

OCTOBER 2023

UNIVERSITY OF CANBERRA MEDICAL & COUNSELLING STUDENT NEWSLETTER

As a part of our creating a culture of **diversity** and **inclusion**, the University of Canberra, welcomes and supports all students; promoting values and experiences that allow each individual to thrive and strive.

The UC medical and counselling team are committed to the values of the University and the message of **respect**.

The following information aims to help you understand the importance of these values and to reflect on how you can embody them and encourage your peers to do the same.

LET'S START BY DEFINING DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION.

Diversity - the practice or quality of including or involving people from a range of different social and ethnic backgrounds and of different genders, sexual orientations, etc

Inclusion - the practice or policy of providing equal access to opportunities and resources for people who might otherwise be excluded or marginalized, such as those who have physical or intellectual disabilities and members of other minority groups.

The Diversity Council Australia works across 10 different Diversity Dimensions to offer wide-ranging information on diversity and inclusion in Australia. These include:-

- Aboriginals and Torres Strait Islanders
- Age
- Culture and Religion
- Disability and Accessibility
- Domestic and Violence Family violence
- Gender
- LGBTQIA+
- Parental
- Race
- Mental Health

We live in a diverse community in Australia and UC reflects this.



The University welcomes students and staff with different life stories, histories, and experience. We have a multicultural staff and student population, students from rural areas, those that are the first in family to attend a university, students with disabilities, ethnic and religious diversity ; and there are many more differences that make us all wonderfully unique, but we are also very similar, in many ways such as our needs, emotions, hopes, aspirations etc;

Students spend a lot of time with each other, attending classes and tutorials, working in teams or on projects, sharing accommodation, socializing, online, gaming, via social media playing sport, working and more.

Ensuring we are respectful in these situations and that we are aware of how our behaviour language, attitude impacts others is paramount.

Let's consider a few very real scenarios.

When asked in class to form a group for a team project you will work on over the semester, what assumptions decisions do you make?

How do you as an individual select who you want to work with - who do you avoid as a potential team member. Are you ageist, do you avoid the mature age student, do you avoid the student with poor English skills, the person from a different ethnic or cultural background. You may think this is my opportunity to get the best grade I can, and your choice is because of that – but have you made erroneous assumptions - dismissing the older person who's experience /expertise may be key to your project or a student with unique skills or talents that will really benefit the group, or the person with a very unique and insightful perspective that also adds great value.

Sharing accommodation can be a great part of life as a student, and a diverse and inclusive living arrangement can be one of the most valuable experiences in your time at uni.

Think again about your biases or your proactive inclusive approach to a diverse living arrangement and how they may impact those you live with or socialize with.

If you are living in share accommodation you may be sharing with someone with a mental health condition (see info link below) a physical disability or from a different cultural group.

The goal again is to treat each individual with respect. Reflecting on the characteristics above, you may need to become better informed about what might cause the person you live with to feel uncomfortable or distressed. To be more inclusive you may need to be more tolerant, more communicative, less judgemental, and more willing to ask about what support they might need. You are likely to discover you actually have more in common than you thought; similar expectations, similar interests and similar goals. See this as an opportunity to gain insights into the surprising challenges or prejudices this person has or is facing and become much more aware and informed about issues you had never considered.



Everyday social situations are often diverse; appreciating that exclusion and active prejudice are experienced by some on a regular basis because of race, gender, etc; and that these need to be challenged.

In a social situation you may have the opportunity to be an **active bystander**. If you see someone being ostracized or harassed or made fun of you can intervene.

There are various models of Bystander intervention, which you may want to review, or you could do the UCMCC Bystander course. Put simply notice what's going on around you – if you see inappropriate behaviour don't ignore it, work out how you can intervene or document, video and report, or take action if safe, say something or do something.

Inclusion also means looking after each other.

If you see racism, if you see aggression or domestic violence, discrimination, these behaviours are disrespectful, and they are exclusionary.

It is not ok to be subjected to discrimination or abuse.

Excuses or comments like these are **unacceptable**, it is **not ok** to say...

... she is OK ,her boyfriend always acts like that when he's drunk and she just puts up with it..

... male control it is a cultural thing, you shouldn't intervene, he will get more aggressive if you disrespect his rights...

