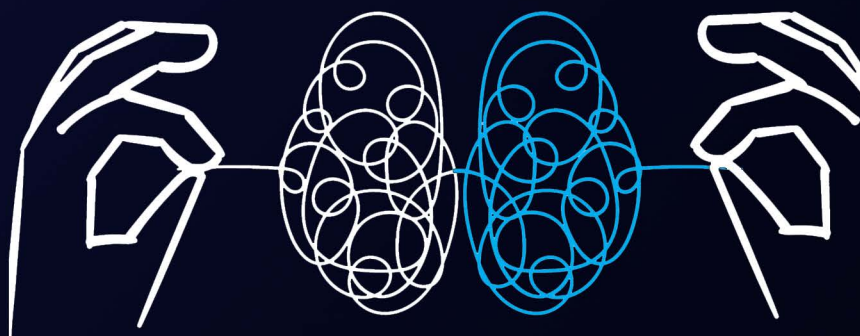
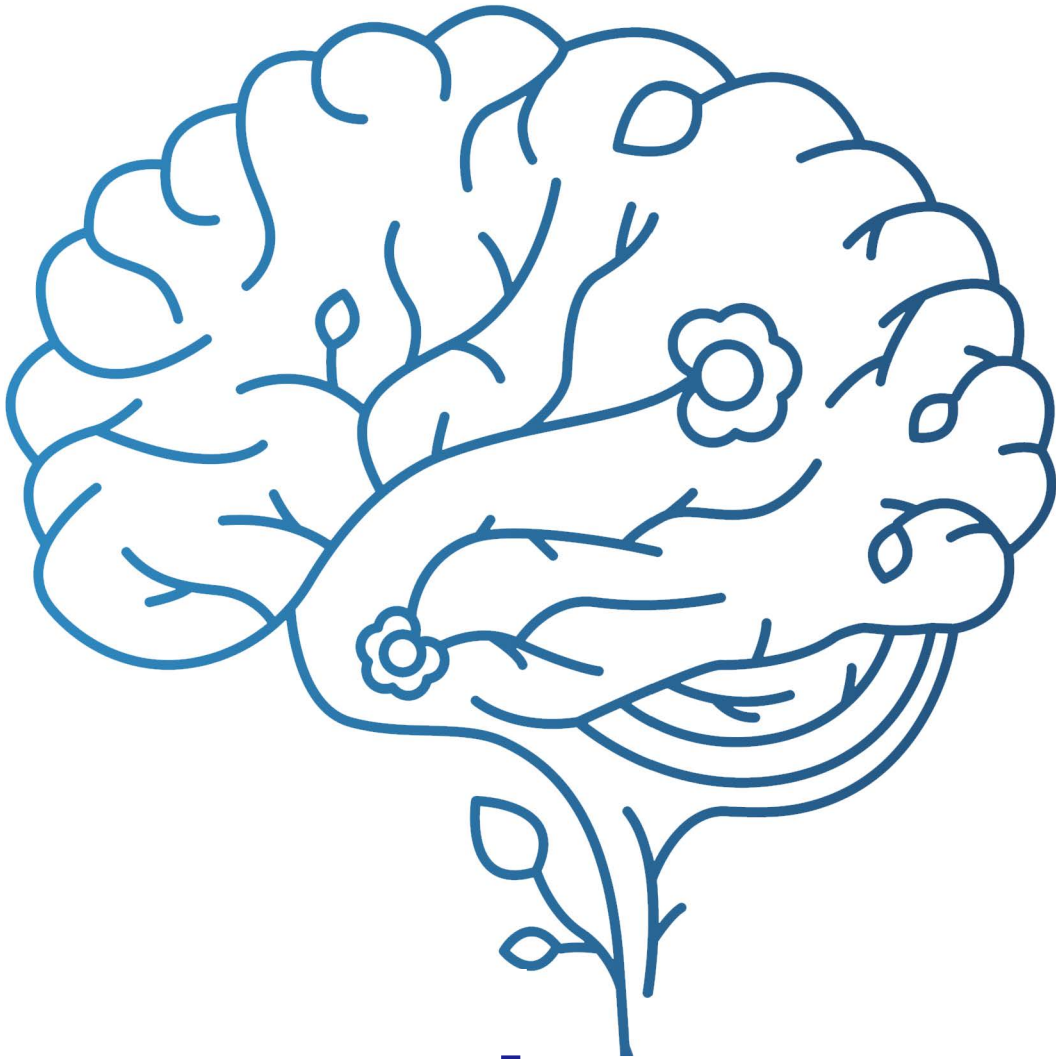




