



SCOPE Tip of the Week Member Newsletter

August 27th, 2013

Addressing Basic Needs

As I've mentioned in a past Tip of the Week, an essential part of prevention education is understanding the needs of the students you intend to help. At Western Kentucky University, I began to notice a number of my counseling clients running out of money near the end of the semester. For many, this kept them from being able to purchase food. Since I was unable to loan or give money personally because of my role as their counselor, I struggled with a way to help this problem.

To address this need at WKU, I created a food pantry with a social work graduate student who had worked at the center during the previous semester. It was a rewarding experience, both professionally and personally, and one that reminded me that students may not always be presenting to us the full scope of their needs. If a student is hungry, homeless or unsafe, they cannot begin to reach their personal or academic potential. We need to be aware and cognizant of co-occurring issues to the healthy and safety concerns we work to prevent.

There is also an opportunity for continued collaboration and dialogue among departments, if you endeavor to learn more about any support programs available on your campus. Your institution may offer micro-loans for books or subsidized meal plans for students in need. Also, be sure to seek out community agencies, service providers and resources for expert consultation and local knowledge.

Find a local food bank: <http://feedingamerica.org/foodbank-results.aspx>

For more information about the WKU food bank: <https://www.facebook.com/WkuFoodPantry>

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