

Student Wellness Guide





What is Wellness?

Life as a GVSU student is fun and exciting, but the college experience and lifestyle may present new challenges and different types of stress. We encourage you to prioritize yourself and your own wellness.

What does that mean, exactly?

- Wellness is a life-long journey; "a conscious, self-directed, and evolving process of achieving full potential" (National Wellness Institute).
- Wellness is "a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being, and not merely the absence of disease or illness." (World Health Organization).
- Many of the habits you form in college may stick with you, so it's important to build healthy habits now.

Wellness is different for everyone.

Understanding the 8 dimensions of wellness can help you focus on your personal well-being during college. This guide will help support your journey by providing a few tips on improving your health and wellness.

Physical Wellness

Physical wellness is about making positive choices to maintain a healthy body: from engaging in regular physical activity, sleep, eating nutritious foods, drinking responsibly, and routinely visiting your healthcare providers for regular check-ups.



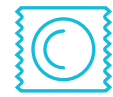
Sleep



Nutrition



Alcohol



Sexual Health



Health Care

Sleep

Your body does a lot of work when it sleeps. It is repairing itself to be fit and ready for another day. That's why it's so very important to get enough sleep to feel well-rested each morning. How do you do that?

- Avoid caffeine and alcohol in the evenings.
- Don't bring school work or your phone to bed with you.
- Get up at the same time each day.
- Keep your room at a temperature between 60-67°F for optimal sleep.

Nutrition

Schedules can be hectic and irregular for the typical college students, and sometimes that means that meals and food intake can also be hectic and irregular.

- Listen to your body and eat within 30-60 minutes of feeling hungry.
- Try to plan ahead and have snacks on hand for days where meals may be hard to squeeze in.
- Connect with on-campus dietitians to learn about the best foods for you.

Alcohol

Drinking on college campuses can vary greatly from abstinence to safe and responsible drinking to binge and dangerous drinking. Alcohol & Other Drugs Services can help you make informed decisions regarding alcohol and other drug use. Be safe. Be smart. Be responsible.



Sexual Health

Sexual health can cross many dimensions of wellness so it's important to make informed decisions that are best for you!

- Are you going to abstain from sexual activity?
- Are you ready to become, or stay, sexually active?
- Do you know how to protect yourself and your partner(s) from STIs?
- Did you know you can get free condoms and STI testing on campus?

Health Care

Preparing to take on your own healthcare can be overwhelming, but there's a few simple things you can do to make the transition smoother.

- Find a local health care provider like the Campus Health Center or the GVSU Family Health Center.
- Know if you have insurance and what's covered before seeking care.
- Take preventative steps to stay healthy, like getting your flu shot and washing your hands.

Environmental Wellness

Environmental wellness inspires us to respect our surroundings and involves feeling and being safe in your current environment. This includes spending time in and having access to places that support your well-being, such as spending time outdoors in nature or attending classes that foster positive learning environments where you feel accepted and welcomed.



Unplug and Get Outside



Spaces for You



Unplug and Get Outside

The benefits of getting away from screens and enjoying the outdoors are plentiful. Spending time outside reduces fatigue, improves short-term memory, reduces stress, lowers blood pressure, improves your ability to focus and may also increase your creativity, reduce experiences of depression and anxiety, and protect your vision. Even in the cold Michigan winters, it's important to spend time outside!

Spaces for You

Environmental wellness also means finding spaces that you feel comfortable in. You may find comfort in a variety of locations around campus: the LGBT Resource Center, the Center for Women and Gender Equity, the Office of Multicultural Affairs, the alcohol-free events offered by Alcohol & Other Drugs Services, the Rec Center, interfaith practice rooms, the Library or even with one of the many student organizations on campus!

Social Wellness

Social wellness is about maintaining healthy relationships with your friends, family, and community. It includes how you spend time in community with others, your social life, and meeting new people.



Meet New People



Stay Connected to Home



Volunteer



Meet New People

College is a wonderful place to meet people from different backgrounds than you, but it can be hard to know where to start! Join a group focused on your favorite hobby like reading, hiking, gaming, or playing music. Or, invite your neighbor to an event on campus.

Stay Connected to Home

Homesickness is a normal experience for many college students. And, while it's important to meet new people and get involved, it can also be helpful to stay connected to family and friends back home. So if you're missing them, give them a call - tell them about new experiences you have been having.

Volunteer

A great way to get involved on campus or in the community is to volunteer. You can volunteer based on your interests. Local non-profits, schools, libraries and places of worship often need volunteers for special events or day to day operations. Even giving back in simple ways can improve your overall health and happiness.

Financial Wellness

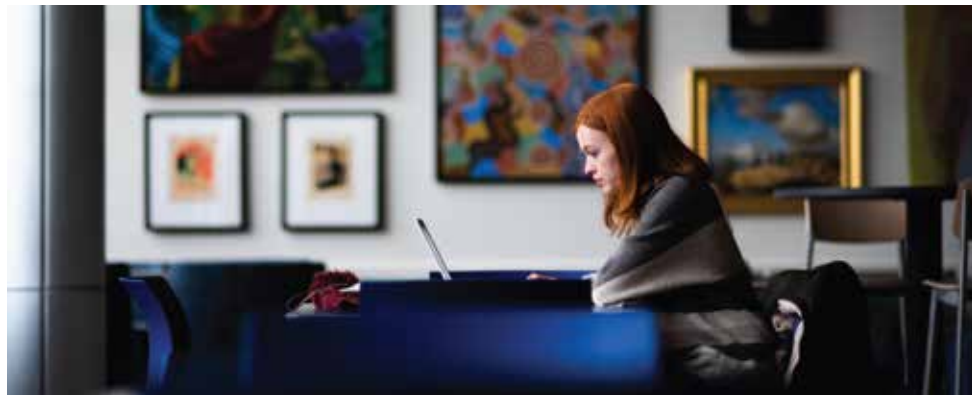
Financial wellness includes things like your income, savings, and expenses, as well as how you understand your financial situation and resources.



