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WKU students promote campus' mental health center amid pandemic

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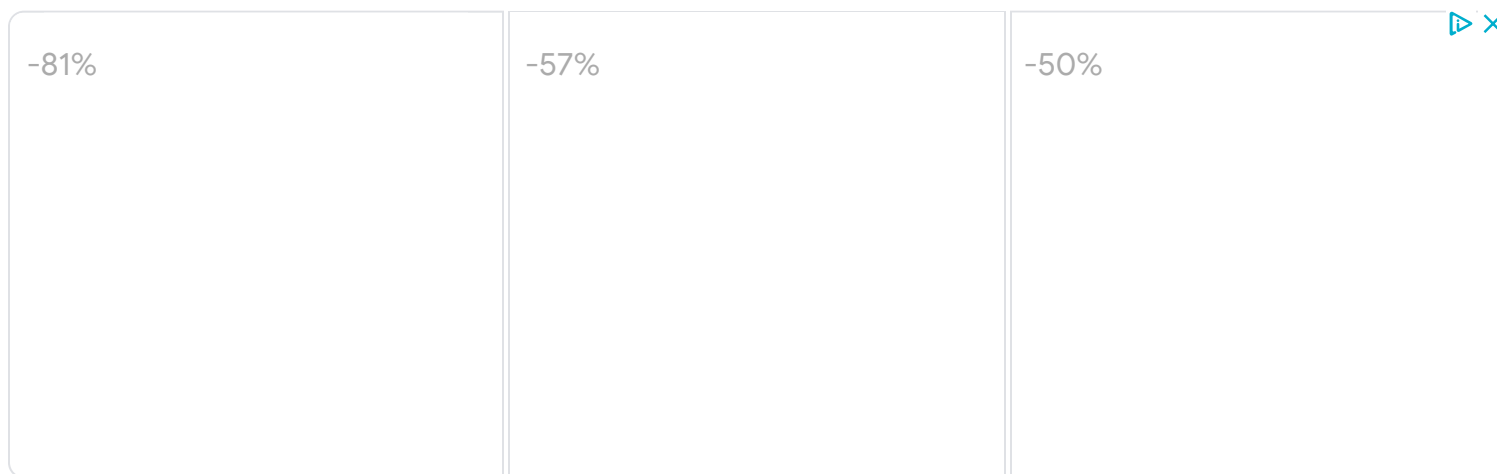


A group of Western Kentucky University public relations students designed an Instagram live event to promote the Counseling Center's services are still available remotely and free of fees.

Submitted

The coronavirus put a new spotlight on Western Kentucky University’s Counseling Center, but its services and staff will likely be vital long after the pandemic’s eventual conclusion.

That’s the message of the “Welcome in, Let’s Talk About It” campaign designed by a group of five public relations students aimed at reminding students that the center’s services are still available remotely.



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WKU students can now get help with stress management, forming healthy relationships and much more via virtual sessions from the privacy of a student’s home – completely free.

The WKU Counseling Center has dropped its initial \$20 fee for services.

“A lot of people have really struggled with this,” said Allie Cornwell, part of a group of WKU seniors working to promote the center’s services amid the pandemic.

Cornwell said the campaign aims to make “more students aware that they are not alone in their mental health struggles, and that the center wants to help them.”



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The group of students includes Cornwell, Mary Murphy, Sydney Jones, MaryCarol Kuhn and Bailey Percifield.

As part of the initiative, the group has taken over management of the center's Instagram account by curating posts and organizing live-streamed sessions with Associate Director Dr. Karl Laves, who's answered students' questions about mental health.

The campaign has also reached out to several campus sororities to survey students' knowledge of the center's services, use the data to offer information sessions and follow up by issuing a second survey to gauge the impact.

Laves said the center was excited when the group of students offered to promote its services.

"Any additional help to get our message out to students is always welcomed," Laves wrote. "We felt very assured that these students could develop a social media campaign with greater impact – particularly more impact than anything us 'older' people would create. And it remains refreshing and

comforting to know there are college students who are socially responsible and want to apply what they are learning to real-world issues.”

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