PEER ACADEMIC SUPPORTS FOR COLLEGE STUDENTS WITH MENTAL ILLNESS

Pilot Randomized Controlled Trial

Paul Cherchia
Maryann Davis
Acknowledgements

Collaborators

- UMass Chan Medical School
  - Amanda Costa
  - Laura Golden
  - Kristen Roy-Bujnowski
  - Young Adult Advisory Board

- Boston University
  - Dori Hutchinson
  - Peer Coaches

- Wright State University
  - Mary Huber

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PASS: THE INTERVENTION

Team Lead: Dori Hutchinson and Paul Cherchia, Psychiatric Rehabilitation Center, Boston University
Mary Huber, Wright State University
PASS Logic Model

**INPUTS**
- Campus resources
- Student demographics (SES, gender, race)
- Baseline student academic capacities

**PASS Coach Activities (Proximal Outcome)**
1. Build peer rapport with student (3)
2. Teach calendaring method (1&5)
3. Identify apps that fit student;
   a. Academic apps (1,4)
   b. Wellness apps (2)
   c. Emotional agility apps (2)
4. Reframe experiences student perceives as negative (2)
5. Acknowledge students’ feelings (2)
6. Evaluate pros and cons with student (2)
7. Identify solutions to challenges with student (2)
8. Connect student strengths to their academic and wellness goals (2)
9. Role plays self-advocacy with professors regarding student’s learning needs/ accommodations (5)
10. Conveys knowledge about campus;
    a. Disability resources (4,5)
    b. Health resources (2,5)
    c. Academic resources (1,4,5)
11. Develops semester academic goals (1 & 5)
12. Identify student values, interests, and strengths (4)
13. Explore student identity (3)
14. Supports student development of self-care routines & wellness (2)
15. Student practices with Coach;
    a. Effective communication of personal difficulties (5)
    b. Asking for help when needed (2,5)
16. Coach shares personal;
    a. Self-advocacy skills with student (5)
    b. Stress coping skills with student (2)
17. Connect and accompany students to social opportunities on campus (3)

**Proximal Outcomes**
1. Executive Function Skills
2. Resiliency
   a. Emotional agility
   b. Stress-coping abilities
3. Social support
4. Academic self-efficacy
5. Self-Determination
   a. Self-empowerment
   b. Help-seeking behaviors-mental health
   c. Help-seeking behaviors-academic

**Distal Outcomes**
1. Improved GPA
2. Increased academic persistence

The Transitions to Adulthood Center for Research
PASS Peer Coach Manual

Topics
- Peer support approach
- Supported education
- Mental health
- Resiliency and wellness framework
- Responding with empathy
- Motivational Interviewing
- Crisis response and suicide prevention
- Reasonable Accommodations
- Peer coach self-care
- Units to work on for each competency

Hard Copy and Online Access

PASS Core Competencies

Hard Copy and Online Access

PASS Core Competencies

The Transitions to Adulthood Center for Research
Peer Coaching

Peer coach training & supervision
- 12 hours of training through webinars & in-person sessions
- 1-hour group peer coach supervision meeting weekly
- Individual supervision as needed

In-person/virtual coaching sessions
- 1-2x/week
- Up to 4 hours per week

Coaching session =
1) rapport building  4) action / activity
2) housekeeping  5) review of tasks for week
3) discussion  6) final thoughts
Coaching is Doing!

Sending emails
Going to office hours
Exploring time management techniques
Planning or attending social outings
Exploring wellness apps

Sharing coping techniques
Discussing and connecting with campus resources
Creating support maps
Reframing negative experiences
Encouraging self-care

Going to the gym
Studying
Keeping accountability
Exploring healthy lifestyle
Helping with class registration, housing, etc.

Formulating SMART goals
Journaling
Supporting career goals

The Transitions to Adulthood Center for Research
8 DOMAINS OF WELLNESS

Emotional
- Recent breakup, therapy weekly

Social
- Book club, dinner with coworkers

Financial
- Student loans, savings account

Physical
- Anxiety around the gym, love to run daily

Occupational
- Job search: how is it going?

PASS SMART Goals Worksheet

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Draft Goal</th>
<th>Specific</th>
<th>Measurable</th>
<th>Achievable</th>
<th>Relevant</th>
<th>Time Bound</th>
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<tbody>
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Obstacles: Solutions:

Final Goal: ____________________________

The Transitions to Adulthood Center for Research
Participants: Students
Ages 18-25, Freshman/Sophomores, MH, hindered education

Data Collection

Baseline surveys:
- Sociodemographics, Significant history, Proximal outcomes

End-of-semester surveys (2 semesters)
- Proximal outcomes

Transcripts
- Grades, Enrollment
### Participant Characteristics (N=71)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Total (N=71)</th>
<th>PASS (n=37)</th>
<th>ESAU (n=34)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sociodemographics</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
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<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>16.9%</td>
<td>21.6%</td>
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<td>Female</td>
<td><strong>76.1%</strong></td>
<td>70.3%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other</td>
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<tr>
<td>Heterosexual Orientation</td>
<td><strong>47.9%</strong></td>
<td>43.2%</td>
<td>52.9%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Latino*</td>
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<td>24.3%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Race</td>
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<tr>
<td>White</td>
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<td>64.9%</td>
<td>50.0%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
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<td>24.3%</td>
<td>44.1%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>8.5%</td>
<td>10.8%</td>
<td>5.9%</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>College Status</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Full Time Student</td>
<td>92.9%</td>
<td>94.5%</td>
<td>91.2%</td>
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<td>On-Campus Residence</td>
<td><strong>90.1%</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Mental Health Status</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Ever MH Treatment</td>
<td><strong>83.1%</strong></td>
<td>83.8%</td>
<td>82.4%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Current Counseling/Therapy</td>
<td><strong>44.3%</strong></td>
<td>48.7%</td>
<td>39.4%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Current Psych Medication</td>
<td><strong>44.3%</strong></td>
<td>48.7%</td>
<td>39.4%</td>
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<td>Self-Report Diagnosis</td>
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<tr>
<td>Affective disorders</td>
<td><strong>64.8%</strong></td>
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<td>Anxiety disorders &amp; PTSD</td>
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<td>24.3%</td>
<td>38.2%</td>
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<td>Other MH disorders</td>
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</table>

* PASS vs Control, p<.05
Outcomes at baseline and follow-up by treatment condition (N=71)

Resilience - Brief Resilience Scale
- PASS
- ESAU

Self-Efficacy - ASEESRL

Self-Efficacy - GSE

Self-Determination – AIR SD
Next Steps

• Large RCT on 2 campuses – Started Fall 2020
  • Large Private University AND Large Public University
  • Will enroll 190 participants over 3 years
• Year 2 Completed
  • 104 Participants recruited
  • All data collection will be completed by July 2024

https://www.umassmed.edu/TransitionsACR/