

Plan a Campus Stress Relief Event

This handout was designed by Wellness Education Services (WES) to assist UB student leaders to create your own stress relief events. Stress relief events can be as big or small as you wish. Below are suggested activities. You can select one or more of these for your event.

Who can help me to plan my event?

UB's student health promotion office, Wellness Education Services (WES), located in 114 Student Union.

- Wellness grants for student organizations <http://www.buffalo.edu/studentlife/counseling> (under Opportunities)
- Stress Management website www.buffalo.edu/studentlife/life-on-campus/health/stress-management.html
- Online "Student Self-Care Manual" <http://www.buffalo.edu/studentlife/wellness> (under Publications at bottom)
- Stress Survivor Kit for checkout (WES provides everything you need to present a program/workshop yourself, including outline, program ideas, supplies, and handouts)
- Giveaways for your program/workshop, like stress balls or aromatherapy lotion
- Free wellness and stress reduction related handouts
- Stress relief art activity ideas and worksheets, like coloring pages
- Large-scale "Chill Out" event in the SU lobby at the end of each semester

Contact Sharlynn Daun-Barnett at sd62@buffalo.edu to help you plan your event.

Submit an online program request for a Stress Survivor Kit: <http://www.buffalo.edu/studentlife/who-we-are/forms/request-a-workshop/health-workshop.do-it-yourself-workshops.html>

What stress relief activities appeal to students?

Activity 1: Dog Therapy



Dogs are fun to be with and provide comfort – just petting a dog can lower blood pressure and anxiety. These guidelines should be followed to successfully host a dog therapy event:

- Use only certified therapy dogs – therapy dog teams (dog + human) are covered by insurance from the certifying agency, and the dogs have been thoroughly trained and tested
- Hold event in a central room away from foot traffic so students who are allergic or fearful can avoid the dogs
- Be sure to ask if dogs are allowed in the space you would like to host your event
- Assign a student to be a liaison and have them meet and assist the dog teams during the event
- Provide water bowls for the dogs. Do not provide treats – the owners prefer to bring their own

Contact Information:

SPCA's Paws for Love program representative Debbie Braun at dlfb2@msn.com or 716-681-0744

When requesting therapy dog team, be sure to let her know the date, time, location, contact person, and how many students you expect to attend so she can schedule the appropriate number of teams. Generally one team for every 25 students.

Debbie will send out a call for therapy dog teams to contact you directly. It is then **your responsibility to coordinate with the team, send directions and provide parking passes if needed, and make sure someone meets the teams on campus to guide them to the proper room.** NOTE: THIS IS CRITICAL – many teams are unfamiliar with campus (especially the residence halls which can look like a maze) and can get easily lost. Also be sure to contact the team if your event is cancelled or the dates change – remember, they are volunteers. UB staff member Pam Rose, who schedules therapy dog teams for the events in the UB Libraries, developed these guidelines for hosting a campus dog therapy event.

Activity 2: Chair Massage



Studies of the benefits of massage demonstrate that it is an effective treatment for reducing stress, pain and muscle tension. **You will need funding to pay for licensed massage therapists to come to your event.** Depending on the size of the event and your funding, you can hire one or more massage therapists. Decide how long you would like to have each massage last-- 5 or 10 minutes each is recommended.

Contact Information:

Renee Wieberg, cwsrg@yahoo.com, Corporate Wellness Services, 126 Lackawanna Avenue, Sloan NY 14212

Cost- \$60/hour plus \$25 traveling fee –per therapist (minimum of 2 hours for each therapist) www.buffalochairmassage.com

Activity 3: Yoga and Meditation

Yoga and meditation are mind-body practices that can help students reduce stress, improve sleep, and become more focused. Uli Carlino-MacDonald at ucarlino@buffalo.edu or Tara Laurenzi at tglau25@hotmail.com are certified yoga instructors affiliated with WES that can facilitate these practices. You could also contact Jessica Nyrop from UB Recreation at jenyrop@buffalo.edu to see if she can schedule yoga instructors for your event. There may be a cost for this.

Activity 4: Arts and Crafts



Artistic expression can free your mind from stressful thoughts and offer a study break. After being focused on a craft, students may feel more relaxed. Some ideas include: coloring pages, creating with Play-doh, water color painting, making stress balls, making your own air fresheners and tie dying shirts. Consult with Sharlynn in the WES office for more ideas.

Activity 5: Quick and Healthy Study Snacks

Eating smart can improve your memory, energy levels, sleep and attitude. It is important to eat breakfast and have several meals throughout the day to perform at your best. It is also good to know the traps to avoid that can zap your energy like skipping meals, drinking "energy drinks," or having too much coffee, soda, candy or high fat foods. Suggested event snacks:

- Vegetables and hummus: Baby-cut carrots, 16 oz. (or other sliced veggies) and family size hummus
- Fruit kabobs: Wegmans Family Pack Tropical Fruit Bowl (you can pre-order this in advance through catering if you are ordering multiple bowls) and Sunbeam bamboo skewers
- Yogurt parfaits: Fresh berries (or other fruit), Low-fat Vanilla Yogurt, 32 oz., and granola cereal for topping

Our office can provide Healthy Eating handouts for your event via WES dietician Janice Cochran at jcochran@buffalo.edu.