VALUE YOUR MIND WHILE YOU STUDY

OCTOBER is Mental Health Month. Mental Health Month NSW is part of a national mental health promotion campaign held throughout October each year. The timing of the campaign centres on World Mental Health Day, which happens each year on October 10.

The 2015 Mental Health Month theme is:

The main message of this campaign is to encourage us all to think about mental health in our daily lives and promote the need for all of us to make mental health a priority. When we make our mental health a priority, we are practicing self-care which is an important part of maintaining study/life balance and wellbeing.

For more information on mental health month and mental health generally, talk with your TAFE counsellor, or go to http://www.mentalhealth.asn.au/programs/mental-health-month-nsw

STRESS MANAGEMENT AND STUDY

OCTOBER 25TH is Stress Less Day

Stress is a normal part of life and can motivate us in our studies. However we need to make sure we can manage stress, otherwise we can begin to feel overwhelmed by it. Too much stress can affect the way we think, the way we act, and our emotional and physical health.

So how can we manage stress? Try these tips-

- Be aware of the things that cause you stress. Identifying your stressors is the first step.
- Consider how you react to stress. Do you try and manage it in healthy or unhealthy ways?
- Aim for balance in the different areas of your life – Take time out from study to do things that give you enjoyment and that are just for you.
- Exercise. It releases tension, helps with our moods, and promotes the release of ‘feel good’ chemicals in our bodies.
- Eat well. Both stress and fast food can deplete our body’s store of nutrients. Too much sugar, tea and coffee can give us a temporary hit but later leave us feeling tired and down.
- Manage your time. Set priorities and goals. Make self-care a priority. It can be easy to forget about it sometimes.
- Use relaxation techniques, for example, meditation, and mindfulness. See http://smilingmind.com.au/ as one example. It’s free and has programs designed for all ages.
- Write it out. Writing about what’s going on in your life can often help you get a clearer picture when things seem confusing.
- Talk to someone about your stress - a trusted friend, a counsellor, or other mental health professional.
A student’s experience with a TAFE counsellor

Kaylene came to TAFE as a mature age student, determined to obtain a Certificate III Aged Care, and to prove to her and others that she had the ability and determination to be a successful learner. She began with some reservations and found that some issues in her past and present life appeared to be restricting her capacity to concentrate fully on her course. So she took up her teacher’s suggestion to see the TAFE Counsellor. Kaylene found the conversations with her TAFE counsellor about her life and previous experiences both enlightening and scary, and at times she doubted her capacity to make any changes. However she was able to gradually change the way she thought about things and deal with her feelings in a different way. Kaylene successfully completed the course and is now working with an aged care provider as one of a team focused on supporting people through in-home care. She is a truly dedicated and empathic nurse who gives her clients thoughtful and generous care.

For further information about our courses in aged care and other career paths, see our website http://www.illawarra.tafensw.edu.au/
Career Development and Counselling Proud to Display Student’s Artwork

Kerrie Williams, a student who just completed her Certificate IV Aboriginal and Torres Strait Cultural Arts, now has her artwork permanently displayed in the Counselling and Careers rooms at TAFE.

Three doors of storage cupboards became the canvas for Kerrie’s transforming colourful work, titled “Foods of the Sea”. Kerrie’s cupboard door artwork was included in her course as an assessment project, enabling her to complete the certificate.

Kerrie has already set up a virtual gallery on Facebook where you can view or purchase her art, but her ultimate goal is to open her own gallery to display and sell her artworks. Kerrie said that “This course has really helped me develop my use of colour in my artwork”.

Kerrie has also worked with the students to create murals at several local schools, and won awards for her art work. Many of the works are interpretations of dreamtime stories. Kerrie is from the North Coast Mob, Biripi Nation and her totem is the shark.