

Mobile Apps:

Combating Mental Health Issues on
College Campuses

Largest Mobile Student Engagement Survey
15,000 students

Presented by

 **READY** Education

Impact of Mental Health on Drop Out

Mental health is a multifaceted issue faced by Higher-Ed campuses across North America: 73% of students experience a mental crisis while in college. This is problematic for institutions, considering student's mental health significantly impacts attrition rate.¹ According to a study assessing mental health in college and universities, 64% of students drop out of college due to mental health related reasons.¹

The percentage of students seeking counselling has increased significantly in the past decade, reaching a staggering 39% by 2012. We strongly believe that mobile technology is part of the solution, and will become pivotal in the way we support students in the near future.

“64% of students drop out of college due to mental health related reasons”

Using Technology to Bridge the Gap

As an Ed-tech mobile organization we care deeply about our students and understand the urgency in providing scalable solutions that can tackle today's Higher Ed campus environments. While colleges offer counselling and peer-to-peer support in order to help students at risk, the reality is that institutions have limited resources. For instance, "college mental health centers see about 10% of the student body"². In addition to this, many centers are closed after 5pm and on weekends making it even more difficult for students to get the help and counselling they need.

Mental health crises require timely intervention and likely don't happen during office hours. We have seen this occur across our partners' mobile platforms: students needed critical support in the later hours of the night and only the student community was awake and able to provide immediate peer to peer support. By having a virtual peer-to-peer community to reach out to at any time of the day, students are likely to receive more timely guidance and support.

