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Student Health and Wellness

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Student Health and Wellness



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Why I chose this topic

In my first semester here at SUNY Cortland the biggest challenge I faced was staying healthy. The transition to college can be challenging in all aspects of our individual health and I felt I was most passionate about this subject. For my presentation, I focused on ways to maintain physical health, socio emotional health, mitigate stress, boost mental health, and cultivate spiritual health. For one of my classes, I also organized a tour of the student life center facilities for my students which beautifully tied into the lesson on maintaining physical health in college. I also focused on strategies to mitigate anxiety and angst in college where the environment is new and family is far. Maintaining our health is pivotal to academic success and happiness.

Main Areas of Focus

- ❖ What is physical health and strategies to maintain it in college
- ❖ The importance of sleep
- ❖ The biological impacts of stress on the human body
- ❖ Strategies to minimize anxiety and depression: Ice in hands, box breathing, journaling, visualization, affirmations
- ❖ Maintaining spiritual health and finding yourself in a new environment.

Activities & Learning Strategies

- ❖ Various Learning Mediums: traditional text slides, incorporation of Ted Talks, questions for discussion, visual aids
- ❖ Active Discussion: in each section of my presentation, I created a slide with a list strategies to maintain that aspect of health. I also opened the floor for discussion of strategies they felt were helpful and suggestions to add to the list.
- ❖ Ice Breaker: I started the lesson by asking my students to choose which aspects of their health out of the list of 5 areas they felt was the strongest and weakest after a series of starter questions. This really helped spark the discussion and get the class to reflect on how the information applied to them individually.

Activities & Learning Strategies 2

- ❖ Provided students with a list of resources on campus with phone numbers
- ❖ Led students through a visualization technique to calm emotions, brainstormed a safe place where they felt they could escape to
- ❖ Incorporated images with funny captions to keep students attentive to the information being presented, examples below



Reflection

Overall I believe I executed this lesson very well. It spanned 45 minutes and I felt I was able to convey all of the important information I planned to cover. If I were to conduct this lesson again in the future, I would include an exit ticket that summarized all of the strategies we discussed in the presentation with focus on strategies for coping with anxiety. After reading a lot of my student's CSI reflection papers, I am confident that spending a generous amount of time on supporting mental health and coping strategies was a valuable use of lesson time. I also am very happy we were able to get a guided tour of all the facilities available in the student life center. I think my students were very receptive, they answered questions, and participated in discussions. I hope the information covered will stick with my students when they need it!

Citations and Inspiration

1. Sharon Horesh Bergquist. How Stress Affects Your Body. Ted-Ed. 2015.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v-t1Z5-oPtU>
2. Li, W., Zhao, Z., Chen, D., Peng, Y., & Lu, Z. (2022). Prevalence and associated factors of depression and anxiety symptoms among college students: a systematic review and metaanalysis. *Journal of Child Psychology & Psychiatry*, 63(11), 1222–1230. <https://doi-org.libproxy.cortland.edu/10.1111/jcpp.13606>