



NAVIGATING
**COLLEGE
CULTURE**

Conversations about

- *Alcohol*
- *Sexual Violence*
- *Mental Health and Suicide*

UNIVERSITY HEALTH SERVICES



Students eat breakfast at the Four Lakes Market in DeJope Residence Hall before the first day of fall semester classes at the University of Wisconsin-Madison on Sept. 6, 2023. Photo: Althea Dotzour.

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HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

This guide focuses on three key health areas: alcohol, sexual violence, and mental health.

The aim of this guide is to equip you with strategies and resources to support your student's wellbeing and encourage them to seek help if they need it. For the purposes of this guide, the term "parent and family" includes any trusted adult who will support a student during college.

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The transition to college is a big step for students, as well as their parents and families.



People gather on Bascom Hill and State Street Mall to watch the 86-percent solar eclipse at the University of Wisconsin–Madison on April 8, 2024. Photo: Althea Dotzour.

WELCOME

TO UW-MADISON

The transition to college is an important time for students and their loved ones. UW-Madison takes the health and safety of your student seriously, and our partnership with you is critical to supporting your student's academic success and fostering rich campus experiences.

With your student entering college, your role and relationship will change. Now is a great time to begin or continue conversations about alcohol choices, consent, sexual assault, and your student's mental health and wellbeing. We understand these are difficult topics, and everyone has unique personal values that reflect what is important to them. In this guide, we share ways you can help your student prepare for new challenges they may encounter during their college career.

IMPORTANT STAT

40%

of first-year students do not drink.¹

It's important for parents and families to talk with their student about alcohol use behaviors, as well as the potential risks associated with alcohol. As students navigate their new surroundings, they will face decisions about alcohol. We look to you as partners in UW-Madison's efforts to create an environment where all students can succeed, both in and out of the classroom.



University of Wisconsin–Madison offers opportunities for all students to find community and a sense of belonging outside of alcohol culture. Finding a community on campus is important to your student’s success. In your discussions with your student around alcohol, you may also discuss their plans to get involved with campus life—through student organizations, interest-based activities, volunteering in the community, or other ways to connect with their peers. Checking in with your students and having conversation about campus opportunities may allow you to support them as they navigate a social climate where alcohol can be easily accessible.

Imagining your student experiencing sexual assault or an abusive relationship can be difficult, but if they do experience interpersonal violence, your support, words, and actions make a difference. It’s common for student survivors to reach out to people they trust after experiencing victimization. A validating, trustworthy support system can help a student heal from trauma, continue educational opportunities, and feel empowered despite the circumstances they have faced.

IMPORTANT STAT

86%

of UW–Madison students feel motivated to intervene to prevent sexual violence.²

Stigma around seeking mental health treatment is decreasing among UW–Madison students. Parents can play a vital role in this by telling your student that you would support their decision to seek help. Seventy-nine percent of UW–Madison students reported they would know where to go on campus if they needed to seek professional mental health services.³ This means most students know about campus mental health services. Parents can help us continue to increase awareness of these important resources by learning about campus mental health services in case your student or their friend needs help at some point.

There are important intersections between alcohol consumption, sexual assault, and mental health that our campus works continuously to address. Before the start of the semester, your student will complete interactive, online learning modules that provides them with information about alcohol, consent, healthy relationships, and bystander intervention. These programs are designed to address harmful attitudes or behaviors and build skills for fostering a safe, healthy campus.

IMPORTANT STAT

87%

of students who used mental health care found it helpful.³

All students deserve a safe, welcoming place to learn, grow, and succeed. As partners in your student's success, we ask you to join us in these important conversations and help to make UW-Madison a campus where students can thrive.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jake Baggott". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Jake Baggott, MLS, 1SG
Associate Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs,
Health & Wellbeing

Executive Director, UHS





Pedestrians stop to enjoy ice cream from The Daily Scoop on Library Mall on the sunny first day after Spring Break 2022. Photo: Althea Dotzour.

■ All students deserve to feel safe and welcome on campus. By understanding key health concerns students face, parents and families can start conversations to support their student's wellbeing.



OVERVIEW

JUST THE FACTS

*Alcohol Use, Sexual Violence,
& Mental Health at UW-Madison*

■ ALCOHOL

Alcohol is the most widely used drug among college age students nationally and at UW-Madison. Data show that our students are choosing to drink at higher rates than the national average. As your student navigates a new community, friends, and social scene it is key to discuss how alcohol will impact these endeavors.