... she's just having funjoking about her hijab, she knows it's a joke...

... that person's stutter is so extreme... why do they speak every tutorial.....

... she has rich parents she gets it so easy and has so many privileges

On a personal level:-

Reflect on how you might build skills to be inclusive rather than exclusive and to appreciate the diverse environment you live in, also recognising your unique contribution based on your individual history and heritage.

Self- awareness is important. Developing self- awareness will help you to be respectful, informed, authentic and genuine in your interactions with others. Be aware of your comments on social media, your intentions, your language, and choices.

Communicate openly and empathically. You do not have to hold the same views and opinions as others – equally others do not need to hold the same views and opinions as you – but you do need to be respectful, calm and tolerant in your interactions.

Career – preparing for your future career; how can you contribute to recognising diversity and being inclusive of the talents and contribution of others. As a student you can start considering the skills you need. This Forbes article suggests 7 skills you may want to explore.

It is very easy to follow popular views without really exploring them; to 'virtue signal', without reflecting on whether this is just an inverted form of exclusion, e.g. including one group, while excluding another.

USEFUL LINKS

Diversity Council Australia

What is Diversity, Inclusion and Intersectionality?

Relationships Australia

Respect.gov.au

Inclusion Australia

Racism. It Stops With Me.

SANE Australia

IDAHOBIT

The STOP Campaign

UC Medical and Counselling Centre offer training courses on Mental Health First Aid and Bystander Intervention throughout the year. Contact us for further information 6201 2351.

Feeling **UNSAFE?**

UC Chaperone service is available to you 24/7

Contact UC Security
at 02 6201 2222



If you are in a life threatening situation call 000.
UC Campus Security is available 24/7 02 6201 2222.

Committed to a respectful and safe campus community. For support contact:

Student Wellbeing and Support

T (02) 6206 8841
E wellbeing@canberra.edu.au
9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday

UC Medical and Counselling

T (02) 6201 2351
9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday

For further information visit:

canberra.edu.au/safe-community/where-to-get-help

UC Crisis Line

after hours, weekends and public holidays only
FREE CALL 1300 271 790 | TEXT 0488 884 227

Canberra Rape Crisis Centre

T (02) 6247 2525 | TEXT 0488 586 518

1800 RESPECT

National domestic, family and sexual violence counselling service
T 1800 737 732

CONSENT

Remember: The inability to speak does not mean you can't express consent. It is important to explore how consent will be expressed and received, particularly with non-verbal replacements.

*'An important part of sexual wellbeing is having agency over sexual decisions and control in sexual situations, which includes the ability to consent to sex, or to refuse it, or to withdraw consent at any point.'**

Consent is an agreement between two or more individuals to engage in any form of activity. Sexual consent, then, means actively agreeing to be sexual with someone. Without positive consent, any sexual activity is against the law and can be harmful.

Have you got consent?

Only 'YES' means YES! Silence or lack of resistance does not equal consent. Children and some individuals with intellectual disability cannot consent. Consent is needed for any kind of sexual activity, from sharing sexually explicit images or texts, to touching, to kissing, to intercourse. Consent needs to be clearly communicated and is reversible at any time.

Affirmative consent

- Consent is a conversation. It's everyone's responsibility to ensure that they have affirmative and informed consent.
- Consent should be communicated before any sexual activity begins, but it is important to keep this conversation going the entire time.

TIP: One way to ensure that you're constantly communicating consent is through dirty talk. Describe what you're going to do. If your partner doesn't seem into it, **stop**.

Note: The conversation about consent doesn't have to end when sex ends! It's always beneficial to discuss what you enjoyed and what can be improved.

Safe words

- Come up with a safe word with your partner/s. This is particularly helpful if you're not a vocal person during sexual activity.
- Ensure affirmative consent has been given and is still able to be communicated throughout.

TIP: Choose a safe word that is recognisable and easy to remember. That way it's easy to know when to stop. It's as easy as saying ... **pineapples!**



Withdrawing consent

You can withdraw consent at any time. It is everyone's right to be able to stop sexual activity whenever they want. If you disengage non-verbally from sex (such as pulling away or not seeming that into it), this is also a sign that consent has been withdrawn.

