

EEB Mental Health Resources

For graduate students in the Department of Ecology & Evolutionary Biology, University of Toronto

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What is the EEB Mental Health Resources Handbook?

This handbook was put together by EEB's Mental Health Committee (MHC) to act as a resource for graduate students. The handbook covers the role of the Mental Health Committee and the resources it offers, alongside support provided by other EEB and UTGSU groups. The handbook also details graduate student access to medical insurance, how to navigate a leave of absence, and a list of University and City-wide resources on mental health and wellbeing. We thank all the previous MHC members for putting this handbook together.

What is the role of EEB's Mental Health Committee?

EEB's Mental Health Committee serves as a **mental health resource and support group** for EEB graduate students and postdocs. Its initiatives are designed to destigmatize the myriad experiences, needs, and challenges of graduate students and postdocs **by building a network of peer-support** through social, educational and developmental programming.

This includes:

- Acting as a **first point of contact** for graduate students and postdocs in need of support (e.g. resource referral, conveying feedback/concerns).
- Providing a **safe space** to share personal experiences with the rest of the community. Conveying feedback/concerns to the relevant authority when they are outside the scope of the MHC.
- Organizing **community-building events** (see below) to support the various experiences of graduate students and postdocs in EEB and to increase awareness of resources.

Current committee (2022-2023):

- Amanda Peake* [amanda.peake@mail.utoronto.ca]
- Youngseo Clara Jeong [youngseoclara.jeong@mail.utoronto.ca]
- Maria Tocora Alonso* [maria.tocora@mail.utoronto.ca]
- Sydney Ackermann [sydney.ackermann@mail.utoronto.ca]
- Meng Yuan [my.yuan@mail.utoronto.ca]
- Jennifer Carpenter [jennifer.carpenter@utoronto.ca], staff member

* Members with Suicide Alertness Training (safeTALK)

Regular events

- **Coffee Breaks:** biweekly opportunities to connect with colleagues, chat and learn a new skill (e.g. crochet), or play a game (e.g. cryptic crossword)
- **Nature Walks:** biweekly/monthly opportunities to get outside, go for a walk, connect with nature and meet people from the department
- **Peer-to-Peer Workshops** on specific topics including:
 - Impostor Phenomenon
 - Procrastination & Time Management
 - Anxiety & Depression
 - Learning Disabilities in Grad School
 - Resilience to News
 - Leave of Absence

One-off events (usually annual)

- **Resources Workshop:** introduction to resources available on campus (Health & Wellness, Accessibility Services, and the Graduate Conflict Resolution Centre)
- **Scenarios Workshop:** use fictional “case studies” and invited professionals to discuss solutions to common issues faced by graduate students
- **Disasters Workshop:** fun opportunity for faculty, pdfs and grad students to tell stories about problems (failures) with their science and how they recovered
- **Mindfulness Tea:** a practice of quieting the mind to be more present by smelling, tasting, and experiencing tea in an entirely new way
- **[IAR \(Identify, Assist, Refer\)](#) or [SafeTalk Suicide Prevention Training](#):** workshops facilitated by skilled, supportive trainers on how to recognize and engage with someone with mental health challenges or thinking about suicide
- **Sexual Harassment Awareness Workshop:** workshops on various topics provided by [SVPSC](#) (Sexual Violence Prevention and Support Center). Note that EEB hosts workshop with SVPSC on what sexual harassment/violence includes and how to avoid it as part of the mandatory training for the new TAs but everyone is welcome to attend

Past Committee members

2021 - 2022: Madeline Peters, Pooja Nathan, Rachel Giles, Maria Tocora, Amanda Peake

2020 - 2021: Madeline Peters, Leila Krichel, Pooja Nathan, Rachel Giles, Tania Barrera

2019 - 2020: Tia Harrison, Priya Vaidya, Leila Krichel, Tania Barrera, Ariel Greiner, Zoe Humphries

2018 - 2019: Ariel Greiner, Zoe Humphries, Bonnie Pilkington, Jade Simons

2017 - 2018: Rebecca Schalkowski

Additional Contacts for Support

EEB Graduate Coordinator [Helen Rodd, helen.rodd@utoronto.ca]: contact for general concerns related to graduate student issues including mental health, student-supervisor relationships and departmental/SGS policies (e.g. going on leave).

EEB Associate Graduate Chair [Don Jackson, don.jackson@utoronto.ca] or **EEB Tri-Campus Chair** [Marla Sokolowski, chairsec.eeb@utoronto.ca]: contact for department-related concerns or if contacting Helen does not work for you.

Your EEB Grad Peer Mentor [assigned to each new incoming graduate student]: general support for coping with day-to-day concerns of life in EEB.

EEB CUPE 3902 Unit 1 Stewards [Maddie Jarvis-Cross, maddie.jarvis.cross@mail.utoronto.ca; Mete Yuksel, mete.yuksel@mail.utoronto.ca]: contact for questions related to your rights and benefits as a CUPE member.

EEB Allyship Network [eeb.allies@gmail.com]: an inclusive, vetted, and trained support network that is dedicated to listening and providing resources.