High risk drinking, especially in young adults, is not just concerning due to potential harm from use but due to the intersection with other important health topics. Mental health and substance misuse or dependency are often intertwined. Students may use alcohol to cope with stress and/or depression. Furthermore, alcohol is the number one “date rape drug” on college campuses, including UW-Madison.

IMPORTANT STAT

77%

of sexual assaults that involve force or incapacitation at UW-Madison also involve the use of alcohol.⁴





Graduation caps adorned with the iconic W crest are pictured during UW–Madison's spring commencement ceremony at the Kohl Center in 2017. Photo: Bryce Richter.



■ SEXUAL VIOLENCE

On college campuses nationwide, including UW–Madison, sexual assault, sexual harassment, stalking, and dating violence are realities that can affect students of any identity. Speaking about sex can be challenging for many individuals;

however, students should feel comfortable expressing their sexual needs and boundaries to engage in mutual and respectful interactions. Consent is a necessary feature of mutual sexual interactions. It refers to freely given permission for or agreement to engage in sexual activity and is necessary for sexual activities to occur. Beyond a singular moment, consent is an ongoing process that can be revoked at any time and cannot be obtained by coercion, threats, or force.

Sexual assault is any sexual contact made without consent. Examples of sexual assault include unwanted touching, kissing, fondling, or any form of anal, oral, or vaginal sex that is nonconsensual.

IMPORTANT STAT

90%

of sexual assaults happen between people who know each other.⁴



■ MENTAL HEALTH AND SUICIDE

Mental health conditions are relatively common among college students and it's likely that your student or one of their friends will need help at some point in their college career. A 2022 study at UW-Madison found that 36 percent of students reported significant symptoms of depression and 30 percent reported significant symptoms of anxiety.³ Although the number of students who are experiencing mental health concerns can be disheartening, there are also some indicators that provide reason for hope and opportunities for you as parents to thoughtfully support your student's mental health. Conversations allow you and your student to plan for the unexpected and know what to do if your student experiences emotional distress, develops a mental health condition, or if an existing condition worsens.

IMPORTANT STAT

94%

of UW-Madison students do not think any less of a person who seeks mental health treatment.³



Conversations about alcohol, sexual violence, and mental health shouldn't be just one big talk—rather, many small conversations.

A student studies in the Undergraduate Study Lounge in the new instructional tower addition to the Chemistry Building in 2022. Photo: Althea Dotzour.

DIALOGUE

START THE CONVERSATION

Topics, Talking Points, and Open-ended Questions

■ WHEN YOU LEAD

You may already be talking with your student about alcohol use, sexual violence, and mental health. It's important to continue having those conversations. For some families, it can be helpful to have talking points to start the conversation. Your relationship with your student is unique and we encourage you to approach these topics in ways that feel authentic, honest, and empathetic.

Rather than attempt lengthy conversations, ask simple, open-ended questions, and listen without judgment. Encourage your student to explore what they want from their social life or dating experiences and look for opportunities to weave topics of alcohol, sex, dating, and mental health into everyday interactions. For example, you may ask your student what they think about a TV show, news story, or social media post related to the topic. In these conversations, be mindful to avoid glamorizing any past alcohol or drug use. Also, make sure to avoid language that is victim-blaming. This may be a time in your student's life where they are exploring new aspects of their identity that stretch the boundaries of your own beliefs or experiences. Remaining open and allowing space for your student to still feel cared for and valued will support their wellbeing.





■ KEY TIPS

- Express empathy and care. Don't offer judgments or make blanket statements about people who may find themselves in harmful situations.
- Encourage questions during the conversation and at any point in the future.
- Use open-ended questions and invite them into the conversation. Check in with them about how they feel about the topic.
- Focus on self-care, resources, and resilience.
- Avoid scare tactics. Don't share information, stories, or statistics with the intention to raise awareness through fear. Remember, you're having this conversation with your student to set them up to succeed, not to leave them worried.

When your student enters college, your relationship will change. Now is a great time to begin or continue conversations about your student's health and wellbeing in college. We understand these are difficult topics, and everyone has unique personal values that reflect what is important to them.



