

Date: July 7, 2020

To: Iowa State employees

From: Kristi Darr, Interim Vice President for University Human Resources  
Dawn Bratsch-Prince, Associate Provost for Faculty

Subject: EAP enhancements ahead; Interactive mental health training available for ISU employees

**On-site and virtual counseling services for fall 2020**

University Human Resources is pleased to share that we have collaborated with our [Employee Assistance Program](#) (EAP) provider, [EFR Employee & Family Resources](#), to offer confidential on-site and virtual counseling sessions through our EAP program for the fall 2020 semester so that these resources are more accessible for you and your family. Stay tuned for more details. EAP is available 24/7 and offers a wide variety of services.

**Online simulation training for mental health support**

Now more than ever, university faculty and staff are facing unprecedented stressors and anxiety in our lives. At ISU, we care about your health and well-being and continue to look for opportunities to support your overall [well-being](#) including mental and emotional health. At this same time, college students around the nation are struggling with their mental health. Nearly 40% of college students have symptoms of depression that impact their performance, and more than 1,000 suicides occur on college campuses each year. On top of those daunting figures, only 40% of students with a mental illness will seek help. You don't have to be a licensed professional to support your colleagues or our students as they navigate the college experience. As employees at Iowa State University, we are in a position to engage with students and raise awareness of the resources available to them.

With the leadership of ISU WellBeing and Student Wellness, we are pleased to announce that Iowa State has partnered with a health simulation company called Kognito to implement an online experiential learning mental health training, At-Risk for Faculty & Staff. This training is provided to help our employees learn to notice signs of distress, use techniques to discuss concerns with others and, if necessary, refer students or colleagues to appropriate resources. Our goal is to empower our university community to be there for each other.

The Kognito training lets you practice these challenging conversations at your own pace through role-play with virtual students and has been shown to increase the number of student referrals to counseling. At-risk is listed in the Suicide Prevention Resource Center's Best Practices Registry. While this training is not required, I strongly encourage you to participate and invite your colleagues too, as well. Our strength is found in our community and these conversations can change lives!

A student-focused Kognito program is also being launched simultaneously through ISU Student Health and Wellness. The simulation training provides similar learning exercises and interactive role playing scenarios in an effort to help students identify and engage with those who may be emotionally distressed.

To complete the At-Risk for Faculty and Staff experiential learning mental health training, visit [Learn@ISU](#), log in with your ISU ID and search the ISU WellBeing catalog with the keyword “at-risk.”

As a reminder, many well-being activities are included in the [Adventure2](#) program. Watch for an Adventure2 Challenge for this training coming soon!

For general inquiries, please contact ISU WellBeing at [wellbeing@iastate.edu](mailto:wellbeing@iastate.edu). For technical support, please visit the [Kognito Support Center](#) or send an email to [support@kognito.com](mailto:support@kognito.com).