A&S Director, High Risk, Faculty Support & Mental Health [Caroline Rabbat, caroline.rabbat@utoronto.ca]: for help with finding campus or community mental health supports, systems navigation, and resources for supporting others.

SGS Vice Dean's Office [sgs.vdeanstudents@utoronto.ca]: for information, support, training or advice about supervision issues (note that they will expect you to contact the EEB Graduate Coordinator or the EEB Associate Graduate Chair/ EEB Tri-Campus Chair before you contact them unless you must speak to someone outside the department).

SGS Website [<https://www.sgs.utoronto.ca/resources-supports/>]: for info about graduate-specific programs, including the Graduate Wellness Portal, building professional skills, academic writing and speaking, leaves of absence, building your graduate community.

UofT Student Mental Health Resource [<https://mentalhealth.utoronto.ca/>]: a starting point to find support and services, including campus-specific resources. Check the Resources List section for **U of T My SSP**, **Graduate Counselling Services** and many other on and off-campus resources

EEB Groups and Events

Different groups within the department organize social and academic events that unite our community and promote a healthy environment. Not all of these are organized every year, but graduate students are encouraged to reach out to their peers or to the department if they have an idea for a group, club or event:

- EGSA Social Committee. Previously organized events include:
 - Halloween Party
 - KSR retreat (usually in September, co-organized by the KSR Manager)
 - Board Game Nights
 - Trivia Nights (usually for Darwin Day)
 - Park hang-outs to play sports (usually in the summer)
 - Live Music Nights
- Events organized by the department's leadership and staff:
 - Fall Welcome Social
 - The Atwood colloquium including the Grad Appreciation dinner (usually end of April)
 - Summer BBQ
 - Holiday Party (in December)
 - Workshops (e.g. sexual harassment, suicide alertness)
- BREWS (Broadening Representation and Equity With Science):
 - Biweekly tea breaks
 - Panels, workshops and seminars regarding Equity, Diversity and Inclusion
- [EEB Allyship Network](#) at St George Campus
 - Office hours
- Journal Clubs (e.g. [EEB Journal Club](#), EEB Student Journal Club, Evolutionary Genetics, Aquatic Ecology, Species Interactions, Morphology, Macroevolution)
- UofT Trash Team
- Book Club (e.g. Indigenous Book Club)
- Writing Support Group
- WWF CN Tower Climb Team EEB

UTGSU Groups

Finding a community outside the department can be beneficial for maintaining good mental health. The University of Toronto's Graduate Students Union has several groups that can help with this:

- UTGSU Caucuses
 - Queer Caucus
 - Race and Ethnicity Caucus
 - International Students' Caucus
 - Women and Trans Peoples' Caucus
 - Professional Graduate Students Caucus
 - Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions Caucus
 - [More info](#)
- UTGSU Committees. Including:
 - Grad Minds: Mental Health Committee.
[Click here for their regularly scheduled events](#)
 - Environmental Justice and Sustainability Committee
 - Equity and Advocacy Committee
 - [Click here for the full list](#)
- UTGSU Levy Groups:
 - Bikechain: DIY bicycle repair shop
 - Centre for Women and Trans People
 - University of Toronto's Environmental Resource Network
 - Sexual Education and Peer Support Centre
 - Students for Barrier Free Access
 - [Click here for the full list](#)

Mental Health Insurance Coverage

As an EEB UofT graduate student, you (and your dependants, [see here for how to opt them in](#)), are covered by at least two (possibly three) health plans:

1. The first plan is either [OHIP](#) (domestic students) or [UHIP](#) (international students). These plans cover psychiatrists and other physicians, but **do not** cover mental health counselling with a psychologist, Master of Social Work Counsellor (MSW), or psychotherapist.
2. All graduate students are enrolled in the UofT Graduate Students Union (UTGSU) health plan, provided by Green Shield. This plan covers services not covered by OHIP/UHIP, like medications, vision care and dental ([see benefits of the UTGSU plan](#)). The coverage period is from Sept. 1st to Aug. 31st of the following year. It covers up to **500 CAD** annually for mental health therapy with a psychologist, MSW, or psychotherapist.
3. Additionally, if you do 30 or more hours of TA work, you are enrolled in the CUPE 3902, Unit 1 [top-up health plan](#). This plan increases the coverage of health services from the UTGSU health plan ([see benefits of the CUPE plan](#)). It covers an **additional 2500 CAD** per year for mental health therapy with a psychologist, MSW, or psychotherapist (so **your total coverage per year from both plans is 3000 CAD**). It is also provided by Green Shield, but you will need two separate accounts to access them.

Note: Although the coverage period for the CUPE plan is the same as the UTGSU plan (i.e. it also starts on Sept. 1st), it is only activated ~30 days after your first TA payment each year. If you need to claim something in September or October, save your receipts and claim them once the CUPE plan is active. Every year there is also a blackout period by Green Shield from January 1 to March 15, during which you won't be able to submit any claims to your CUPE plan, save your receipts and claim after March 15. Check [FAQ for CUPE Health Benefits](#) or contact the EEB CUPE3902 Unit 1 stewards if you have any questions.

