

Supporting the Whole Student

The National Academies of Science,
Engineering, and Medicine

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800+
CAMPUSES

17,000
STUDENT MEMBERS

591,000
STUDENTS REACHED IN-PERSON

5 million+
TOTAL STUDENTS REACHED

"Without Active Minds, I honestly don't know that I'd be here today. I don't know that I would've felt like I mattered, or that I could make a change – as I have."



NEW RESEARCH

Strengthening College Students' Mental Health Knowledge, Awareness, and Helping Behaviors: The Impact of Active Minds, a Peer Mental Health Organization

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Objective: To examine the relationship between college students' familiarity with and involvement in Active Minds, a student peer organization focused on increasing mental health awareness, decreasing stigma, and affecting mental health knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors.

Method: Students ($N = 1,129$) across 12 California colleges completed three waves of a web-based survey during the 2016–2017 academic year to assess familiarity with and involvement in Active Minds and mental health attitudes, behaviors, and perceived knowledge. Fixed-effects models assessed relations between changes in organization familiarity and involvement and changes in mental health-related outcomes over time overall and stratified by students' baseline engagement (ie, familiarity/involvement) with Active Minds.

Results: Overall, increased familiarity with Active Minds was associated with increases in perceived knowledge (0.40 ; $p < .001$) and decreases in stigma over time (-0.33 ; $p < .001$). Increased involvement was associated with increases in perceived knowledge (0.40 ; $p < .001$) and a range of helping behaviors. Associations differed by students' baseline engagement with Active Minds. For students with low engagement, increased familiarity with Active Minds was associated with decreased stigma and improved perceived knowledge. For students with moderate baseline engagement, increasing involvement with Active Minds was associated with increases in helping behaviors (eg, providing emotional support, connecting others to services) over time.

Conclusion: Student peer organizations' activities can improve college student mental health attitudes and perceived knowledge and significantly

Active Minds Healthy Campus Award Criteria:

- Collective, strategic approach
- Pursue health comprehensively
- Champion student voices
- Provide equal opportunities for health
- Provide responsive, accessible clinical services
- Enact policy and systems change
- Make the most of available resources
- Measure results to drive change
- Address emerging issues



www.activeminds.org/award

For more
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