



reCAPS

Counseling & Psychological Services
University of California, Santa Cruz

CAPS: More than Just Counseling!

What is the first thing that comes to mind when you hear *Counseling & Psychological Services (CAPS)*? It may be one-on-one counseling. However, CAPS offers a wide variety of services besides counseling, some of which could be the best fit to address your particular situation.

For instance, some students just want a short one-time conversation to get advice, support, or information, such as when someone is having trouble making a deci-

sion or had a fight with a roommate. In these situations, Let's Talk is a great option: Offered four afternoons a week at various locations around campus, Let's Talk provides a drop-in space for students to have a short consultation with a counselor.

Another option for getting one-time help is through one of our workshops. Our Wellness Wednesdays happen every week from 3 to 4 pm and address topics such as self-compassion, mindful-

ness, thought patterns, positive psychology, and academic focus. We also offer several Peer Educator-led workshops every quarter on stress, helping a friend, and other topics.

When someone has a serious or complicated mental health or substance use issue, professional help is the best option. However, for things like stress management, mild mood problems, test anxiety, and other such issues, self-help resources can

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All About CAPS

Counseling & Psychological Services (CAPS) offers confidential mental health services to registered UCSC students all year:

- Helpful workshops, trainings, and self-help tools
- A variety of therapy and support groups
- Let's Talk drop-in consultations
- Brief individual and couples counseling
- Referrals to on- and off-campus resources
- Crisis services in person Mon–Fri 8 am–5 pm and by phone 24/7 at (831) 459-2628

To make an appointment, call (831) 459-2628 or stop by (Student Health Center, East Wing, 2nd floor) weekdays between 8 am and 5 pm. To learn more, visit our [website](#), check out the [CAPS blog](#), and like us on [Facebook](#)!



Groups and educational events are just some of the services CAPS provides.

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be useful. CAPS offers several self-help tools. One is WellTrack, an online program and app addressing some common issues. Using a UCSC email address, you can sign up to use WellTrack for free! CAPS also offers many other self-help resources, such as podcasts, handouts, and other tools on our [website](#).

A group is great when your concerns involve relationships or you just want the support of other students and to feel less alone. Some CAPS groups are “drop in” (meaning you can come any week you want) and others require

sign up and run for a quarter.

CAPS also provides psychiatry (medication services) for students whose conditions might benefit from a prescription. Our psychiatry staff work as a team with our counseling staff and other Student Health Center clinicians.

Sometimes CAPS refers students off campus for open-ended therapy or other services we typically don’t offer. We may also provide off-campus referrals when there is a long wait for on-campus appointments or after a student has already had a round of brief therapy through CAPS but wants to receive more therapy. We can

provide referral suggestions and tips for connecting with an off-campus clinician. (See the “Dear CAPS” piece, below.)

We offer many other services, too, like this newsletter, our [Facebook page](#) and [blog](#), and special educational events. We also have a massage chair in our waiting area that students can use on a first-come, first-served basis during business hours. Check out our [website](#) to learn more about all of the services mentioned in this article, and more!

Dear CAPS,

How can I find the right off-campus therapist for me?

—Shopping Around

Students seek off-campus therapy for different reasons: Some prefer or need open-ended therapy (rather than brief therapy, which is what CAPS typically provides). Others are seeking a type of treatment not offered on campus. Still others have already done a round of brief therapy through CAPS and would like to continue therapy. Finally, some choose this option when CAPS is backed up and there’s a long wait for first appointments.

You can get referrals from CAPS by calling us or stopping by to set up a short phone or in-person appointment, where a counselor will get information about your concerns and give you contact information for off-campus clinicians and tips on connecting with them.

You can also search for referrals yourself by using the [CAPS online database](#) or calling your insurance company.



Here are a few tips for choosing a therapist:

1. When calling, ask questions to get a feel for their experience, personality, and style. You may decide to talk with several before picking one to meet with.
2. Often, you’ll reach voicemail. Leave a clear message, including your name, number, and

reason for calling. Answer your phone and check that your voicemail is not full, or you may miss the therapist calling back. If they don’t call in a few business days, call again.