What to do first

You will need to create two Green Shield accounts. For this, you will need both your UofT student number and personnel number. You can find the latter in one of the emails you received from Jenn English during your first grad school month (or call the union if you cannot find it: 416-593-7057).

Steps for creating the two accounts:

- a) Go to the Green Shield Canada [Plan Member Online Services page](#). It has three columns: left for Signing In, middle for Registering, and right for getting a Registration Key.
- b) Get a Registration Key. For the UTGSU plan, your Plan Member ID is UTG-[your student number]-00. For the CUPE plan, it is UOT-[your employee number]-00.
- c) Once you have the Registration Key, use it to register, along with your Plan ID
- d) Repeat the process with both the UTG Plan ID and the UOT Plan ID.




Once you have your two accounts, you are ready to make a claim.

How to make a claim

The UTGSU plan account is your “primary” account. It is recommended that you only submit claims to this account, specifying that you want to use your “secondary” account (i.e. the one from the CUPE plan) to cover anything that is not covered by the first one.

Steps to make a claim for mental health services:

- a) Log in to your UTGSU plan account.
- b) Click on “Submit a Claim” either in the “Quick Access” section or via the side menu > “My Claims”
- c) Select “Professional Services” from the list and then “Counselling Services”
- d) Select your provider from the list of providers you have submitted before. If it is your first time submitting a service from a certain provider, you will have to search for them. If that is the case, tick the box for “Search for a new Provider” and enter their information.
- e) Enter the Claim details. Where they ask you if you have another benefits plan, it should look like this (if you have the CUPE plan):

Do you have coverage under another benefits plan?	* <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No
Is the coverage with GSC?	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No
Has this claim been submitted to the other benefit plan?	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input checked="" type="radio"/> No 
Pay any unpaid balance through my other GSC plan:	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No 
Enter the other GSC Number: *	<input type="text" value="UOT[employee#]-00"/> 

- f) Click “Submit”, check that all the details are correct, and click “Submit” again.
- g) Done! If you have Direct Deposit activated, you will get the reimbursement in the next few days. If you use up the 500 CAD covered by the UTGSU plan, you should still submit the claim via this account. It will automatically go to the CUPE plan account, if you followed the above steps.

Note: Some providers are able to submit the claim for you, saving you all of this! Make sure you provide them with both plan IDs (the UTG one as your primary and the UOT one as your secondary). That also goes for pharmacies, dental and any other service for which you use your health insurance.

If you run into any issues when submitting claims with your secondary plan, e.g. “the benefit plan you have entered for coordination of benefits is invalid”, feel free to call Green Shield customer service (1-888-711-1119) directly to solve the issue. Green Shield also has a [YouTube channel](#) with video tutorials for submitting a claim. You should also try to submit the claim within the time limit (usually within 12 months of the service date), to avoid unwanted delays or failure of submitting.

Navigating leave or research pause/slow-down

- **Leave of absence and research pauses/slowdowns are not only for health reasons.** Students may require leave or a research pause/slowdown for myriad reasons, including but not limited to: acute or chronic mental health issues, acute or chronic physical health issues (e.g., chronic illness), disability, family obligations, parental leave, professional development opportunity, going through a diagnostic process and/or for financial reasons (e.g., stipend insufficient for student to financially support family).
- Students do not have to be “in crisis” to take a leave of absence. In fact, considering leave before a difficult situation is exacerbated can help avoid additional stress on the student and save the student time in the funded cohort.
- When a student or labmate takes a leave of absence or research pause, **please be respectful.** When on leave, people vary in how much information they want to share and how much they want to be involved in lab activities.

Students

- If you're thinking about a leave or research pause for mental health purposes, then **it can be really helpful to start getting professional help even before you go on leave.** Mental health professionals can give useful advice about how leave would work and/or the pros and cons of going on a leave.
- **There are different options for people to talk to about leave:** your supervisor, members of your lab, someone in the department you trust, Mental Health Committee members and Helen Rodd (as Graduate Coordinator, she has considerable experience helping students consider options including going on leave as well as with information about the official (easy) process of going on leave).

Reminders for students

- Supervisors care about you from the moment they invite you into their labs and want you to be okay.
- Supervisors might not have sufficient funding to hire you to help in the lab on work unrelated to your thesis while you are leave, but it would be worth asking them if that could be a possibility. If not, speak to Helen about other possible funding options.
- Helen Rodd, the Graduate Coordinator [helen.rodd@utoronto.ca], is a potential ally if you don't feel comfortable speaking with your supervisor first. It is part of Helen's job to talk to students about leaves of absence!

