

How to host a Stress Relief Event on campus

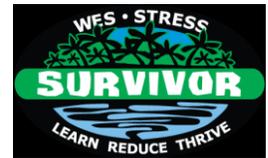
This handout was designed to assist UB student leaders and Campus Living parapro staff to create your own stress relief events. Stress relief events can be as big or small as you wish. Below are suggested activities. You can select one or more of these for your event.

Who can help me to plan my event?

Wellness Education Services (WES), UB's health promotion office, located at 114 Student Union can help

Resources available:

- Wellness grants for Student Organizations (<http://www.student-affairs.buffalo.edu/shs/stugrant.php>)
- Stress Less website <http://wellness.buffalo.edu/stress> and Sleep website <http://wellness.buffalo.edu/sleep/>
- Online "Student Self-Care Manual" <http://wellnessed.buffalo.edu/stresmgmt.php>
- Stress Survivor Kit for checkout (WES provides everything you need to present a program/workshop yourself, including workshop outline, program ideas, supplies, and handouts)
- Giveaways for your program/workshop, like stress balls or aromatherapy lotion
- Free wellness and stress reduction related handouts
- Stress relief art activity ideas and worksheets, like mandalas
- Large-scale "Chill Out" event in the SU lobby at the end of each semester



Please contact Sharlynn Daun-Barnett at sd62@buffalo.edu to help you plan your event. You can also submit a program request for a Stress Survivor Kit on our website at <https://www.student-affairs.buffalo.edu/shs/wes/diy.php>

What stress relief activities appeal to students?

Activity 1: Dog Therapy

Dogs are fun to be with and provide comfort – just petting a dog lowers blood pressure and stress. Their antics inspire humor, joy and a sense of carefreeness. These guidelines should be followed to successfully host a dog therapy event:

- Use only certified therapy dogs – these therapy dog teams (dog + human) are covered by insurance from the certifying agency, and the dogs have been thoroughly trained and tested
- Hold event in a central room away from foot traffic so students who are allergic or fearful can avoid the dogs
- Be sure to ask if dogs are allowed in the space you would like to host your event
- Arrange to host dogs in an area away from food (for example: if in one room, lay out food on one side, and put dogs on the other side with chairs in a circle)
- Assign a student to be a liaison and have them meet and assist the teams during the event
- Schedule students to help control the crowd
- Provide water bowls for the dogs. Do not provide treats – the owners prefer to bring their own



The local group that provides therapy dog teams is the SPCA's Paws for Love program. **Contact Debbie Braun at dlfb2@msn.com or 716-681-0744 to request therapy dog teams** – be sure to let her know the date, time, location,

contact person, and how many students you expect to attend so she can schedule the appropriate number of teams. Generally one team for every 25 students.

Debbie will send out a call for therapy dog teams to contact you directly. It is then **your responsibility** to coordinate with the team, send them directions and provide parking passes if needed, and make sure someone meets the teams on campus to guide them to the proper room. NOTE: THIS IS CRITICAL – many teams are unfamiliar with campus (especially the residence halls which can look like a maze) and can get easily lost. Also be sure to contact the team if your event is cancelled or the dates change – remember, they are volunteers and have set aside this time for you.

UB staff member Pam Rose (pmrose@buffalo.edu), who schedules therapy dog teams for the events in the UB Libraries, has developed these guidelines for hosting a dog therapy activity. Pam works with Therapy Animals of Western New York (TAWNY), whose website also has information about animal therapy at <http://therapyanimalswny.org/>.

Activity 2: Chair Massage

Studies of the benefits of massage demonstrate that it is an effective treatment for reducing stress, pain and muscle tension. You will need funding to pay for licensed massage therapists to come to your event. Massage therapists rarely donate their services. Depending on the size of the event and your funding, you can hire one or more massage therapists. Decide how long you would like to have each massage last-- 5 or 10 minutes each is recommended.



Contact Information:

Renee Wieberg, Corporate Wellness Services, 126 Lackawanna Avenue, Sloan NY 14212
Cost- \$60/hour plus \$25 traveling fee –per therapist (minimum of 2 hours for each therapist you hire)
716-835-7084; 716-912-1762 (cell); cwsrg@yahoo.com; www.buffalochairmassage.com

Activity 3: Arts and Crafts

Artistic expression can free your mind from stressful thoughts and offer a study break. After being focused on a craft, students may feel more relaxed. Some ideas include: coloring pages, creating with Play-doh, water color painting, making stress balls, making your own air fresheners and tie dying shirts. You can consult with Sharlynn in the WES office for more ideas and possibly apply for a Wellness grant to fund your project.

Activity 4: Quick and Healthy Study Snacks

Eating smart can improve your memory, energy levels, sleep and attitude. It is important to eat breakfast and have several meals throughout the day to perform at your best. It is also good to know the traps to avoid that can zap your energy like skipping meals, drinking “energy drinks,” or having too much coffee, soda, candy or high fat foods.

Below are suggested snacks students can sample at your event. Wellness Education Services can provide Nutrition Program handouts to supplement your program too. Contact WES dietician Janice Cochran at jcochran@buffalo.edu for assistance. Please note, these suggestions are from Wegmans, but you can use any brand or variety that you would like.

Vegetables and Hummus: Baby-cut carrots, 16 oz. (or other sliced veges) and family size Sabra hummus

Fruit Kabobs: Wegmans Family Pack Tropical Fruit Bowl (you can pre-order this in advance through catering if you are ordering multiple bowls) and Sunbeam bamboo skewers

Yogurt Parfaits: Fresh berries (or other fruit), Low-fat Vanilla Yogurt, 32 oz., and granola cereal for topping