A first-year undergraduate student takes notes while studying in her room at Elizabeth Waters Residence Hall. Photo: Jeff Miller.



Students walk among the colors of the fall leaves near Camp Randall Arch autumn 2021. Photo: Bryce Richter.

■ QUESTIONS TO START THE CONVERSATION

General conversation starters

- What are ways that we/I can help you from home?
- How are you feeling about heading to college?
- What excites you most about heading to UW–Madison?
- What worries you most about heading to UW–Madison?

IMPORTANT STAT

77%

of students feel very or extremely safe on campus.⁵

Alcohol use

- How will you decide whether or not to drink?
- Have you thought about what you will do if you feel pressure to, or are offered a drink and don't want one?
- What are your thoughts about drinking in college?

Sexual Violence

- How would you support a friend or roommate if their boundaries are crossed?
- How would you talk to a friend if they were acting disrespectful or pressuring someone?
- What did you think about the U Got This! and GetWise programs?

Mental health

- What are ways you can proactively take care of your mental health while at school?
- Who do you feel like you can check in with when you're struggling?
- How would you help a friend or roommate if you're worried about their mental health?

STATEMENTS OF SUPPORT

- Communication is an important part of sex and dating.
- No one has the right to cross your boundaries or push you further than you want. This is something you can always talk to me about.
- Your mental health is vastly more important than a good GPA.
- (If relevant) We have a family history of (mental illness or substance abuse), so I really care about you taking care of yourself at college.





Navigating new relationships is an important part of the student experience.

Students enjoy spring rolls during the Asian Pacific Islander Desi American (APIDA) Heritage Month Art Show, held at the Multicultural Student Center (MSC) lounge in the Red Gym in 2022. Photo: Jeff Miller.

LISTENING

SUPPORT YOUR STUDENT

Skills, Statements, and Resources

■ WHEN THEY SHARE

Your student may approach you about alcohol use, sexual assault, or mental health – either before they head to school or at some point during the semester. If your student comes to you about one of these serious issues, in-person or with a text or phone call, listen with patience and without judgment. Allow your student to share as much or as little as they feel comfortable sharing with you. Thank your student for trusting you and reaffirm that you're there for them. Being empathetic and listening may be the most important thing you do.

The services a student seeks out on campus are confidential and many offices cannot directly discuss a student's concerns with parents and family members without the student's explicit, written permission.

Focus on their options, not your opinions. You can offer to serve as a support person to accompany your student to related meetings and appointments or help them connect with resources. Emphasize that everyone needs help sometimes. Listen non-judgmentally to your student's needs and experiences. The following sections may help you with issue-specific conversations and referrals.





Badger football fans (including third-year law students carrying canes) make their way to the stadium before the start of the homecoming Badger football game against Rutgers University at Camp Randall Stadium at the University of Wisconsin–Madison on Oct. 7, 2023. Photo: Althea Dotzour

I STATEMENTS OF SUPPORT

TRY

- What will help you feel supported?
- Do you want help talking to your professors?
- I love you. I'm here for you.
- I support your decision to use resources/services.
- Thank you for trusting me enough to share this with me.
- Do you want to talk more about it?
- You deserve to feel safe and respected, no matter what.
- There are people who can help, even if you don't want to report.
- You can come home if you need. I will support you in your choices.
- Have you thought about getting an STI test or a forensic exam?

AVOID

- Why aren't you going to class?
- I don't know what to tell you. You'll have to figure out how to get out of this mess on your own.
- What did you think would happen when you went to that party?

IMPORTANT STAT

41%

of students report receiving mental health support from a family member in the past year.³

- This is making me uncomfortable. Can we change the subject?
- Are you sure this wasn't just a misunderstanding?
- We need to report right now.
- You have no choice in the matter.



■ ALCOHOL USE

If you think your student may be misusing alcohol or has a problem with alcohol, let them know you're concerned and willing to help. You can refer your student to UHS for an alcohol and other drug assessment and counseling services at no cost.

When UW–Madison Police or City of Madison Police encounter a student who is nonresponsive, disoriented and unable to answer simple questions, or otherwise determined to pose a risk to others, officers may transport them to Tellurian Detoxification Center or a hospital emergency department for medical monitoring. The minimum length of stay in the detox facility is 12 hours.