Leave of Absence

A formal leave of absence (LoA) is a documented leave through the School of Graduate Studies (SGS). The first LoA for a student requires a single form. A student does not need to disclose information about the purpose of their leave on this form, and the student does not require the signature of their supervisor on this form. LoA has implications for funding and health insurance, many of which are highlighted below. Read the full SGS policy and guidelines here:

<https://www.sgs.utoronto.ca/policies-guidelines/leave-of-absence-policy/>

Ask the Graduate Coordinator (Helen Rodd) for help filling in the form. She also has a video about going on leave with a Q&A session, ask her if you would like to watch the video or if you would like her to host another workshop on going on leave.

Administrative and enrolment

- For the first leave, **SGS does not ask any questions about the reason for the leave** (e.g., if you decide to take a LoA for non-health reasons, you just need to choose the “other” option on the LoA form). You do not need to provide documentation about the reason for the leave.
- **Your supervisor doesn't have to sign the first LoA form.** However, consider talking to your supervisor about taking an LoA before you go on leave and, once you go on leave, they must be aware of the situation.
- **LoAs have to be taken in four-month segments (one term).** You can request all three terms off and then only take one or two of them, or request one term and then add more terms on to it. The start dates are rigid and have to be January 1 (winter), May 1 (summer) or September 1 (fall).
- **You can take 2 LoAs during the length of your program.** If you need to go into a second leave, SGS has to approve this and documentation may be required. Helen Rodd will provide a brief letter to SGS and, so far SGS, has not denied EEB grad students' requests for a second LoA. Note that some students have been approved for more than 2 years of leave, depending on the circumstances.
- If one decides to take more time off after applying for one or two semesters of leave, does this count as a second LoA? This will be dealt with on an individual basis, ask the Graduate Coordinator for details. In the reverse case, if a student requests three semesters but then decides to come back after one or two, it is totally flexible.
- You cannot take a course for credit while you're on leave. In the case of taking a retroactive LoA, if you took a course during the retroactive leave period, you will not receive credit for it.

Financial

- **You don't pay tuition at all while you're on official leave of absence.** For those in the funded cohort, the clock stops when you take a LoA and most other funding (e.g., OGS, NSERC) is also halted. However, some students may be allowed to TA depending on the timing of the start of leave, and whether they've been offered a TA offer position before that. Some faculty can afford to hire students part time to work on other projects to provide additional funding.
- **If you take a retroactive leave, you may have to pay back some of the funding you received;** however, the payroll officer may be able to (i) help you “reallocate” your RA payments to a semester when you will return (so you won't have to pay that funding back but you may not receive any RA during your first semester back—ask the Graduate Coordinator and your supervisor about this) or (ii) change that RA into a casual employment contract so you wouldn't have to pay some or all of the RA received during a term that becomes part of a retroactive leave back (this will be dealt with on an individual basis, ask EEB payroll officer Jenn English for details).
- **The university offers paid parental leave to doctoral students** (see this website for details: <https://www.sgs.utoronto.ca/awards/sgs-parental-grant/>, several EEB PhD students have received this funding). **NSERC also pays stipends to students who go on parental leave.** Ask the Graduate Coordinator about the forms to request these leaves. The Family Care Office is a good resource for other related questions.

Insurance

- During official leave, you will have continued access to healthcare, but **CUPE benefits from TA-ing may not be available, depending on the duration of the leave.** International students should note that UHIP is only provided for one term per year of leave, and may have to look into other insurance options if taking a longer LoA.
 - If you are already receiving healthcare services from a doctor/therapist on any campus, you can receive continuing care from them (we suggest that you double check this with them before you go on leave). However, if you are a grad student with a primary affiliation on the St.G. campus and you wish to begin accessing a new health service on the StG campus, you can pay a fee (see the leave form for details).

Miscellaneous

- Students may request continued access to U of T library services, including Microsoft licenses, by emailing SGS [graduate.information@utoronto.ca] if the library privileges are revoked. If this is not successful, ask the Graduate Coordinator who you should contact.
- Note that there can be implications for international students taking more than 1 term of leave (including getting permission to remain in Canada to work after they graduate - ask the Graduate Coordinator about this).

Research pause/slow-down

Research pauses or slowdowns differ from a leave of absence in that they are short-term (less than 4 months), unofficial changes to a student's research activities. After consultation with the supervisor, during a pause, a student may take a week or longer away from research activity, while during a slowdown a student may choose to work part-time. Importantly, the funding clock does not stop during research pauses or slowdowns because they are not official leaves. Students requiring an extended period away from research may wish to consider a formal leave, so that they do not run down their time in the funded cohort. Research pauses and slowdowns are negotiated between a student and their supervisor(s) and there is no paperwork to complete.

- A research pause or research slowdown is done **with the agreement of the supervisor**, especially in cases in which the student and/or the supervisor don't think that a whole semester or more off is required.
- In a research pause, **the student could step away from research for one week or longer**. Duration depends on what the issue is that has to be dealt with. A student may choose these options if there's uncertainty in cases about whether or not a whole leave will be required.
- In a research slowdown, **students reduce the number of hours per week** for which they work on their research.
- **What starts off as a research pause can be converted into a LoA retroactively**, for example if recovery from a health problem takes longer than anticipated. One downside would be if you received funds, you're going to have to pay them back (e.g. UTF). Tuition will be cancelled for that semester. As per the rules, any RA funds you receive should be repaid, but if your supervisor is willing and can afford it, they can change that RA into a casual employment and so you wouldn't have to pay or some or all of that back.

