

TEACHING TIP

Raising Awareness of Mental Health in Higher Education: Research Activity for Educators

Globally, there has been increasing concern about university students reporting mental health conditions, yet their mental health needs remain mostly unaddressed. This Teaching Tip introduces Raising Awareness of Mental Health in Higher Education (RAMHHE), a student-centered and pedagogical research activity that adopts qualitative methods of interviews and focus group discussions to explore the meaning and understanding of mental health among students. The RAMHHE research activity enables collaborative dialogue about mental health between students and educators, using 4 questions: (1) What is mental health? (2) Who would you speak to about your mental health? (3) How is mental health viewed in your community, and (4) How can we support students' mental health? The first question will provide an understanding of the student's definition of mental health and if it differs from the educator's definition; the second question will support a range of referral pathways for students. The third question is useful for understanding the varied meanings of mental health among students from diverse cultural and religious backgrounds because students may not seek help if their culture or religion does not recognize mental health. The final question encourages an all-university dialogue on how to support students with mental health conditions. The use of focus group discussions will enable students to share interpretations and meanings. Findings will prompt the development of student-informed mental health interventions and may positively impact student access, retention, attainment, and progression outcomes. The model is illustrated in the Figure, Supplemental Digital Content, <http://links.lww.com/NE/A671>.

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