours that CAPS is open for appointments. CAPS also expanded the comprehensive “iCare” training program, which teaches participants real-time skills to listen and aid students in distress. Already, more than 200 students, faculty, and staff have participated in this important effort to teach members of the Penn community tools to support each other.

Very shortly the University will institute the “HELP LINE,” a 24-hour-a-day, single, easy to remember phone number for members of the University community seeking information about how to obtain help for themselves or other Penn community members when confronted with immediate health and wellness concerns.

The subject of mental and emotional issues facing college and university students is a critically important one. More than 1,000 college students commit suicide each year on campuses across the country. While there are no easy answers to this national tragedy, please know that at Penn we are doing everything in our power to reach students in distress and provide them with the highest level of support and care.

For parents and other family members, we urge you to remind your student of the resources that are available to them. Please notify the University if you have any concerns about your student’s emotional health. Similarly, we encourage faculty and staff to be on alert for students who may be struggling and to offer assistance when needed.

Finally, we urge students to take advantage of the programs and other resources that are in place when you think that you or someone you know needs support or help.

Services that are available to Penn students include:

**Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS):**

215-898-7021

215-349-5490 (Nights and weekends. Ask for CAPS counselor on call.)

**University Chaplain's Office:** 215-898-8456

**Student Health Service:**215-746-3535

**Division of Public Safety Special Services 24/7 Hotline:** 215-898-6600

**Division of Public Safety Emergency Communications Center:** 215-573-3333

**Office of the Vice Provost for University Life/Student Intervention Services:** 215-898-6081

**School Advising and Student Affairs Offices:**

Annenberg School for Communication: 215-573-6349

College of Arts and Sciences: 215-898-6341 (Undergraduate) or 215-898-7577 (Graduate School)

Dental School: 215-898-4550

School of Design: 215-898-6210

School of Engineering and Applied Science: 215-898-7246

Graduate School of Education: 215-898-7019

Law School: 215-898-7491

Perelman School of Medicine: 215-898-7190

School of Nursing: 215-898-6687

School of Social Policy and Practice: 215-746-5895

School of Veterinary Medicine: 215-898-3525

Wharton 215-898-7613 (Undergraduate) or 215-573-5756 (Graduate School)