Registering with accessibility services may help

Accessibility Services might be able to advocate for you. Read more here:

<https://studentlife.utoronto.ca/department/accessibility-services/>

Some examples of useful advocacy by accessibility services:

- A graduate student panelist lived in on-campus housing. Because she had registered with accessibility, they helped advocate for her to keep her housing. (This was a special case at UTM).
- Accessibility Services helped a graduate panelist regarding developmental disorders and physical disabilities (e.g., gave her paperwork so her service dog can get access to relevant buildings, and they helped with bureaucratic things).
- For extensions on any kind of deadline, speak to the EEB Graduate Coordinator, currently, Helen Rodd. This is dealt with internally within EEB.

Resource List

This is a list of resources available to graduate students at the University of Toronto and to individuals living in Toronto and the Greater Toronto Area. It is heavily based on the list compiled by the UTGSU Mental Health Committee, [Grad Minds](#), with their permission.

Note: This icon indicates religious or cultural-based services:



Distress Phone Lines

Assaulted Women's Helpline | 416-863-0511 | <https://www.awhl.org/>

Provides free, 24-hour, 7-day-a-week crisis counselling, emotional support, information, and referrals via telephone to women in up to 200 languages. Completely anonymous and confidential.

Gerstein Centre | 416-929-5200 | <https://gersteincentre.org/>

Provides free, voluntary, and confidential crisis intervention service over the phone and in-person for adults living in the City of Toronto. Available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Good2Talk | 1-866-925-5454 | <https://good2talk.ca/>

Good2Talk is a free, confidential helpline providing professional counselling and information and referrals for mental health, addictions and well-being to post-secondary students in Ontario. Available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Hope for Wellness Help Line | 1-855-242-3310 | <https://www.hopeforwellness.ca/>

Offers immediate mental health counselling and crisis intervention to all Indigenous peoples across Canada. Available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Counsellors are also available through online chat. Phone and chat counselling are available in English, French, Cree, Ojibway, and Inuktitut.

U of T My Student Support Program (U of T My SSP) | 1-844-451-9700 |

<https://studentlife.utoronto.ca/service/myssp/> | [Apple App Store](#) | [Google Play](#)

Provides students with immediate and/or ongoing, confidential, 24-hour support for any school, health, or general life concern at no cost. Ongoing support is available over the phone in 146 languages. Immediate support is available over the phone in 35 languages and over chat in simplified Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Korean and Spanish. Outside of North America, call 001-416-380-6578

Naseeha Helpline for Young Muslims | Call or Text: 1-866-627-3342 |

<https://naseeha.org/>



Provides a confidential helpline for young Muslims and the general public to receive immediate, anonymous, and confidential support over the phone from 12PM - 12AM, 7 days a week and over text Monday to Friday.

Connex Ontario | 1-866-531-2600 | <https://www.connexontario.ca/>

Free confidential helpline that can provide information about mental health supports provides service information for people experiencing problems with gambling, drugs, alcohol, or mental health. Available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Connex Ontario also provides chat and email services.

Distress and Crisis Ontario | Text 258258 |

<http://www.dcontario.org/> If you are not comfortable using the phone or would prefer to communicate with someone online or over text, DCO is able to chat and text regarding distress, crisis, and suicidal thoughts. Text services are available from 2pm to 2am, 7 days a week at 258258. For text services, text SUPPORT to 258258. Online chat services are also available from 2pm to 2am, 7 days a week.

Scarborough Hospital Mobile Crisis Program | 416-495-2891 |

<https://www.shn.ca/mental-health/crisis-support/> Provides Telephone Crisis Response and community mobile crisis visits to individuals over 16 years of age who are experiencing a mental health crisis in Scarborough and East York.

Distress Centres of Greater Toronto | GTA: 416-408-4357 Peel: 905-459-7777 |

<https://www.spectrahelpline.org/>

24/7 Helpline providing confidential crisis and suicide intervention and emotional support. Text and chat options are also available. Multi-lingual helplines are available Monday to Friday, 10:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. in eight languages (Cantonese, Mandarin, Portuguese, Spanish, Hindi, Punjabi, and Urdu).

Suicide Prevention Lifeline | 988 for support in English, 1-888-628-9454 for support in Spanish | <https://suicidepreventionlifeline.org/>

The Lifeline provides 24/7, free, and confidential support for people in distress, prevention, and crisis resources for you or your loved ones.

Talk4Healing | 1-855-554-HEAL (4325) | <https://www.talk4healing.com/>

A 24-hour helpline by Indigenous women for Indigenous women. Free and confidential, 14 Indigenous languages plus English and French. Call or text.

The Warm Line | Call 416-960-WARM (9276) | Text 647-557-5882 |

<http://www.warmline.ca/> A confidential and anonymous service for adults. Call, text, and online chat services are available every night from 8PM to Midnight Eastern Time.