Understand
Financial Aid



Create
a Budget



Understand Financial Aid

Knowing your way around loans, grants, work study, scholarships and student employment can be tough. Luckily, the Office of Financial Aid & Scholarships can help you navigate it all.

Create a Budget

Knowing how much money you are spending and how much money you have coming in can be helpful in a lot of ways. It can reduce stress and anxiety, and it can help you build assets and reach goals. It's important that when you create your budget you stick to it! Don't know where to start? Schedule an appointment with MoneySmart Lakers!

Occupational Wellness

Occupational wellness is your involvement in activities like volunteering, employment, or career preparation. It also includes your balance between these things and the time you have for things you enjoy like friends, exercising, or whatever you do to relax.



Work/Life
Balance



Explore
Your Options



Work Life Balance

When everything is a priority, your wellness is at risk. Be sure to practice balance in your school work, job work, and life (work).

- Put limits on work hours. Relaxation has to be part of your routine as well.
- Understand you can't do everything. Focus on the things you truly love.
- Create a routine. Having time carved out for studying, working, exercising, sleeping and relaxation can help keep you balanced.

Explore Career and Major Options

Whether you know your major or future career aspirations, or if you're undecided, it's important to explore your options. GVSU has so much to offer and the world is full of career options. Let the Career Center help you discover the possibilities.

Intellectual Wellness

Intellectual wellness includes exercising your mind like you exercise your body. It can be your educational journey through life including formal classroom learning as well as your hobbies or interests where you take part in discussions or conversations that you find interesting with others.



Participate in Cultural Events



Tutoring



Learn a New Skill



Participate in Cultural Events

Each campus is full of events that provide new, unique experiences from various cultures and backgrounds. Visit art galleries, tour a museum, appreciate the symphony, attend a theatrical performance, or support a local band.

Tutoring

An important step in achieving intellectual wellness is getting academic help when you need it. The Tutoring Center on campus is here for you to become a self-directed, independent learner by helping you to understand content that may be difficult through practice and study techniques.

Learn a New Skill

Challenge your mind by learning to do something you've never done before. The possibilities are nearly endless, so once you've mastered one skill, you can start on another! Try a new sport, cooking, pottery, swimming, singing, dancing, musical instrument, gardening, drawing, writing, painting.

Emotional Wellness

Emotional wellness involves expressing your feelings, adjusting to challenges, coping with the stress that life brings, and enjoying your life.



Coping With Stress



Brighten Your Outlook



Be Mindful



Coping with Stress

Stress is a normal part of life, especially for a college student. When we have stress that lasts a long time, it becomes harmful. However, learning healthy ways of coping with stress can boost your resilience.

- Don't procrastinate. Give yourself enough time to study or finish projects.
- Give yourself permission to relax. Do your favorite hobby or take a nap.

Brighten your Outlook

People that are emotionally well have fewer negative emotions and hold on to positive emotions longer. As a college student, you can develop a more positive mindset by giving yourself a break, remembering your good deeds, spending time with friends, and forgiving yourself.

Be Mindful

By being aware of what's happening in the present, you are able to shift out of "autopilot" and see the world around you. It's easy to start:

- Enjoy a stroll and notice the sights around you.
- Practice deep breathing.
- Be aware of each bite and know when you're full.

Spiritual Wellness

Spiritual wellness is about understanding your own values and beliefs and taking time to deepen your spirituality (learning about other religions, using your beliefs to guide your decisions, or finding a peaceful place to reflect). Spiritual Wellness often explores living life with meaning and purpose.



Explore Your Spiritual Core



Spend Time Alone



Appreciate Uniqueness



Explore your Spiritual Core

College offers you a time to explore who you are as a person. Ask yourself: Who am I? What is my purpose? What do I value most? Let this exploration lead you to learn more about yourself and help you feel happy and fulfilled.

Spend Time Alone

This is the best way to get to know yourself. Whether you take time to get outside, exercise, or meditate, being by yourself regularly allows you to become comfortable in your own skin and with your own values and beliefs.

See and Appreciate Uniqueness

You may meet people on campus with different values and beliefs from your own, but that doesn't mean there is right or wrong. A spiritually well person can be themselves and allow those around them to be themselves, too. By taking opportunities to understand those around you, you can grow in your own spiritual wellness.

University Resources

Physical Wellness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Alcohol & Other Drugs Services Athletic & Rec Facilities Campus Dining 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Campus Health Center GV Family Health Center Recreation & Wellness Replenish
Environmental Wellness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accessible Restroom & Wellness Rooms Division of Inclusion & Equity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Housing & Residence Life Office of Multicultural Affairs Office of Sustainability Practices
Social Wellness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Campus Interfaith Housing & Residence Life Kirkhof Center 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Laker Link LGBT Resource Center Recreation & Wellness Office of Student Life
Financial Wellness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Career Center Handshake Money Smart Lakers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Office of Financial Aid Replenish Student Employment
Occupational Wellness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Academic Advising Career Center Community Service Learning Center 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Office of Student Life Student Employment
Intellectual Wellness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Academic Advising Center for Women & Gender Equity Laker Link 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student Academic Success Center Tutoring & Writing Centers University Libraries
Emotional Wellness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LGBT Resource Center Recreation & Wellness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student Organizations and Clubs University Counseling Center
Spiritual Wellness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Campus Interfaith Resources Interfaith Reflection Rooms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Laker Link Office of Student Life



 GRAND VALLEY STATE UNIVERSITY