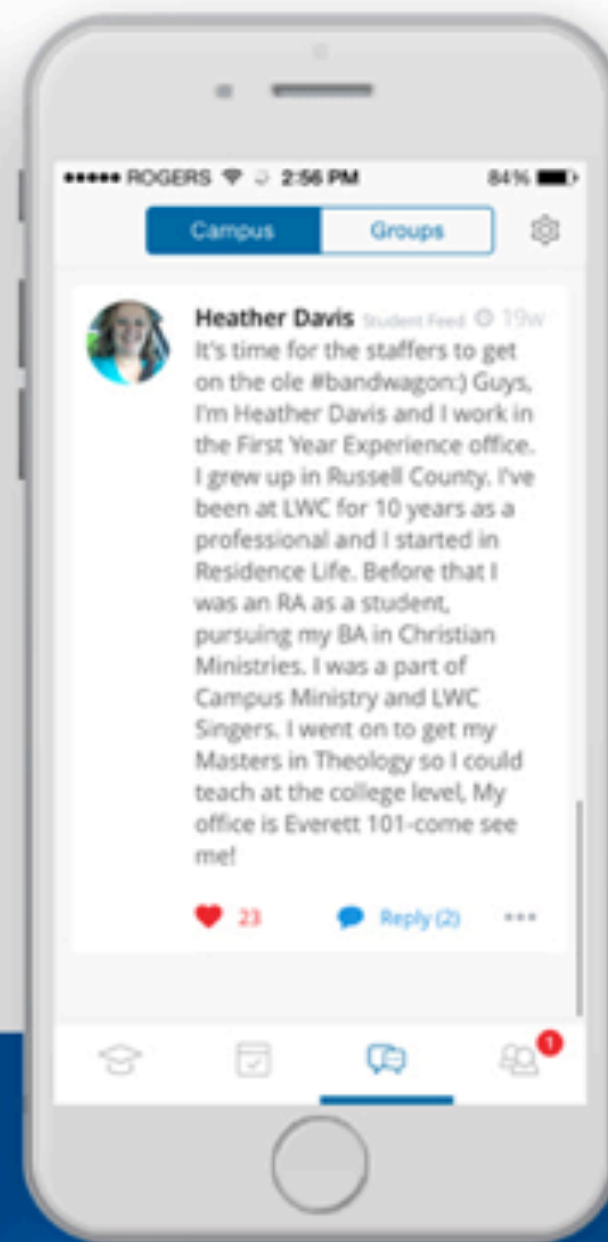
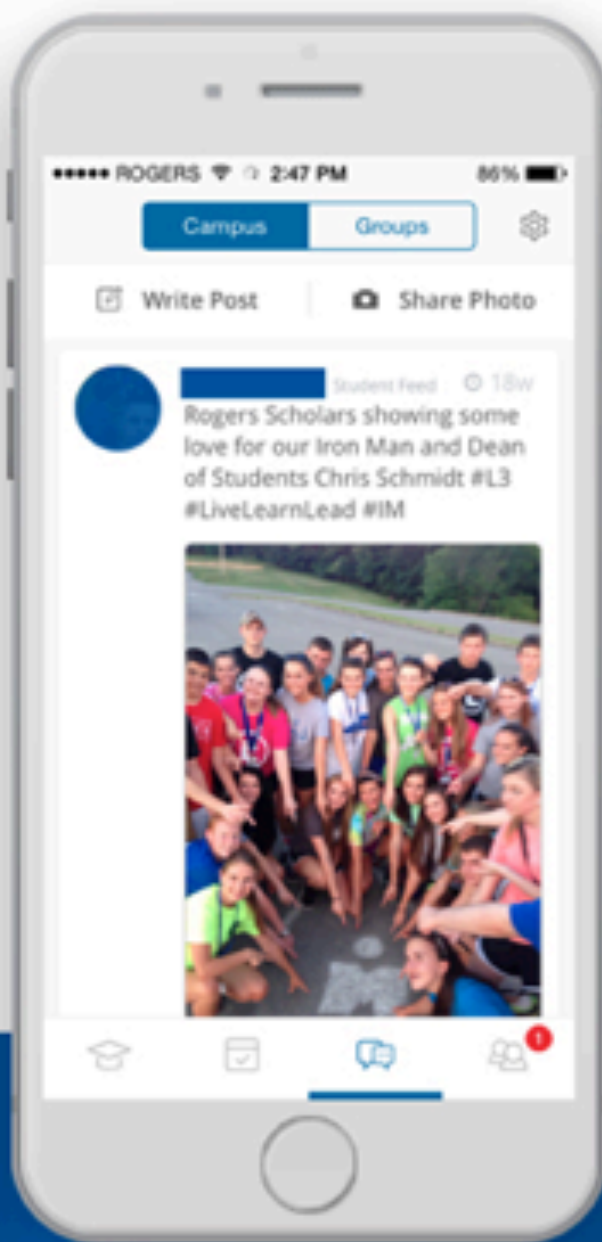
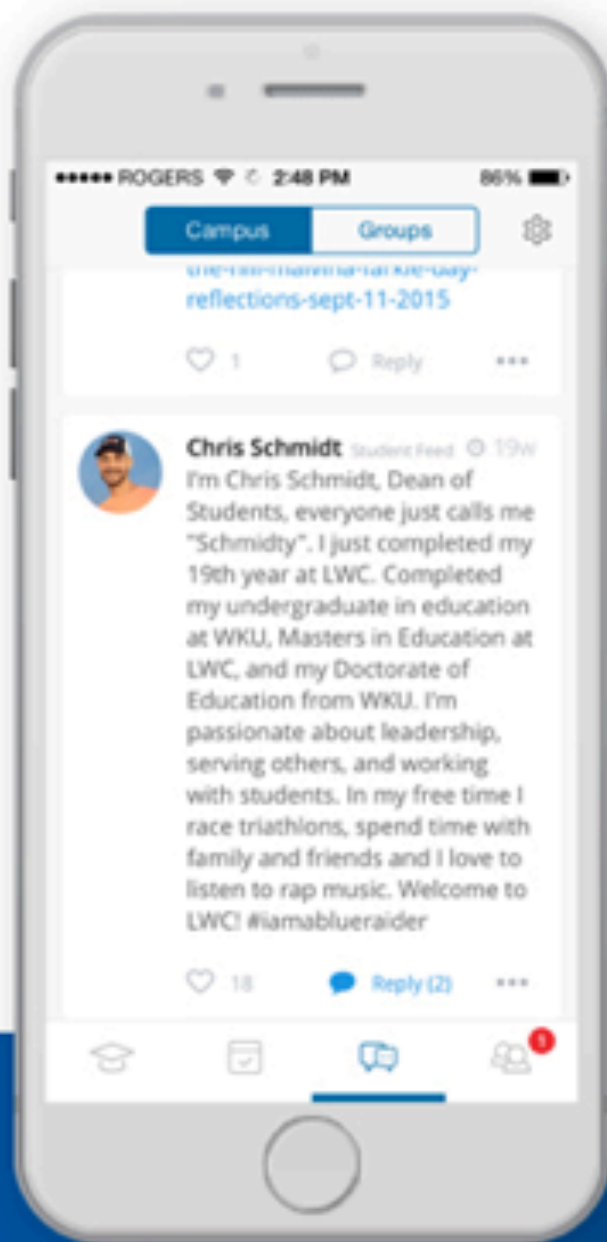
The Right Support at the Right Time