ACT CRISIS SERVICES

ACT Police

Emergency: 000
Non-emergency: 131 444

Responsible for providing policing services to the ACT. They can also redirect you to the Sexual Assault and Child Abuse Team (a specialist team dedicated to investigating sexual assault committed against adults and children in the ACT).

Operating Hours: 24/7

Canberra Rape Crisis Centre

(02) 6247 2525

Provides crisis and ongoing counselling to victim-survivors and their supporters. Provides advocacy during police, hospital and court processes. CRCC has specialist services for men and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Operating Hours: 7am-11pm daily

Domestic Violence Crisis Service

(02) 6280 0900
Online Chat also available

Provides crisis intervention services to anyone who is experiencing, or has experienced, domestic and family violence, including telephone support, attendance to incidents with police, emergency accommodation, safety planning and referrals to support services.

Operating Hours: 24/7

Forensic and Medical Sexual Assault Care

Direct: (02) 5124 2185
Canberra Hospital:
(02) 5124 0000

Provides forensic and medical sexual assault care to people who have experienced sexual assault. Located at Canberra Hospital.

Operating Hours: 24/7

ACT Access Mental Health

1800 629 354
(02) 6205 1065

Central point of entry to access mental health services in the ACT. They provide immediate help if you or someone you care about is experiencing a mental health crisis and have a range of services in both hospital and community settings.

Operating Hours: 24/7



Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS National)

Assists in immediate phone interpreting to deliver equity and access to the community.