Toronto Distress Centre | 416-408-HELP (4357) | <https://www.dcogt.com/>

The Distress Centre offers 24/7 emotional support, crisis intervention, suicide prevention and linkage to emergency help when necessary. Available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Wellness Activities/Resources

Academic Success Centre |

<https://studentlife.utoronto.ca/department/academic-success/>

The Academic Success Centre helps undergraduate and graduate students reach their full potential by helping students develop important skills such as note-taking, study strategies, writing, giving a presentation, and reducing test anxiety.

Accessibility Services |

<https://studentlife.utoronto.ca/department/accessibility-services/>

Provide students with a network of resources to succeed, both inside and outside the classroom. Services include arranging test and exam accommodations, peer mentoring and drop-in, expertise in learning strategies, and access to funding for disability-related supports. They run an Accessibility Grad Productivity Group.

Better Breathing Workshop | <https://studentlife.utoronto.ca/program/breathe-well/>

Feeling too busy to manage stress effectively as a university student? Come learn about the benefits of restorative breath, try new techniques for relaxation such as muscle tension reduction and learn new tips for taking time to pause and recharge.

Better Coping Skills | <https://studentlife.utoronto.ca/program/better-coping-skills/>

If you're having trouble coping with the demands of university life—or even regular everyday situations—this series of workshops can help you build the skills you need to thrive.

Better Sleep Workshop | <https://studentlife.utoronto.ca/program/sleep-well/>

Feeling too busy or stressed as a university student to sleep properly? Come learn about what you can do to improve your sleep and feel more rested and refreshed.

Togetherall | <https://togetherall.com/en-ca/>

An online community of members, who support, help each other and share what's troubling them in a safe and anonymous environment, available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year – no need to wait until morning, the next business day or for a doctor's appointment. You can find support simply by logging on.

BounceBack Ontario | 1-866-345-0224 | <https://bouncebackontario.ca/>

A free skill-building program managed by the Canadian Mental Health Association. It is designed to help adults and youth 15+ manage low mood, mild to moderate depression and anxiety, stress or worry. Delivered over the phone with a coach and through online videos, you will get access to tools that will support you on your path to mental wellness.

CAMH Game Changers |

<https://www.camh.ca/en/driving-change/game-changers> A mental health program designed to help young Canadians feel more comfortable talking about health, mental health, seeking help and supporting friends. Their tools have been co-created with CAMH's clinical and education team alongside youth ambassadors to ensure they reflect informed research with a youth perspective.

Dealing with Depression: A Resource Guide |

<https://ontario.cmha.ca/documents/understanding-and-finding-help-for-depression>

/ If you or someone you know is suffering from depression, it can be difficult to know where to turn. This resource guide contains a selection of some of the best websites, organizations, and other helpful resources available to anyone who has been diagnosed with or suspects they are suffering from depression.

Graduate Wellness Portal |

<https://www.sgs.utoronto.ca/resources-supports/wellness-portal/>

An online directory containing 100+ mental health services, resources, and academic supports available on and off campus for domestic and international graduate students.

Grief Support Sharing Circle |

<https://studentlife.utoronto.ca/program/grief-support/> Everyone grieves in their own unique way. The Grief Support Sharing Circle is an informal mutual support group for students who have experienced a death, as well as students experiencing anticipatory grief.

Health & Wellness | 416-978-8030 | 214 College Street, 2nd Floor |

<https://studentlife.utoronto.ca/department/health-wellness/>

Offers a wide variety of mental health services including psychotherapy, pharmacotherapy, group therapy, and embedded counsellors. UofT students who have registered and paid fees at the University of Toronto are eligible for services.

Hong Fook Mental Health Association | 416-493-4242 | 130 Dundas St. W., 3rd Floor | <https://hongfook.ca/> Hong Fook Mental Health Association is the leading ethno-cultural community mental health agency with a consolidated culturally competent team in Ontario serving the Asian communities.



iRelax: Mindfulness Resource Area | <https://ischool.utoronto.ca/irelax/>

iRelax is UofT's first secular, ethically, and sustainably sourced mindfulness resource area. Provides items to assist users with resilience, personal development, stress-reduction, and increased focus through the year.

LinkMentalHealth | <https://www.linkmentalhealth.com/>

Connects people to diverse, private and public counseling in the Greater Toronto Area, regardless of what they can afford.

Mennonite New Life Centre of Toronto | Various Locations | <https://mnlct.org/>



Many immigrants and refugees experience high levels of stress and trauma as a result of their migration and settlement experiences. In addition, they struggle to find help in their first language. The Mennonite New Life Centre of Toronto Mental Health Program mobilizes the skills of internationally trained mental health professionals to meet the emotional health needs of newcomers in Toronto.

Mindful Moments |

<https://studentlife.utoronto.ca/program/mindful-moments-meditation-and-yoga>

/ Daily drop-in meditations, yoga, and Tai Chi for focus, relaxation, and resilience.