“Students needed major support in the late hours of the night and only the student community was awake and able to provide immediate peer to peer support”

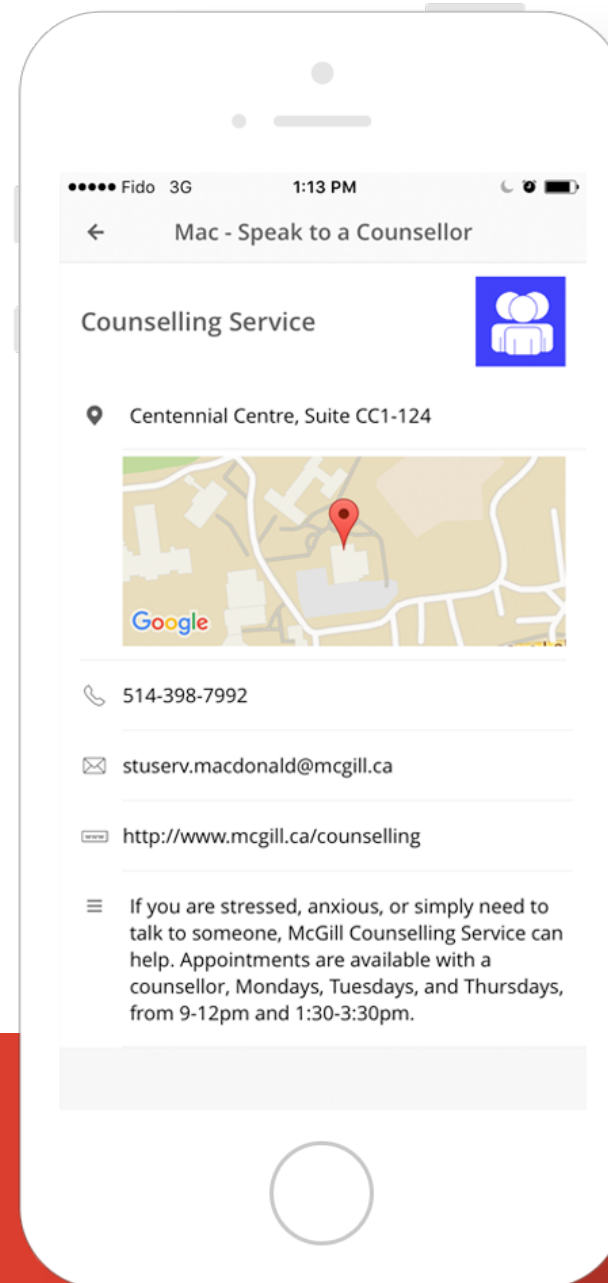
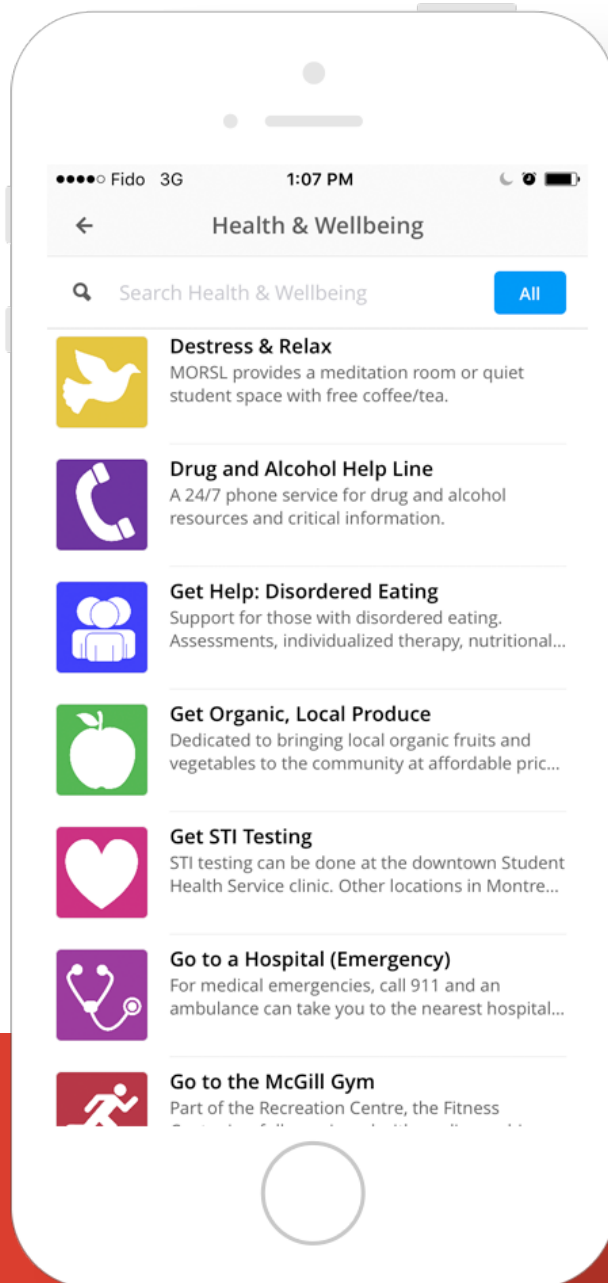
While various factors can trigger a mental health problem, the issues of loneliness, isolation and stress could be mitigated through mobile communities. In designing our mobile app, we leveraged existing research and data with the aim of creating a healthier more inclusive virtual student environment. First, we focused on providing users with mental health resources at their fingertips thereby reducing campus complexity. Second, we introduced a social feed for the purpose of enhancing the sense of campus community and reduce feelings of isolation and loneliness. In order to understand if our mobile technology can create a sense of belongingness and positive feelings on campuses across North America, we conducted the largest mobile student engagement study, to date. Over 15,000 app users across 78 Higher-Education institutions.