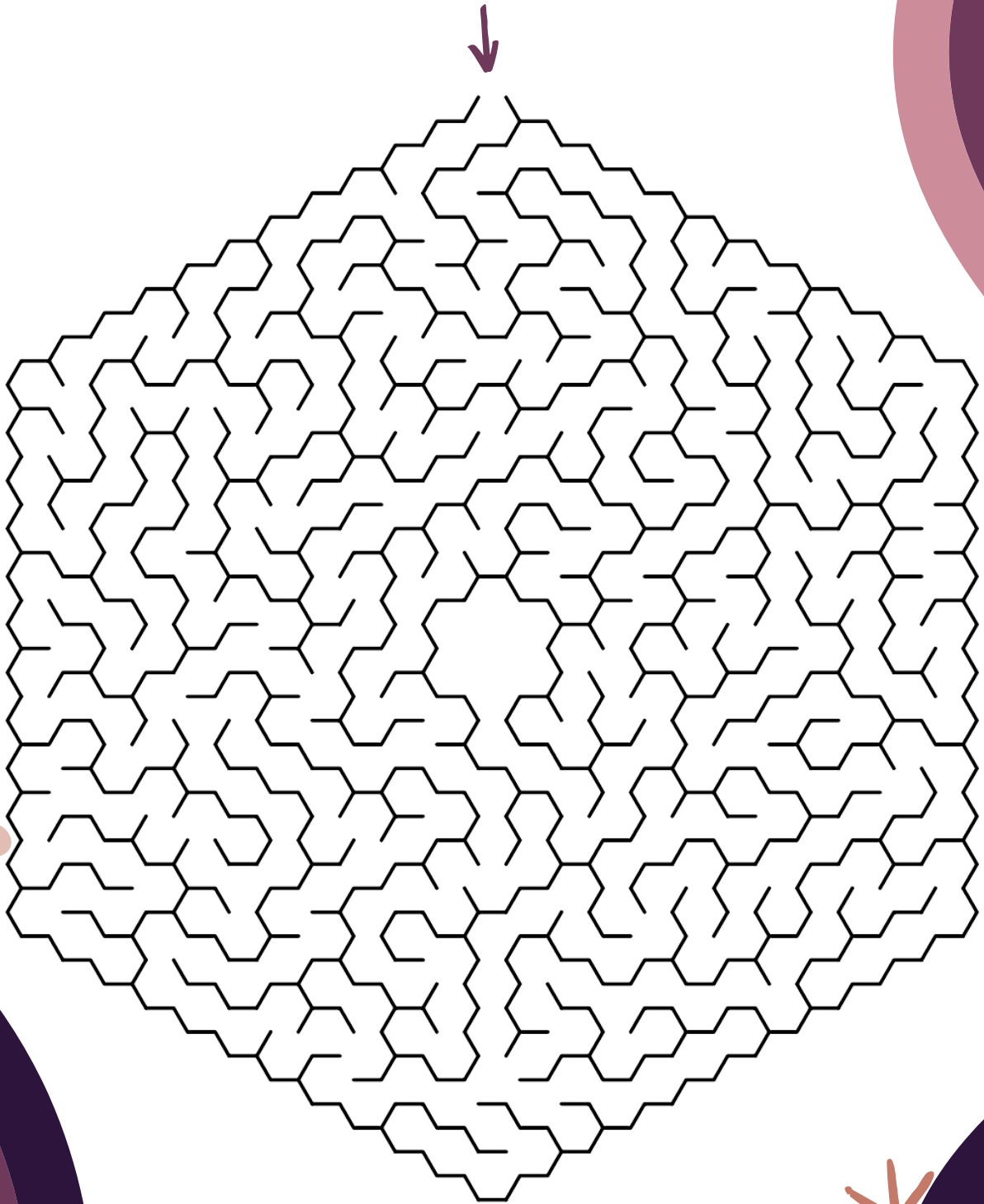
131 450 | Operating Hours: 24/7

TAKE A BREAK AND FIND ALL 10 WORDS

H V U A M O J H X F B R Q J P
Z T V F M I A L C E R I B R B
S D G I A V P Z F S C Q P W B
S B X N T T C E P S E R I X R
X A A K E C I V N P P U M J A
F R O X S R R H I W D Q V D V
Y S V D S N T F Y M N U O E E
M K S T T P E S Q Y V P E U G
J E M P O W E R N H S U B G H
O S O L I D A R I T Y T T I F
G S X R Y X W Y R R U V U E P
T Z B W E H P B F O G I H I V
C S N R Q S J T X W V M W O D
J I H Q A U T O N O M Y Z M V
E V Y I H L E V E I L E B A O

- brave
- solidarity
- reclaim
- rest
- autonomy
- believe
- worthy
- respect
- empower
- strength

**NAVIGATE YOUR WAY
TO THE CENTRE OF
THE MAZE**



SAFE SEX

Practising safe sex is essential for physical, mental and sexual wellbeing.

SEXUAL WELLBEING

Sexual wellbeing is more than just an absence of harm, but rather a positive and respectful view of sexuality, sexual relationships and your body. Sexual wellbeing also includes having pleasurable and safe sexual experiences! Having open and respectful conversations with yourself and with others about all things sex is an important way to promote sexual wellbeing.

COMMUNICATION AND CONSENT

Effective communication and listening is key to safe sex. This includes enthusiastic and ongoing consent from all partners. Asking questions such as, "Do you like this?" and "How does this make you feel?" are helpful starters.

PARTNERS

Safe sex is between consenting partners of legal age (16 years of age in the ACT). Safe sex may be between any number of people, of any sexuality or gender identity, providing it is consensual.

CONTRACEPTIVES

To protect against sexually transmitted infections, the use of condoms and dental dams are most effective. For pregnancy, there are many options of birth control, such as the Pill, Contraceptive Implant or Hormonal IUD.

MIND-ALTERING SUBSTANCES

A person may not have the capacity to consent when under the influence of mind-altering substances, such as alcohol or drugs.

HEALTH

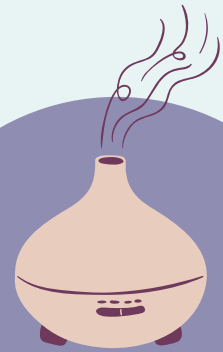
If you are sexually active, it is recommended that you get sexual health checkups at least every six months, or after every new partner. There are many services that do this for free, such as the Canberra Sexual Health Centre.

