

# College Wellbeing

Conducted by



**Institute of Professional Studies**

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## Contents

Executive Summary .....	2
Program Objective .....	4
Activities.....	4
Campus Initiation.....	4
On-campus Engagement .....	5
Online Engagement.....	8
Conclusion .....	9

## Executive Summary

Youth go through significant transitions between the age of 18-24 due to evolving academic rigor, peer and social relationships, family ties, career and finances. Many emotional and behavioural issues tend to appear during this period. The current mental health system is not designed or resourced for youth facing mental health challenges. Youth often do not have information on the signs and symptoms of mental health challenges. Youth are also not equipped with the skills to help themselves out of such crisis.

ASM College Wellbeing Solution enables College Wellbeing Program (CWB) that seeks to combine cognitive behaviour approaches with mental health program to increase the help-seeking behaviour of youth.

The program is delivered through multiple modes for effective reach among students:

1. **Self-help** – Mental health awareness, Access to RoundGlass solution consisting of Programs, tools, knowledge articles.
2. **Mentor-led** – Mentor-mentee program (Campus Sensitization), campus community building – onsite by mentors and online using social features of solution.
3. **Coach-supported** – Online consultation as well as on campus programs

**Our program covers in-depth the following areas:**

- **Mental Health Awareness:** Create youth focused themes for monthly engagement. Throughout a month, the target population is provided with awareness information and is helped to create personal acceptance.
- **Campus Sensitization:** the mental health sensitization in the program is done through online engagement and on-campus mentor presence.
- **Campus Community building:** A peer support program has been created within the program to enable mental health aware peers, who can act as safety nets for their peers. The program builds the skills of the mentors to deal with personal and peers emotional and behaviour challenges and makes support readily available and normalized.
- **Intervention:** This is based on the cognitive behaviour model. The mHealth application created for the youth is feature rich and included 3 main components: E-consult platform, Mood charting and Content.

**In this report, one can find program objectives, various activities performed to enable the objective and the initial trends of adoption of a new paradigm.**

## Program Objective

College Wellbeing Solution is a youth mental wellbeing program for delivering mental health services to the youth. The key objective of the program is to

- Create awareness,
- Build acceptance for mental health.
- Improve help seeking behaviour and
- Provide access to care for those seeking support.

It is based on global best practices of building peer mentor networks and communities that strive to provide a safe space for students to have discussions around mental health. The program empowers students to become more proactive about their mental health, enabling them to reach out for support to either a mentor or an expert. The program uses the science behind community interventions, youth mentoring and the cognitive behaviour model.

ASM Institute, Pune along with its partner RoundGlass is providing a platform to the youth where they can share their mental health experiences, create safe spaces, learn to deal with or seek support for their emotional difficulties.

The program conducts monthly campaigns to spread mental health awareness on their campuses. It also creates campus leaders through the *Peer Mentoring Program*. Peer mentors are trained in mentoring skills and mental health sensitization modules for 30 hours, i.e. 14 hours of training and 16 hours of practical assignments.

## Activities

Some of the key initiatives undertaken by the College Wellbeing Team in 2019-2020 for ASM Institute, Pune are as follows:

### Campus Initiation

We begin our campus initiation program through our Introductory Session. The introductory session was conducted on 23<sup>rd</sup> August 2019. The session was conducted on both the campuses simultaneously. During this our partner Round Glass team have reached out to 326 students. The session was divided into 2 parts:

- Relevance of mental health for the youth
- Introduction to the college wellbeing program which consists of the on-campus (peer mentoring program) and online engagement.

## On-campus Engagement

### **Psychoeducation and Sensitization:**

The program has created youth relevant themes and content for monthly engagement with the youth. College Wellbeing has so far conducted the themes:

1. Acclimatization to Campus
2. Body Shaming
3. Youth Substance Use
4. Gender Parity
5. Internet Addiction (current theme)

Throughout this period the youth has been provided with information on the issues and built their capacities for self and peer support.

### **Campus Community building:**

Youth are connected and seek help from peers and informal campus communities. Hence, a peer support program was created. Students who volunteered for the program were selected through an online selection process. Peer mentors are leaders of change and they create promental health communities on campuses.

We currently have 17 mentors who have enrolled to volunteer for peer-mentoring program. Peer mentors are being trained in mentoring skills and mental health sensitization to provide support to peers for emotional, behavioural challenges and create a safe space for mental health discussions on campus. We have conducted 6 training sessions (using webinars) on mental health sensitization and peer-mentoring skills at our campus this year.

### **Campus Club Activities:**

The Peer Mentors club on the ASM campus is in the process of formalization. Nevertheless, they conducted their first mental wellbeing activity on their campus.

### **Treasure Life 2019**

The event is curated based on the WHO mandate for this year, '*Mental Health Promotion & Suicide Prevention*'. The theme inculcated positive character among students, help them build communities on campus they can rely on and to have some quick fixes for negative emotions. The event gamified the concepts of positive psychology for youth engagement and for promoting positive behaviour practices that the youth can adopt and practice.

For the "Treasure Life" event, 8 teams have registered with a total of 50 participants for the event. The event was conducted on 13<sup>th</sup> December, 2019 from 10:00-12:00 noon on campus.





## Online Engagement

### Online Program

Consists of the REACH app and focuses on providing intervention. It also had the following features:

#### 1. Content

Content is delivered through a mobile application for youth relevant issues and to ensure that the youth have curated information, based on which they could take informed decisions for their mental health.

#### 2. Care through health-coach

Each student using the mobile application is assigned a trained mental health professional. Students can reach out to their assigned health-coach for e-consultations. RoundGlass College Wellbeing has provided access to the app to all the students of ASM Institute, Pune students.

#### 3. Theme-based Emails:

Psychoeducation and sensitization on the above-mentioned themes were done through content delivered via emails on a weekly basis. Each week the mailers provided students the required information for awareness, acceptance, provided resolutions on self-help and peer support for building resilience for specific mental health issues.

#### 4. Webinar:

Through webinar we provide training to our mentors to build their mentoring skills and capacity for dealing with mental health issues. So far, we have conducted 3 webinars:

#### Peer Mentoring webinars:

1. August - September: Orientation of the peer mentoring program
2. October: Peer Mentoring Relationship and Skills
3. November: Boundaries and Confidentiality **Monthly theme webinars:**

1. September- Acclimatization to Campus
2. October- Body Shaming
3. November- Youth Substance Us



## Conclusion

The aims of the on-campus engagement were to increase awareness, reduce stigma and improve help-seeking behaviour among the youth for mental health services.

We have conducted two phases of mentor selection. We have mentors who are actively working with us to spread the awareness related to mental health and mental health concerns.

### **Upcoming Event:**

Worldwide the number of internet users are a whopping 3885 million. These numbers probably aren't surprising, the internet has become as ubiquitous as cars or electricity. The rapid adoption of the internet has far-reaching social and mental health impacts. There are entire corners of the internet devoted to bullying, harassing, exploiting and extorting.

Although, we all use the internet, the youth are more at risk of using the internet to an unhealthy degree. Towards that endeavour, RoundGlass College Wellbeing in association with the ASM Pune peer mentors would conduct a campus-wide seminar, "Disconnect to Connect" to address the issue of excessive usage of the internet by the youth.

### **Seminar Details:**

**Title: Disconnect to Connect**

**Session Duration: 45 mins**

### **Objectives of this program are:**

- To create awareness on the excessive usage of the internet
- Equip students with the skills to reduce the harmful usage.

### **Program Execution:**

Students will register for the session online via a link. The date for the event is getting finalized.