

# What is Mental Health?

Mental health is your emotional, psychological, and social well-being. For international students, challenges like culture shock, academic pressure, and loneliness can impact mental health. In many cultures, mental health isn't openly discussed, but understanding it is key to thriving in the U.S. This guide will show you when, where, and how to care for your well-being.



## Recognizing the Symptoms

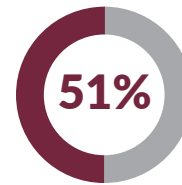
- Feeling overwhelmed or anxious
- Prolonged sadness or low mood
- Trouble sleeping or sleeping too much
- Withdrawing from friends or social activities
- Difficulty focusing or studying
- Frequent headaches or fatigue

## “I’m young. Why do I need to worry about mental health?”



3 out of 4

Lifetime mental health struggles start in college



Students report worse mental health when entering college

The decline of mental health is a process that can easily be ignored, but begins at an early age.

## Simple Ways to Boost Your Mental Health



### Pursue Hobbies

Provides positive release from daily stress



### Practice Meditation

Develop awareness and peace of mind



### Eating Omega-3's

Healthy fatty acids are linked to lower depression



### Volunteer Work

Boost your social connections and inner satisfaction



### Increase Sunshine

Elevated vitamin D can improve your mood



### Journal Your Experience

Process your feelings and track your progress

# Professional Support

As an international student, it's normal to feel stressed but if you're experiencing suicidal thoughts, self-harm, addiction, or extreme mood swings, it's important to seek help. Start with your student health center or ask your international student office to connect you with a specialist physician.



**PSYCHOLOGIST** – Licensed counselor that provides talk therapy to help manage stress, anxiety, and emotions.

**PSYCHIATRIST** – A medical doctor who can diagnose conditions and prescribe medication.

## Free Resources

In recent years, the U.S. has introduced resources you can use if you are seeking free, accessible mental health support across all 50 states. **Immediate assistance is just a call or text away.** Below are few of the many support systems that are publicly available.



### SAMHSA National Helpline

Agency that supports those with behavioral and mental disorders. Call at **(800) 662-HELP** for multilingual support.

### Crisis Text Line

**Text HOME to 741741** anywhere in the US for assistance about any urgent mental crisis situations you may have.

### 988 Lifeline

**Text or call 988** to be connected to crisis counselors for crisis support. All conversations are free and confidential.



### NAFC - [www.nafclinics.org](http://www.nafclinics.org)

Organization of **free and charitable clinics** offering support, public advocacy, medication access, and discounted supplies.

### 7Cups - [www.7cups.com](http://www.7cups.com)

FAQ and public forum for mental health questions. Provides **free 24/7 chat** to speak with trained volunteer listeners.

### iPrevail - [www.iPrevail.com](http://www.iPrevail.com)

**Peer-to-peer support** offered in solo and group settings for collaborative growth through coaching and assessments.