mental health



INFORMATION BOOKLET



Information Booklet

MENTAL HEALTH EDITION

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Foreword

Welcome to this information booklet on mental health, tailored specifically for you. As you embark on this exciting journey of studying abroad, it is important to prioritize your well-being, both academically and emotionally. Adjusting to a new environment, culture, and educational system can sometimes be overwhelming, but with the right support and resources, you can thrive and maintain good mental health throughout your journey.

This booklet aims to provide you with valuable advice and insights to help you navigate the challenges that may arise during your time abroad. It is crucial to remember that seeking support and taking care of your mental well-being is just as important as your academic pursuits.

1. **First and foremost**, remember that you are not alone. Reach out to your fellow international students, join student clubs or organizations, and actively engage in campus activities. Building connections and friendships will not only provide you with a support system, but also enhance your sense of belonging in your new environment.

2. **Avoid getting involved** in harmful activities that may jeopardize your mental health. Be mindful of the choices you make and surround yourself with positive influences. Seek out healthy and constructive ways to cope with stress, such as exercise, hobbies, or talking to a trusted friend or counselor.

3. **It is crucial to prioritize** your mental well-being and to be aware of the signs of self-harm or thoughts of suicide. If you or someone you know is struggling, please don't hesitate to reach out to the counseling services provided by your institution. They are there to support you and provide the help you need.

4. **Staying connected with** your family and loved ones back home can provide a sense of comfort and support. Regular communication can help alleviate feelings of homesickness and provide an outlet to share your experiences and challenges.

5. **Take care of your physical** environment as well. A clean and organized living space can contribute to a positive state of mind. Establish healthy habits, such as getting enough sleep, maintaining a balanced diet, and engaging in regular physical activity. These lifestyle factors greatly influence your mental well-being.

6. Remember, seeking help is a sign of strength, not weakness. Your institution is equipped with resources, including counseling services, support groups, and workshops designed to address the mental health needs of international students. Don't hesitate to reach out if you are struggling or in need of guidance.

Substance abuse

Substance abuse is a serious issue that can have detrimental effects on individuals' mental and physical health. As an international student, it is essential to be aware of the risks associated with substance abuse and make conscious choices to avoid falling into this destructive pattern. Substance abuse can negatively impact your academic performance, relationships, and overall well-being. By staying informed and making informed decisions, you can protect yourself from the harmful consequences of substance abuse.

- One of the key ways to prevent substance abuse is to surround yourself with positive influences and engage in healthy activities. Build a strong support network of friends who share similar values and prioritize their well-being. Participate in campus clubs, organizations, and events that promote healthy lifestyles and provide opportunities for social connection. Engaging in physical activities, pursuing hobbies, and exploring new interests can help you channel your energy in positive ways and reduce the temptation to turn to substances.

- Stress and pressure can sometimes be overwhelming, especially as an international student adapting to a new environment. It is crucial to develop healthy coping mechanisms to manage stress effectively. Seek out stress management techniques such as deep breathing exercises, mindfulness practices, or talking to a counselor. Take advantage of the resources provided by your institution, such as counseling services or support groups, to help you navigate through challenging times.

- Maintaining a balanced and healthy lifestyle is also important in preventing substance abuse. Prioritize self-care by getting enough sleep, eating nutritious meals, and engaging in regular physical activity. These lifestyle factors not only contribute to your overall well-being but also help reduce stress and promote positive mental health. Surrounding yourself with a supportive environment that promotes wellness will greatly reduce the risk of turning to substances as a coping mechanism.