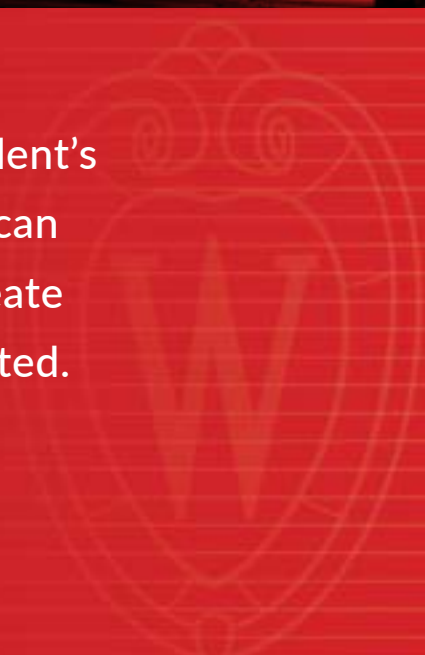
UHS has no-cost counseling services.

UW–Madison is required to notify parents when a student goes to detox.



Students and pedestrians walk in front the Education Building during the first morning of classes for the Fall semester of 2021. Photo: Bryce Richter.

■ We are partners in promoting your student's success at UW-Madison. Together, we can get students the help they need and create an environment where they feel supported.



■ SEXUAL VIOLENCE

Supporting your student after victimization

Follow up with your student and recognize that they are a whole person with many elements to their developing identity. It's common for survivors to experience trauma symptoms for months and years. Remind your student that they can get help at any time—even if the incident happened in the past.

Some parents and family members find it helpful to receive their own support and consultation so they may better support their student. It's common to have questions, concerns, and experience feelings of anger, shock, shame, or denial. There are services on- and off-campus (page 27) that offer 24/7 support and information that are available to you as a parent or family member assisting your student.

Focus on their options, not your opinions.

Accommodation and reporting options

UW–Madison trusts student victims/survivors to make the best decisions for themselves including whether filing a report is the right choice for their healing process. If a student isn't sure they want to file a report, they can access confidential services through University Health Services and/or community offices. A list of confidential support options starts on page 27. Students are entitled to reasonable accommodations such as academic or housing supports, safety measures, and access to information, regardless of whether they choose to file a report. Professional advocates can also help a student better understand what a reporting process entails and help support them as they make decisions along the way.



Students participate in a group strength class held at the Nick (Nicholas Recreation Center) in Spring of 2022. Photo: Powers Spees.

If a student knows that they would like to file a formal report, they can report to the Office of Student Assistance and Support, the Sexual Misconduct Resource and Response Program, and/or a law enforcement agency. Sexual assault, intimate partner violence, sexual harassment, and/or stalking are forms of gender discrimination and violations of Title IX federal law, state law, and the UW System Administrative Code.

University employees who are not specifically designated as confidential, including House Fellows and many faculty members, have obligations to report disclosures of sexual violence to the campus Title IX coordinator who may investigate the report.

■ MENTAL HEALTH AND SUICIDE

While some stress is normal and healthy, significant life changes and increases in stress levels can negatively affect mental health. By communicating regularly with your student, you'll be able to notice warning signs that may indicate a mental health concern beyond normal stress. Check in with your student early and often. If you're concerned, notify the Office of Student Assistance and Support, or consult with UHS by calling 608-265-5600 (option 9 for 24/7 crisis line). It is important to note that UW–Madison students report they are most likely to talk with a friend or family member if they experience emotional distress.³



■ Stressors

- Developing and managing new relationships
- Increased academic demands
- Feeling alone or homesick
- Financial stress
- Feeling marginalized, misunderstood, or like they “don’t fit in”

■ Warning signs

- Depressed mood
- Loss of interest in activities
- Changes in appetite or sleep
- Withdrawal from friends and family
- Feeling isolated or like they don’t belong
- Increased alcohol and/or other drug use
- Increased anxiety
- Sense that life has no purpose
- Feeling worthless
- Unable to perform academically
- Feeling trapped or hopeless
- Thoughts of suicide or death
- Unable to contact your student

IMPORTANT STAT

46%

of students reporting receiving mental or emotional health support from their friends.³

■ INTERVENE WHEN CONCERNED

Strategies to check in with your student about their mental health

- Contact your student and express genuine concern and care.
- Don't argue or act shocked by their responses. This can make students feel guilty or ashamed.
- Speak to your student as a supportive loved one first and foremost. Don't attempt to diagnose your student or problem solve.
- Focus your conversation on your student's needs and what they feel would help.
- Normalize and support decisions to seek help.

