

## Understanding College Student Mental Health: Stress, depression, stigma and religiosity

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## GENERAL CONFERENCE Adventist Health Ministries Adventist Health Ministries

## Depression rates have been increasing amongst college students for several years.

Our SDA college students are not immune to these challenges. More than half do not get the help they need primarily due to the stigma of admitting they have a problem. This poster is sharing information from three studies conducted on an SDA college campus.



Being only partially committed to Christ increased the chance of being depressed, compared to being fully committed or completely rejecting Christ.

Follow up focus groups with young adult SDA students were conducted later in the year. Some themes were identified to better understand these issues. They report there is a good awareness of the importance of mental health and where to get help, but there is a stigma to admitting you have a problem and need help. Religion can be a helpful thing in setting standards for behaviors and is a way to cope with the stress of being a college student, but shouldn't be forced. If SDA young adults are feeling coerced into religious behaviors, it could lead to rebellion, excessive guilt, and feeling oppressed which can increase symptoms of depression.







Based on these studies, it is recommended that those who work with young adults be more understanding of the unique stressors they are facing and support their spiritual growth without them feeling forced.

They want to be an treated like adults and be given choices on how to express their spirituality. There needs to be open dialogue about their religious concerns and support for coping with their emotional distress while in college. In addition, college students could benefit from knowledge and support in finding a healthy balance with managing responsibilities, social life, and personal self-care. By openly talking about mental health challenges that many are facing, it can help address the stigma surround those issues.

## ACTACAS -

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Scan the QR Code to learn more about college students mental health.