- Remember, prevention is key when it comes to substance abuse. Educate yourself about the risks associated with different substances and the potential consequences of their use. Be mindful of peer pressure and be confident in making decisions that align with your values and goals. If you find yourself struggling with substance abuse or suspect someone else may be, don't hesitate to seek help. Reach out to the resources available on campus or in your community that can provide support, guidance, and treatment options.

Activities in the northern part of Cyprus

Staying active and engaged is a fundamental part of being human. When we have excessive free time and lack of activity, we are more prone to feelings of loneliness, boredom, and depression. To help you combat these challenges, we have compiled a list of suggestions

- **Hiking:** Hiking can be a beneficial hobby both physically and mentally. There are over 15 hiking trails in the northern part of Cyprus. You can find more information about these trails at <https://naturescapes.wixsite.com/cyprus>.

- **Language courses:** If you have free time, why not consider taking a Turkish language course? It can help you navigate your way in the local community.

- **Student clubs & societies:** Your university offers various student clubs and societies focused on different activities. Joining them can help you stay active and meet new people.

- **Volunteering with VOIS:** Volunteering can be one of the most meaningful and fulfilling experiences in our lives. Consider joining VOIS and dedicating your time to volunteering, which will not only fill up your schedule but also provide opportunities for personal development and learning.

- **Exercise:** Engaging in regular exercise is a great way to stay mentally and physically fit. There are many gyms in the northern part of Cyprus where you can join fitness classes or even try self-defense or boxing lessons.

- **Dance classes:** Dance centers in the northern part of Cyprus offer dance classes in English. It can be a fun way to spend your time, have a good time, and meet new people.

• **Sports:** Many higher education institutions and cities have sports centers and fields for activities like tennis, football, and basketball. Consider joining a team or practicing by yourself.

• **Swimming:** Living on an island means water is all around us! During the hot summer months, consider taking swimming lessons to improve your techniques or even try kite surfing courses in Lefka or Famagusta.

• **Exploration:** The northern part of Cyprus has a lot to offer, including mountains, beaches, caves, ancient castles, ruins, and a rich history. Explore these places alone or with friends.

• **General learning:** Make the most of your time by being productive. Take online language courses or classes, learn new hobbies, and acquire new skills.

Did you know?



The average price of private therapy sessions in the northern part of Cyprus as of May 2023 is around 500 TL. If you would like recommendations for private therapists don't hesitate to contact us.

Psychological guidance centers of higher education institutions in the northern part of Cyprus

Did you know that many of the higher education institutions in the northern part of Cyprus have free counselling available for their students? You can find their contact information compiled below. Also feel free to contact the VOIS mental health committee which will offer a listening ear to you if you would like to share and talk, however do note that we are not professionals and cannot offer you diagnosis or treatments.

Eastern Mediterranean University

Psychological Counseling Guidance and Research Center

counsel.pdram@emu.edu.tr

- +90 (392) 630 2251

- 0392 630 3222

- 0392 630 3223

- 0392 630 3224

- 0392 630 3225

- 0392 630 3226

- Psychiatrist Dr. Mehmet Yağlı will also offer services at +90 533 868 7756

Cyprus International University

Psychological Counseling and Guidance Center

- +90 392 671 1111 Extension: 2086 - hkorusan@ciu.edu.tr

- +90 392 671 1111 Ext: 2030 - cakun@ciu.edu.tr

Girne American Univesity

Psychological Counseling and Guidance Center

- +90 531 705 3487

Near East University

Psychological Counseling Guidance and Research Center

- sozen.inak@neu.edu.tr

- +90 392 2236464 Ext: 5278

Middle East Technical University

Student Development and Counseling Center

- 0533 861 91 54

- <https://ncc.metu.edu.tr/ogpdm/application-forms>

Bahçeşehir Cyprus University

Psychological Counseling and Guidance Center

- pdrm@dso.bau.edu.tr

European University of Lefke

Counselling & Guidance Centre

- dos@eul.edu.tr

- +90 392 660 2000 Ext: – 2121 – 2304 – 2114

Cyprus West University

Student Development and Counseling Center

- <https://cwu.edu.tr/student-development-and-counseling-center>

