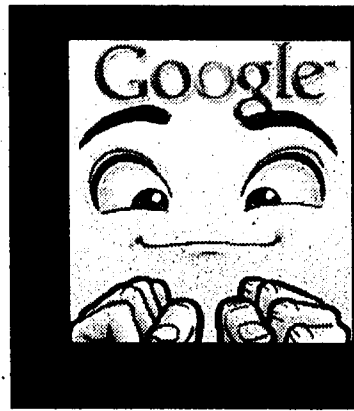


the MEREDITH **Her**ald



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It's a Hard Knock Life

Analyze This

Anna Turner
Staff Writer

As reported by the News and Observer, "nearly 15 percent of college students in spring 2008 said they had been diagnosed with depression." That number is up nearly 10 percent from 2000. With more pressure to make good grades, graduate, and find jobs in today's dog-eat-dog economy, it's no wonder more students are being diagnosed with depression and anxiety. Even finding free time to take a breather and deal with problems is a job within itself. That's where the free counseling services offered at Meredith can help!

Meredith College offers many services to its students, but one service that many students don't even know exists is Meredith's counseling service. Some students may know about the Counseling Center, but may not know exactly how to get there. The Counseling Center is located in 202 Carroll Hall in the same building as the Health Center. All of the Meredith counselors are licensed and have master's degrees in social work, rehabilitation counseling, marriage and family counseling, and counseling psychology. They are here to help with all types of problems ranging from school and life stresses, to even more serious mental illnesses. The most common issues that students come to the Counseling Center with involve anxiety, depression, fear of failure, relationship issues, and/or financial stress. Elizabeth Meier believes the rise in depression and anxiety is because "students have more and more responsibilities: work, school, and

family." She also notes that Meredith students "are juggling a lot."

Students are encouraged to come to the Counseling Center to help find a solution to their problems. Elizabeth Meier also explains that counselors "listen to and work with students to help identify the primary issues and goals for counseling. We use established, evidence based approaches to meet those goals. We assist students with learning new coping, relationship, and effective communication skills." Counselors use Cognitive Behavior, Narrative Therapy, Dialectic Behavioral Therapy, Family Systems, and Psychodynamic approaches. In cases where serious mental illness is concerned, counselors work with student and their insurance to find psychiatrists on their insurance plan. If a student doesn't have insurance, the counselors help her find community resources. As stated on the Counseling Center's website, it is their goal "to teach those who seek services how to cope with the challenge of college and life in a healthy, productive manner."

According to the News and Observer, colleges and universities all across the nation are seeing a rise in students who seek counseling for depression, anxiety, and a variety of other needs. As of October 16, La Salle University in Philadelphia has seen their number of counseling sessions rise 48 percent, from 137 appointments last year this time, to 204 appointments this year. Results from an Associated Press-mtvU poll report that eighty-five percent of students polled felt stress in their daily lives in recent months. Worries

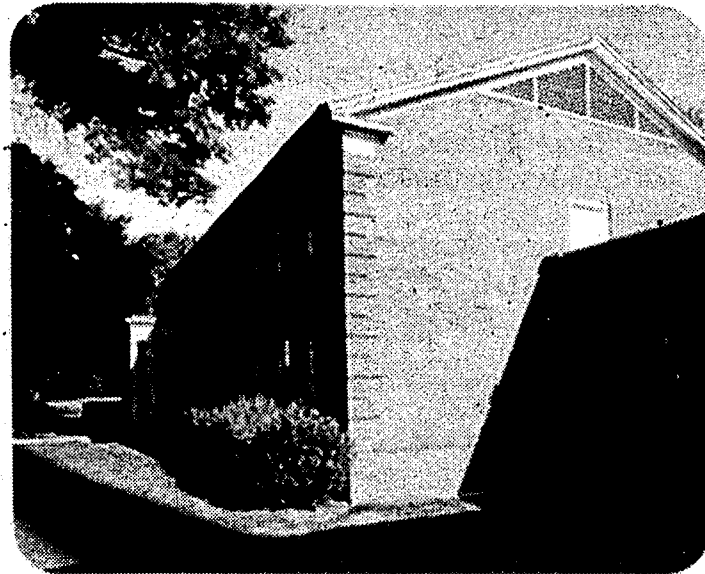


Photo courtesy <http://www.meredith.edu/students/counsel/contact-us.htm>

about grades, school work, money and relationships were the major contributing factors. Within this same survey, 42 percent said they had felt depressed or hopeless for several days during a two week interval, and 13 percent showed signs of being at risk for at least mild depression. These statistics were based on the students' answers to a series of questions used to diagnose depressive illness.

In addition, these students had trouble sleeping, little energy, or felt down or hopeless. Most had not received professional help. Eleven percent admitted to having thoughts that they would be better off dead or had entertained ideas of inflicting self-pain. These studies show that there are significant numbers of college students who experience depression, anxiety, relationship and family issues, stress, and other mental illness. Meredith's Counseling Center is free and confidential. In addition to helping with these, and other related issues, the Counseling Center also works with students who have disabilities.

The Counseling Center is there for the Meredith community and urges students to use their services. There is a daily crisis hour at 1:00 pm where students can come and seek help. Call (919) 760-8427 if you wish to speak to a counselor, or send an email to counselingcenter@meredith.edu. There is also a link on the Counseling Center's website (<http://www.meredith.edu/students/counsel/>) for students who need immediate assistance. In the words of Elizabeth Meier, "free mental health care: you can't beat it."

Green Tip for the Week of November 11

Only do laundry when it's absolutely necessary and only in full loads. This will save time, money, and energy.

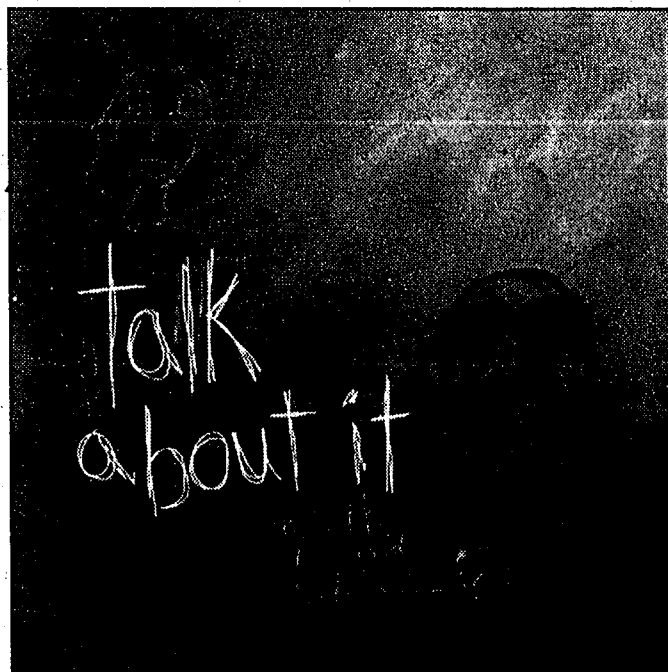


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