“...we leveraged existing research and data with the aim of creating a healthier, inclusive and engaging virtual student environment”

“We focused on providing users with mental health resources at their fingertips thereby reducing campus complexity”



Express your digital personality



McGill's mental health resources in the palm of students

Building a Feeling of Belonging

In our current study 67% of the students reported that, when using the app, they feel like they belong to the university community. We were able to achieve this by designing a unique mobile experience focused on peer-to-peer support, specifically through the “campus wall”. The campus wall is a private, mobile campus feed where students can interact with their peers as well as with administrators by asking questions, posting photos, and starting discussions. We’ve seen some incredible stories arise through this medium. The student feed on the Lindsey Wilson College mobile app alone generated over 80,000 conversations and facilitated over 2,500 social connections. Below you can see one of the countless positive reactions students & administrators had to the mobile app.

By using our expertise in Ed-tech, coupled with insights gained by working with our schools, we’ve created an environment where 63% of students say that the app contributes to a positive feeling towards being on campus. Whether these sentiments are proven through statistics, or personal anecdotes, one strong case proves true; technology in higher education can aid in improving the quality of students lives.



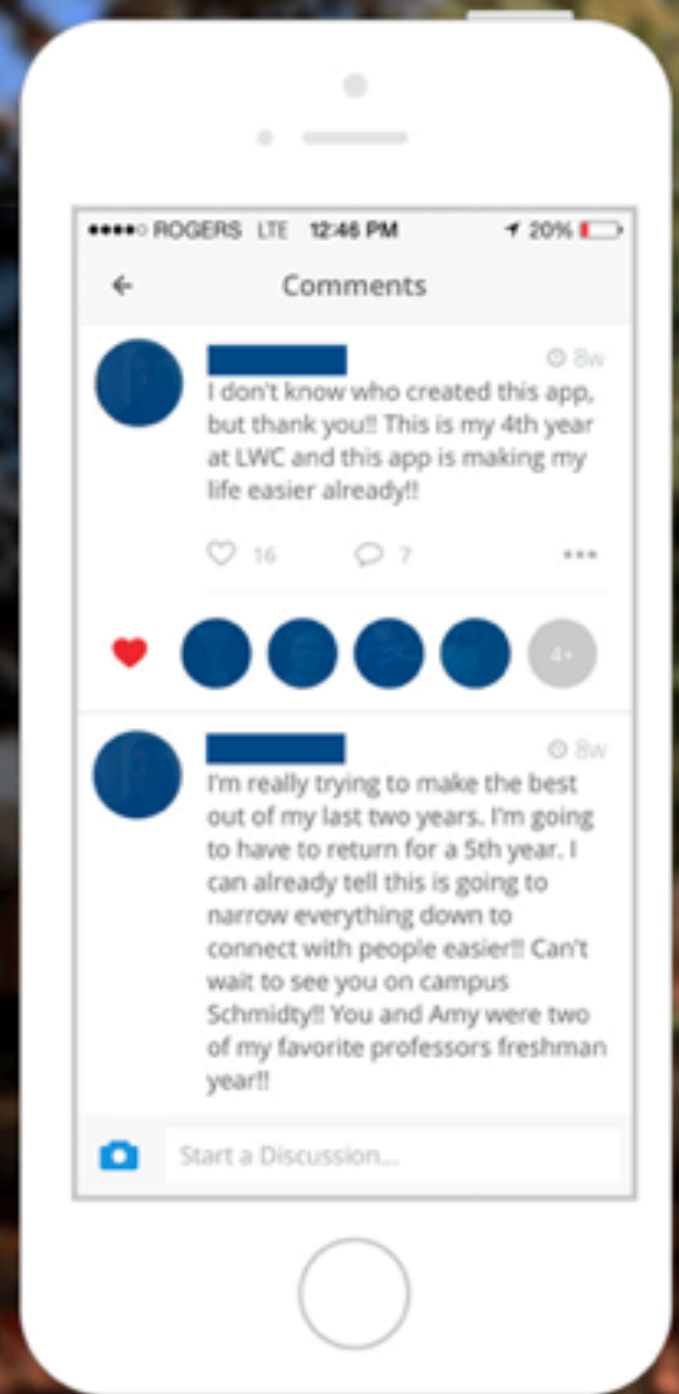
Chris Schmidt, Dean of Students
Lindsey Wilson College, Columbia, KY