■ TALKING POINTS

- The last time we talked you mentioned feeling stressed with classes. I'm just calling to talk and see how you're doing. How do you feel today?
- With all you mentioned about feeling down, I'm wondering if you would consider talking to someone at UHS. It seems like it would be worth going at least once to see if it's helpful?
- That sounds really tough. I'm here for you and want to help. And you may want to talk to someone else about what's going on. Have you heard about mental health services at UHS?
- I notice that you've been mentioning how hard things have been lately. Tell me more about what is going on. I'm here to listen.
- It sounds like school is stressful right now. I just want you to know that I love you and want you to be healthy, first and foremost. How can I be supportive?
- Everyone needs help sometimes. And it's a good idea to take advantage of the resources on campus. Do you know how to make an appointment at UHS? I can help you find that information.



Students follow along with the lecture on their laptop computers in Chemistry 103 in Ag Hall during the first morning of classes for Fall semester 2021. Photo: Althea Dotzour.


■ SUICIDE PREVENTION

If your student is struggling with their mental health or you believe they may be thinking about suicide, the best thing you can do is to have an honest conversation. Reach out to your student, tell them you care, listen without judgment, and encourage them to seek help. If you believe they're thinking about suicide, ask them directly.

Many people fear that asking, "Are you thinking about suicide?" will give someone the idea. Research overwhelming shows this is not true. Asking about suicide opens the conversation and can save a life.

Take all suicidal behavior and discussion seriously, even if the student has been drinking. Alcohol can increase suicide risk.

It may be difficult to intervene and support your student if they live in a different city, state, or country. If you are concerned for your student, contact UHS at **608-265-5600 (option 9 for after-hours crisis services)**.



Campus resources
are available to support
your student's wellbeing
throughout their
academic journey.

*Students study, eat, and relax
in seating areas within the main
atrium of the Microbial Science
Building in 2021. Photo: Jeff Miller.*

RESOURCES

TO SUPPORT HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Connect Your Student on Campus

■ REFLECTING AND REFERRING

To help your student prepare for their transition to UW–Madison, we encourage you to have a conversation with them about the resources that are available to support their health and wellbeing. Consider asking your student their thoughts about the online trainings they take about alcohol use and sexual assault.

The following section contains resources, including those that University Health Services offers. For a comprehensive picture of on- and off-campus resources, visit uhs.wisc.edu.

■ ALCOHOL

UHS alcohol and other drug assessment

Assessment provides an opportunity to meet one-on-one with an alcohol and drug specialist, who will evaluate the nature of any problems a student has with alcohol or drugs. The assessment gets the student involved through discussion of biological, psychological, and social factors affecting alcohol and other drug use and abuse. If necessary, the counselor can make recommendations for further treatment. Visit uhs.wisc.edu/alcohol or call 608-265-5600.



Collegiate Recovery

Badger Recovery is a program for students in, or considering, recovery from substance use. Recovery is individually defined. This program values the diverse experiences of its members and their personal goals. Badger Recovery helps create a community where students can access resources and support through a variety of meetings, events, and services.

uhs.wisc.edu/recovery, recovery@uhs.wisc.edu

eCheckup

UW–Madison has two online programs available to students who are interested in examining their relationship with alcohol and/or marijuana. By taking Alcohol eCheckup or Cannabis eCheckup, students can learn more about their own substance use habits, compare their behaviors to those of their peers, and find helpful campus resources. Both programs are free and available to students 24/7. uhs.wisc.edu/echeckup

SEXUAL AND RELATIONSHIP VIOLENCE

24/7 Services

- Dane County Rape Crisis Center
608-251-7273
- Domestic Abuse Intervention Services
608-251-4445
- National Sexual Assault Hotline
800-656-4673
- National Domestic Violence Hotline
800-799-SAFE (7233)
- Love is Respect
866-331-9474

IMPORTANT STAT

25%

of female-identifying students have experienced sexual assault while at college.⁴

ON CAMPUS

UHS Survivor Services

No-cost confidential services for student survivors of sexual assault, intimate partner violence, sexual exploitation, and/or stalking. Services include individual and group counseling, information about rights, resources, and reporting options, case management, and accompaniment. UHS is also equipped to provide emotional support, safety planning, and support with accommodations.

uhs.wisc.edu/survivor-resources, survivorservices@uhs.wisc.edu

608-265-5600 (option 3)

333 East Campus Mall, 8th floor

UHS Mental Health

Opportunities to talk with a counselor are available to students on a daily basis. Informal consultations, individual and group counseling, and psychiatric services are available.