SLEEP HYGIENE

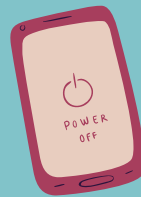
TIPS



MAINTAIN A
REGULAR PATTERN,
TRY TO GO TO BED
AT THE SAME TIME
EACH NIGHT



CREATE A
COMFORTABLE
ENVIRONMENT



AVOID
ELECTRONICS
IN BED



AVOID
CAFFEINE
LATE IN THE
DAY



SPEND TIME
WINDING DOWN
BEFORE BED, FIND
AN ACTIVITY TO
DO BEFORE BED
THAT HELPS YOU
RELAX



AVOID
NAPPING
DURING THE
DAY





Take a Break




Take a break from this resource and do something to help you relax, cope with stress or fear and to wind down. This could be through meditation, breathing exercises, prayer or the below visualisation. We have included some guided imagery prompts for you to picture in your mind if you choose. This technique can help you visualise positive and safe spaces.

Visualisation Prompts

By the river

Imagine you are sitting by a river. You can hear the gentle flow of water and the birds in the trees above. You can feel the cool stones beneath you and the light breeze on your face. You look up and you see the soft blue of the sky and dark outlines of trees reaching for the clouds. Now, you look back down and you see the browns, blues, greens and greys of the river. There are curls of white where the water meets the rocks. When you look more closely, you can see little fish darting around in the water. You place your hands and feet firmly on the ground beneath you. You take some deep breaths. You let the river carry away your worries.

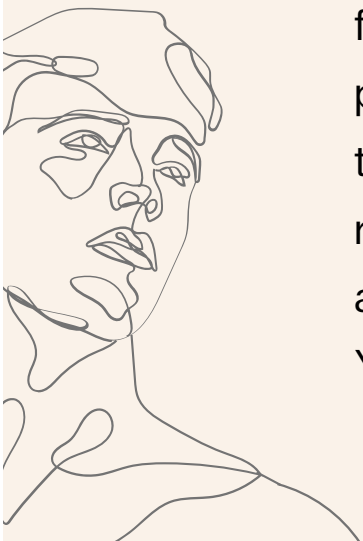


Relaxation

Imagine you are lying down with your body relaxed and almost completely touching the ground. If it feels more comfortable, you can be seated or standing up. Take a few deep breaths to this rhythm: in for 4 counts, hold for 2 and release for 6. Feel the breath travel in through your nose and down into your lungs, lifting your belly as you breathe. Now, visualise the air from each breath travelling through your body: down through your legs and into your toes, across your arms and into the tips of your fingers, up through your neck and into your head. Imagine every breath relaxing each checkpoint in your body as the air travels around and through. Relax into your body, and slowly release any tension it carries.

Safe space

Imagine you are in your room. You can feel your warm blankets around you and the soft pillow behind your head. Maybe you've just woken up, or maybe you're watching a movie or calling a friend. There is soft music playing, you feel at peace and revitalised. There's a steaming cup of tea on your bedside table and the air in your room smells fresh and clean. You look around as sunshine gently filters in through the curtains. You feel at home.



UC MEDICAL AND COUNSELLING CENTRE GROUPS, COURSES, AND CLINICS

THE WEEKLY PSYCH SESSION

Join one of our psychologists every Wednesday for a FREE weekly psych skill workshop on building new skills and tools to manage a range of challenges students face today – such as goal setting, connecting with others, managing stress, and overcoming procrastination.

Register via events.humanitix.com/ucmcc-the-weekly-psych-session.

MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID TRAINING

MHFA will teach you how to provide initial support to someone who is experiencing a mental health problem or crisis. This course is based on guidelines developed through the expert consensus of people with lived experience of mental health problems and professionals.

Email beniah.colbourn@canberra.edu.au for information.

BYSTANDER TRAINING

A free 2-hour workshop on bystander intervention in the university setting. This training helps to identify safe and effective strategies in common bystander situations, including discrimination, sexual assault, harassment, intimate partner violence, mental health issues, and harmful use of drugs and alcohol.

Email beniah.colbourn@canberra.edu.au for information.

CITIZEN CENTRED JUSTICE CLINIC

Citizen Centred Justice (CCJ) is a student-led, legal advice clinic providing FREE and confidential support to UC students, staff, and the Canberra community every Friday. The clinic is run by lawyers supported by students who are gaining legal practice experience towards their legal qualification.

Call UC Medical and Counselling Centre on (02) 6201 2351 to book an appointment.



Scan to follow UC Medical and Counselling Centre on Humanitix and receive updates on all upcoming groups and courses