Mindyourmind | <https://mindyourmind.ca/>

Offers support and guidance for young people aged 14 to 29 to co-create interactive tools and innovative resources to build capacity and resilience.

Mood Disorders Association of Ontario | 416-486-8046 | 36 Eglinton Ave. W., Suite 602 | <https://www.mooddisorders.ca/>

The Mood Disorders Association of Ontario offers free support and recovery programs to people across Ontario living with depression, anxiety or bipolar disorder. They provide drop-in peer support groups, recovery programs, family and youth clinical support, early intervention for mood disorders and psychosis and online tools focused on wellness and recovery.

MoveU.HappyU | <https://www.moveu.ca/moveuhappyu>

MoveU. is a tri-campus initiative at UofT that promotes healthy active living and improving student mental health. HappyU is a free, unique six-week program that offers physical activity counselling and exercise training to reduce symptoms of stress, depression, and anxiety.

Robarts Library Reflection Room |

<https://onereach.library.utoronto.ca/robarts-multifaith-space>

Space for religious, spiritual, and secular practices, including prayer, mediation, yoga, and mindfulness.

Sexual Violence Prevention and Support Centre | 416-978-2266 |

<https://www.svpscentre.utoronto.ca/>

The Sexual Violence Prevention and Support Centre works with University students, staff, and faculty affected by sexual violence and sexual harassment. They provide help with navigating and accessing supports such as counselling, medical services, academic or workplace accommodations, financial aid, and legal aid.

Workplace Strategies for Mental Health: Post-Secondary Student Resilience | <https://www.workplacestrategiesformentalhealth.com/employee-resources/post-secondary-student-resilience>

When they begin college or university, students may face significant stressors on their own for the first time. This resource can help them plan ahead so they are better able to cope with the personal and academic stressors they may encounter.

Emergency Shelter/Assistance

CAMH Emergency Department | 416-535-8501 press 2 | 250 College Street | <https://www.camh.ca/en/your-care/programs-and-services/emergency-department>

† Adults in need of emergency assessment and treatment with mental health and substance abuse issues. No referral required. Available 24 hours a day, 7 days per week.

Central Intake for the GTA | 416-338-4766 | Toll Free 1-877-338-3398 |

<https://www.torontocentralhealthline.ca/display/service.aspx?id=133949>

Comprehensive list of shelters with direct admission.

Gerstein Centre | 416-929-5200 | <https://gersteincentre.org/> Provides crisis intervention to adults, living in the City of Toronto, who experience mental health problems. The service has three aspects: telephone support, community visits and a ten-bed, short-stay residence. All three aspects of the service are accessed through the crisis line.

Walk-In Support

416 Community Support for Women | 416-928-3334 | 416 Dundas St. E. |

<https://www.211toronto.ca/detail/en/80667>

416 Community Support for Women is a daytime drop in program for women looking to gain or give support while coping with isolation, addiction and/or mental health issues and other difficulties. It is open 8:30AM-4:30PM, 7 days a week. Basic services include daily breakfast (8:30-10:00 AM) and lunch (12:00-2:00 PM), weekly food bank, social/recreational programs and life skills training. The Centre also offers weekly medical clinics and mental health and addiction case management services on a daily basis.

Family Service Toronto | 416-595-0307 ext. 269 | 128A Sterling Road, 2nd Floor, Suite 202 | <https://familyservicetoronto.org/>

Family Service Toronto provides free, immediate drop-in counselling for a wide range of concerns to individuals, families, and couples over 18 years of age on Wednesday evenings, opening at 3:00 PM, with the latest arrival at 6:15 PM. No appointment or referral is needed.

What's up Walk-In | Various Locations | <https://www.whatsupwalkin.ca/>

Free Walk-In Mental Health Counselling. No fee. No appointment. No Health Card.

Six Locations across Toronto. Immediate mental health counselling for children, youth, young adults and their families, and families with infants is available at the what's up walk-in clinic.

WoodGreen Community Services | 416-645-6000 ext. 1100 or 1200 | 815 Danforth Ave., 1st floor | <https://www.woodgreen.org/>
The WoodGreen Walk-in Counselling Service offers free, immediate drop-in counselling on Tuesday and Wednesday evenings to address a wide range of concerns. They open at 4:00 PM, with the latest arrival at 6:45PM. No appointment or referral is needed. There are no restrictions to access.

Counselling & Psychotherapy

Access CAMH | 416-535-8501 ext. 2 | 250 College Street | <https://www.camh.ca/en/your-care/access-camh> Provides centralized information, intake, and scheduling for most of CAMH's services. Access CAMH makes it easy for patients, families, friends, and healthcare professionals to find the help and services they need with a single phone call.

Centre for Interpersonal Relationships | 1-855-779-2347 | 790 Bay St. | <https://cfir.ca/> A team of psychologists, psychotherapists, and counsellors that offer a wide range of services for adults, couples, families, and groups.

First Session | <https://www.firstsession.com/> A video directory of mental healthcare professionals in Toronto. Each therapist on First Session has been vetted, interviewed, and filmed to help you make the initial thumbs up or thumbs down in a matter of seconds, not hours.