First-time appointments can be made by phone or in MyUHS.

uhs.wisc.edu/mental-health/

608-265-5600 (option 2) (or option 9 for 24/7 crisis)

333 East Campus Mall, 7th floor

**24-hour mental
health support
is available.**

UHS Medical Services

Treatment of injuries, emergency contraception, pregnancy testing, HIV testing, wellness services, forensic nurse exams, and screening and treatment for other STIs.

Appointments by phone or via MyUHS. Students who need to be seen following sexual assault don't need an appointment and can drop-in during business hours.

uhs.wisc.edu/medical

608-265-5600 (option 1)

333 East Campus Mall, floors 5 & 6



Pedestrians and students walk among the colors of the fall leaves Bascom Hill in autumn 2021. Photo: Bryce Richter.

■ **Resources to support student health and wellbeing are available, often at no-cost, on campus. However, students may also access services in the surrounding community.**



OFF CAMPUS

Forensic Nurse Examiner, Unity Point Health-Meriter

24 hour medical and forensic examination. Nurses examine for injuries, collect evidence, and offer medications to prevent STIs and/or pregnancy. Evidence can be collected within five days of an assault. There is no requirement to report to law enforcement.

www.unitypoint.org/madison/forensic-nurse-examiner-program.aspx

608-417-6000 (24 hours)

202 South Park Street

Rape Crisis Center (RCC)

Free victim advocacy including a 24-hour help line, counseling support groups, medical and legal advocacy, self-defense program, and a campus office.

thercc.org, info@thercc.org

608-251-RAPE (7273) 24/7 helpline

2801 Coho Street, #301 **or** 333 East Campus Mall, room 7901

Domestic Abuse Intervention Services (DAIS)

Free victim advocacy including a 24-hour help line, emergency shelter, legal advocacy, a children's program, crisis response, support groups, and assistance in fostering pets.

abuseintervention.org, info@abuseintervention.org

608-251-4445 2102

2102 Fordem Avenue

A complete list of reporting options at UW–Madison, including filing a criminal complaint, can be found at: compliance.wisc.edu/titleix/.

MENTAL HEALTH AND SUICIDE

24/7 Mental Health Crisis Lines

608-265-5600 (option 9) for UW–Madison students in distress or for concerned parents/family members

Suicide & Crisis Lifeline

Call or text 988

Trevor Project (LGBTQ Lifeline) 866-488-7386

Veteran’s Lifeline 800-273-8255 (option 1) Text: 838255



Training for Peers and Friends

The online program Suicide Prevention Training for UW–Madison Students includes modules on recognizing warning signs in peers, responding effectively, and referring to resources. All students can access this program in Canvas.



Let's Play games and swag from UHS on a warm spring day on Library Mall near Memorial Library in 2018.
Photo: Matthew Norman

UHS Mental Health Services

No-cost, confidential counseling, care management, and psychiatric services.

An **Access Appointment** is the first step to getting started with clinical mental health care can be made by phone or in **MyUHS**.

Consultation is also available for third parties concerned about a UW–Madison student.

uhs.wisc.edu/mental-health/

608-265-5600 (option 2) (option 9 for 24/7 crisis)

333 East Campus Mall, 7th floor

Office of Student Assistance and Support

The Office of Student Assistance and Support provides non-clinical resources and support to students struggling with a variety of issues.

osas.wisc.edu

608-263-5700

70 Bascom Hall

A complete list of Mental Health services and resources can be found at: uhs.wisc.edu/mental-health/. Information about UW–Madison suicide prevention efforts can be found here: uhs.wisc.edu/prevention/suicide-prevention/.