I was walking in to work and my phone "chimed." I looked and it was a post on the wall, I opened it and I couldn't be happier.

I know [Student], she is quiet and reserved, she's a hardworking student but also works a lot of hours at Walmart to afford school.

Her comment is really meaningful because the app is connecting her socially and academically.

She gets feedback when she needs it and informational resources are now at her fingertips. This kind of feedback from an upperclassman is incredible.





Seattle University

Seattle, Washington

Medium four-year institution

~7,200 students, 4,500 undergrad.



Monica Nixon, Assistant VP for Student Development

"I value the work that OOHLALA does and the way that they go about it, and I feel confident that other campuses would as well."

98%

Would recommend the app to their peers.

90%

Agreed or strongly agreed that the app **helps them get off to a good start at university.**

73%

Agreed or strongly agreed that the app **helps them feel more confident as a first-year student.**

67%

Agreed or strongly agreed that the app **helps reduce stress in their first weeks of university life.**

75%

Agreed or strongly agreed that using the app **makes them feel part of the university community.**

74%

Agreed or strongly agreed that the app **provides them with a platform to voice their opinion at their institution.**



Lindsey Wilson College

Columbia, Kentucky
Small four-year institution
2,200 students

Student Survey Excerpts

91%

Would **recommend the app to their peers.**

80%

Agreed or strongly agreed that the app **helps them get off to a good start at university.**

84%

Agreed or strongly agreed that the app **helped them learn about their campus surroundings during their first weeks of university life.**

59%

Agreed or strongly agreed that the app **that using the app help to reduce stress in their first weeks of university life.**

63%

Agreed or strongly agreed that they use the app **that the app helped them connect with other students before arriving on campus.**

77%

Agreed or strongly agreed that **they feel comfortable reaching out to their peers for support on the app.**



Texas A&M University Galveston

Galveston, Texas
Small four-year institution
2,200 students

Student Survey Excerpts

96%

Would recommend the app to their peers.

74%

Agreed or strongly agreed that the app helps them get off to a good start at university.

76%

Agreed or strongly agreed that the app helped them learn about their campus surroundings during their first weeks of university life.

80%

Agreed or strongly agreed that the app that it was helpful having their orientation schedule in the app.

62%

Agreed or strongly agreed that using the app makes them feel safe on campus.

84%

Agreed or strongly agreed that the app gave them a platform to voice their opinion at their institution.

Citations

1. Gruttadaro, Darcy, and Dana Crudo. "College Students Speak: A Survey Report on Mental Health." NAMI, the National Alliance on Mental Illness (2012): 1-22. Web. 4 Nov. 2015.
2. Becker, Deborah, and Lynn Jolicoeur. "Colleges Work To Prevent Suicide And Fight Stigma Around Mental Health On Campus." CommonHealth RSS. N.p., 11 May 2015. Web. 03 Nov. 2015.