Graduate Counselling Services | 416-978-8030 Option 5 | <https://www.sgs.utoronto.ca/resources-supports/graduate-wellness-services-at-sgs>
/ Short-term counselling offered to graduate students by the Health & Wellness Centre and School of Graduate Studies.

Ontario Psychological Association | <https://www.psych.on.ca/>
The Ontario Psychological Association has a referral service to link individuals with psychologists for treatment or assessment.

Psychotherapy Referral Service | 416-920-0655 | <https://prstoronto.com/>
PRS is a referral service that, based on an intake interview, matches individuals with trained psychotherapists in Toronto.

Psychology Today | <https://www.psychologytoday.com/ca> Psychology Today maintains an online directory of therapists all over Canada and the U.S.A., with information about their location, therapy type, experience, insurance coverage, etc.

Toronto New Life Wellness Place | 647-340-5433 | 1122 Finch Ave. W., Unit 23 | <https://www.newlifeplace.ca/> The Toronto New Life Wellness Place provides multicultural, multilingual therapeutic wellness services for people in the Greater Toronto Area needing mental health and wellness support.

No- or Low-Cost Counselling & Psychotherapy



Barbra Schlifer Commemorative Clinic | 416-323-9149 ext. 234 | 489 College St., Suite 503 | <https://schliferclinic.com/> Barbra Schlifer offers no-cost group and individual counselling as well as legal and interpretation services to women who have experienced violence.

Catholic Family Service Toronto | 416-921-1163 (Central Toronto) | 416-222-0048 (North Toronto) | <https://www.cfstoronto.com/>

Catholic Family Service Toronto provides sliding scale individual, family, couple, and group therapy to people of all backgrounds – clients need not be Catholic. No one is turned away for inability to pay.

Family Service Toronto | 416-595-9618 | Various Locations |

<https://familyservicetoronto.org/> Family Service Toronto provides sliding scale individual, family, couple, and group therapy for a range of difficulties including trauma therapy. They also offer internet counselling. No one is turned away for inability to pay.

Gestalt Institute of Toronto | 416-964-9464 | 417 Parliament Street |

<https://gestalt.on.ca/> Gestalt therapy provides an opportunity to move through old issues, make changes, improve relationships, express creativity, decrease generalized fear and mistrust, and learn to have more fun.

Hard Feelings | 416-792-4393 | 848 Bloor St. W. |

<https://www.hardfeelings.org/> Hard Feelings is an innovative, welcoming community of professional counsellors who provide low-cost services and support. Their storefront sells carefully curated books and resources to help build and sustain stronger mental health.

OISE Psychology Clinic | 416-978-0654 | 252 Bloor St. W. |

https://www.oise.utoronto.ca/aphd/Home/Psychology_Clinic/

Sliding scale psychotherapy is provided to individual adults by Counselling Psychology graduate students who are supervised by licensed Psychologists. The clinic is open from September through April. Low cost, with sliding scale.

WoodGreen Community Services | 416-645-6000 ext. 1367 | 815 Danforth Ave., 1st floor | <https://www.woodgreen.org/>

WoodGreen offers no-cost counselling to individuals 16 years of age or older who

are experiencing problems with mental health. They aim to work with people from a recovery strengths-based perspective.

Student Groups on St. George Campus

Leave the Pack Behind | <https://www.utoronto.ca/smoke-free/resources> They offer information about smoking and quitting, personalized support, and quitting resources – all for free! The LTPB team at the University of Toronto–St. George campus works together throughout the year to plan and implement activities, events, and campaigns centered around smoking cessation and prevention.

Healthy Grad Crew | <https://studentlife.utoronto.ca/program/healthyu-grad-crew/> A student-led team providing health education and promotion programming by graduate students for graduate students. They plan and implement health initiatives that are relevant to graduate students and address their unique needs. Areas of focus include mental health, relationships with supervisors, school-to-work transition.

Healthy Minds UofT | <https://www.ulife.utoronto.ca/organizations/view/id/127176> Healthy Minds is a mental health advocacy and peer support group focused on providing a physical and mental space for discussion and activities relating to well-being on campus.

Healthy U Crew | <https://studentlife.utoronto.ca/program/healthyu-crew/> A student-led team at the University of Toronto St. George campus dedicated to creating a healthier campus for all students. They use education, advocacy, and collaboration with campus and community partners to help support students in making healthier choices.

Jack.org UofT Chapter | <https://www.ulife.utoronto.ca/organizations/view/id/94563> Student group that aims to raise mental health awareness and knowledge, decrease silence and stigma, and challenge the societal and structural barriers that stop students from accessing service.

UMatter | <https://ulife.utoronto.ca/organizations/view/id/126932> UMatter is a student-led initiative focused on increasing student mental well-being on campus. They partner with community organizations, professors, and other clubs to host workshops and de-stressor events for students and give students opportunities to explore and learn about their mental health.

U of Thrive | <https://uofthrive.ca/> A tri-campus student collective dedicated to elevating student voices on mental health.