**Our campus cares
about building a
community that holds
people accountable
when they cause harm.**

*Students listen to lecture during Introduction to Algorithms class in Noland Hall in 2020.
Photo: Jeff Miller.*

CAMPUS POLICIES

SUPPORT AND RESPONSE

Student's Rights and Responsibilities



ALCOHOL POLICIES

UW–Madison, in compliance with state law, prohibits the use and possession of alcoholic beverages by persons under age 21. UW–Madison utilizes two programs—Choices About Alcohol and BASICS—to help students who are found responsible for violating our alcohol and drug policies make educated decisions in the future. Complete information about each program can be found here: conduct.students.wisc.edu/sanctions/.

SEXUAL ASSAULT POLICIES

UW–Madison expressly prohibits sexual assault, sexual harassment, dating/domestic violence, and stalking. When misconduct is reported, UW–Madison will act promptly to investigate, provide safety accommodations for the victim, and address any concerns for a hostile environment.

Consent must be freely given with overt words or actions that clearly communicate an individual's desire to engage in sexual activities. Consent is a clear yes, not the absence of a no. Consent cannot legally be obtained if an individual is incapacitated due to alcohol or other drugs, is unconscious or asleep, or has limited mental capacity.

UW–Madison is committed to addressing common barriers to reporting sexual assault and ensuring the safety of its students.

Academic accommodations for students with disabilities

The McBurney Disability Resource Center provides accommodations and academic services for UW–Madison students with disabilities, including students with diagnosed mental health conditions. Students are required to provide documentation that verifies that a diagnosed condition meets the legal definition of a disability covered under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act (1973) and the Americans with Disabilities Amended Act (2008).

We encourage students interested in exploring academic accommodations to contact McBurney prior to arriving on campus. mcburney.wisc.edu.

Medical Withdrawal

For some students, withdrawal is needed to manage health conditions, recover, and get back on track. Medical Withdrawals may be granted to students who experience a serious or unexpected physical or mental health condition; who may need to provide care to an immediate family member who is experiencing a serious or unexpected health condition; or who have experienced the death of an immediate family member.

More information can be found here: registrar.wisc.edu/medical-withdrawal/

More than half of students who screened positive for significant symptoms of anxiety and/or depression have received professional mental health treatment.³



Student volunteers load up their vegetable harvest into vehicles as part of The People's Farm student organization at the F.H. King garden at the University of Wisconsin-Madison on Oct. 1, 2023. Photo: Bryce Richter.

■ **UW-Madison supports your student** at every step of the way. Our campus policies are designed to support your student during their time here.





UW-Madison offers a variety of programs that align with students' interests and help create community that supports overall wellbeing.

UW sailing team members compete in 2010 along a course on Lake Mendota near the UW-Madison campus. Photo: Jeff Miller.

Amnesty through responsible action

When someone is in danger, UW–Madison students are protected when they seek immediate assistance, such as calling 911. Amnesty through Responsible Action is a UW–Madison policy that applies to disciplinary actions related to the caller’s personal consumption of alcohol as well as the person they are calling for. This means that students will not be found responsible for policy violation if they or the person they’re calling for is drinking underage. The purpose of this policy is to create a situation where responsible action is encouraged and expected.

Privacy and confidentiality of student health information

For many students, college is a time when young adults become independent in managing their time and their health care. Many parents want to support their students while respecting their confidentiality. More information is available at uhs.wisc.edu/privacy.





■ We are a community dedicated to helping students thrive.

Parents and families can contribute to these feelings of support through conversations about important health topics. While conversations about alcohol use, sexual violence, and mental health can be difficult, they make a difference to your student and how they navigate campus. The 2021 UW–Madison climate survey found that most students report a positive campus climate experience. However, students from historically underrepresented and marginalized groups report a less-positive experience. Together, we must continue to build an environment supportive of all students.

References: ¹2023 AlcoholEdu (preliminary data)

²2023 ActWise (preliminary data)

³2022 Healthy Minds Study

⁴2019 Association of American Universities

⁵2021 Campus Climate Survey

University Health Services is here for you and your student. We have a central clinic in the heart of campus and a second clinic on the west side of campus. Our services range from medical appointments, to counseling and advocacy.

Colorful trees adorned with twinkle lights line East Campus Mall on an autumn day on the UW-Madison campus in 2021. Photo: Althea Dotzour.





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