

Student Mental Health Policy Annual Report

Georgian College

September 1, 2024 to August 31, 2025

Policy Overview

Policy Title: Student Mental Health and Well-being Policy

Date of Last Review: January 2025

Next Scheduled Review: June 2026

Link to Public Policy Page: <https://content.georgiancollege.ca/wp-content/uploads/ACA-SS-POL-119-student-mental-health-and-well-being-policy-2025-12-11.pdf>

Mental health is a crucial determinant in a student's ability to thrive academically and socially in their post-secondary experience.

In late summer 2024, a Student Mental Health Directive was issued by the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities, requiring a mental health policy in alignment with the Strengthening Accountability and Student Supports Act (2024). Georgian's [Student Mental Health and Well-Being policy](#) was approved and posted in January 2025, and outlines the college's commitment to mental health programming, services and supports.

The guiding principles of Georgian College's Student Mental Health and Well-Being (MHWB) Policy emphasize the establishment and clear communication of comprehensive mental health programs and services that foster a supportive and inclusive college environment. These principles promote a holistic approach to student well-being, prioritizing connection, engaged learning, cultural appreciation, and personal growth. The policy was developed collaboratively, aligning with diversity, equity, inclusion, accessibility, and anti-oppressive practices, while also ensuring swift responses to urgent mental health needs. It underscores the importance of increasing mental health awareness, education, and early intervention, with particular attention to students at risk. The college remains committed to ongoing improvement, transparency, and broad communication regarding its mental health supports.

A key compliance measure in the policy is the submission of an annual mental health report in January of each year, to Georgian College's Board of Governors and the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities. The report is also required to be posted publicly.

Institutional Capacity & Structure

The development of the policy was a crucial step to support the institutional structure created to ensure students continue to receive mental health programming, services and support. Over the past year, many events were held to promote the policy and share mental health resources with students and staff.

Information, Education and Self-Guided resources

To ensure broad communication and accessibility of mental health resources, Georgian College consistently updates and disseminates information on available supports, event details, and significant awareness days through multiple platforms, including MyGCLife, the Learning Hub, Staff News, and the Bear Necessities

newsletter. The college utilizes Navigate360 email campaigns and social media to further promote mental health services, especially during times of heightened need such as geopolitical events.

The college maintains up-to-date resources on its mental health and well-being website and student portal, offering information on student insurance, Good2Talk, and other free supports. Additional initiatives include the creation of Mental Health Service Overview videos with the Centre for Teaching and Learning, continuation of the Wellness Chairs project with QR-linked resources to combat social isolation, active engagement through the Conversations in Mental Health @ Georgian Blackboard organization, and support for the Flourishing5Pack micro-certificate, which recognizes students' achievements in empathy, mental health literacy, social connectedness, and positive perspective.

Peer to Peer Support

The MHWB team collaborates with college's peer mentorship program, ensuring mental health peer competencies are embedded into the program training, as well as integrating well-being strategies into their student support structure.

Organized Workshops & Events

Over the past year, Georgian College has implemented a range of targeted initiatives to strengthen mental health and well-being competencies and awareness. These efforts included delivering specialized workshops and classroom presentations on topics such as self-care, mindfulness, and the Brain Game; organizing major awareness events like World Mental Health Day, Bell Let's Talk Day, CMHA Mental Health Week, and Sexual Violence and Consent Education; and enhancing support for Barrie Campus Residence through on-site services, weekly outreach, and Residence Advisor training. Additionally, staff professional development in mental health literacy was prioritized, with over 182 participants completing Living Works Start and ASIST training programs, further building institutional capacity to support student and staff well-being.

Direct Service

The college's mental health support model follows a stepped care approach, integrating specialized roles to offer accessible and culturally informed services at various levels. The Mental Health Lead oversees coordinated services and training, while the Mental Health Navigator triages referrals to ensure prompt, suitable support. Professional Counsellors provide confidential help for personal and academic issues, and the Indigenous Student Counsellor (Getsid) offers culturally relevant guidance and advocacy for Indigenous students. Together, these roles create a responsive continuum of mental health care for the college community.

Crisis Intervention and Support

The team provides education, outreach and targeted support to students and families in line with college procedures on student death, student of concern, violent threat and risk assessment and tragic events, collaborating closely with Campus Safety Services.

College Collaborations and Community Partnerships

A key focus is fostering support and engagement with college departments and external partners. The team continues ongoing collaboration and relationship building with key community partners for events, workshops and direct student referrals. Some examples include the Canadian Mental Health Association, Royal Victoria Regional Health Centre, Women and Children's Shelter of Barrie and Public Health for tabling events and team presentations

Data and Metrics

In fall 2024, Georgian College launched the Thriving Survey to gather data on first-year students' demographics, preparedness, stressors, and well-being, focusing on Dr. Laurie Schreiner's five determinants of student thriving,

in addition to life stability indicators. Results showed that nearly half of first-year students felt lonely or overwhelmed, with financial stress and food insecurity affecting a significant portion. In response, the college used Navigate360 to automate mental health and related alerts and scheduled over 1,100 support appointments, connecting students with essential services and reinforcing the need for targeted well-being resources.

Annual contacts engaged

Resources/Activity	Contacts made	Notes
Digital promotion and engagement	9421	Social media, Navigate360
Workshop engagement & student training	1132	Mindfulness, Brain Game, Empathy Strain
Staff training	212	ASSIST and Living Works programs
Tabling and outreach	2437	

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Service utilization

Service provided	Number of student contacts
Counselling appointments	2317
Navigator appointments	299
Triaged Navgiate360 mental health alerts	230
Student of Concern coordinated care team cases	71

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Opportunities and Future Plans

Looking ahead, there are several key initiatives planned to address student mental health challenges. The effectiveness of current services continues to be evaluated, and enhancements to the stepped care model will be implemented. There is a strong focus on building more robust partnerships with community organizations. Increasing the availability and promotion of digital resources, peer and navigation support for students are priority, and these resources will be highlighted through ongoing well-being strategies and services.

In March 2026, the Canadian Campus Well-being Survey will be deployed to gather comprehensive data on student mental health and well-being. The findings from this survey will be instrumental in identifying emerging needs, shaping targeted interventions, and informing continuous improvement of our services and supports.