3. Some students feel it’s important to have a therapist who matches one of their identities (e.g., sexual orientation, ethnicity), and others don’t. If the therapist’s identity is important to you, make this part of your search process.
4. A good “personality fit” is one of the most important factors in successful therapy. You should feel comfortable and safe enough to open up. If you are choosing between several therapists who are all qualified (e.g., licensed, experienced with the issues you want to work on), go with the one with whom you feel the most comfortable.

Wellness Tip: The Healing Power of the Arts

For all of recorded history, people have engaged in some sort of art—cave drawings, body and face ornamentation, sculpture, dance, portraiture, music. There is something magical about creating, and also about witnessing, art.

Mental health practitioners and other healers recognize that there are many ways for people to get help, connect with others, cope, and heal. The arts provide many tools for mental health and wellness. The arts often provide paths to understanding and expressing emotions and connecting with spirituality that are harder to reach through talking or medication.

While CAPS does not specialize in art therapy, we do provide a few ways for students to explore using the arts for healing. One is through the Mindfulness Arts program at the Ethnic Resource Centers: Every Thursday from 4 to 5 p.m., trained CAPS Peer Educators are at the Ethnic Resource Centers to facili-

tate creative mindfulness activities with students on a drop-in basis and answer questions about CAPS, mental health, and wellness. Students can color and create mandalas as a way to build mindfulness and calm their thoughts.

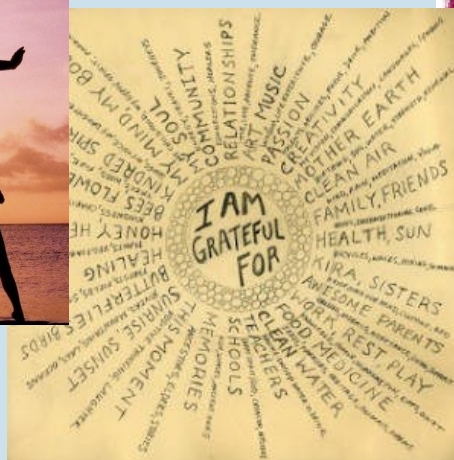
CAPS also organizes educational events throughout the year, some of which involve the arts. For example, CAPS partnered with Art With Impact in November to present a workshop on short films with mental health themes. Film and other forms of storytelling are often a powerful means of expressing feelings. You can watch a variety of short films on mental health on the [Art With Impact website](#). And, if you are a budding filmmaker, you can submit your 5-minute film to Art With Impact: A winner is selected every month and receives a cash prize.

CAPS can also help you connect with an off-campus therapist who provides expressive arts therapy.

There are several in the area, and many are covered by SHIP or other insurance.

You can explore the healing power of the arts outside of a therapeutic setting: Take a dance or music class, get some crayons or colored pencils and take time every day to doodle, sing in the shower or with your friends, or print out mandalas and coloring pages to color. Below are a few websites where you can explore your creative side and learn more about expressive art therapy:

- [American Art Therapy Association](#)
- [American Dance Therapy Association](#)
- [American Music Therapy Association](#)
- [Binaural beats apps for sleep, relaxation, and meditation](#) (Google Play app site—you can also search the Apple app store)
- [Free, printable coloring pages](#)



Left, dance therapy. Center, gratitude mandala. Right, ©2014 "Sensory integration" from the journal of C. Malchiodi, Ph.D.



Upcoming Events

See our [website calendar](#) and [Facebook page](#) for more upcoming events.

PEER-LED WORKSHOPS: Our trained Peer Educators are leading several workshops this quarter on stress management and supporting a friend who is having a hard time. These workshops are free, and no sign-up is required. All happen at the CAPS main office in our group room. Free pizza at the “Stress Less” workshops! Visit our [website](#) for dates and times!

LET’S TALK: Let’s Talk is a drop-in space where you can have a brief, confidential, chat with a professional CAPS counselor. It’s free, and you don’t need an appointment—just walk in! Let’s Talk is held four afternoons a week at different, convenient locations around campus when classes are in session (not held during finals week or summer). All registered undergraduate and graduate UCSC students are welcome to any location of Let’s Talk. Read more and see the current schedule on our [website](#).

WELLNESS WORKSHOPS: CAPS offers a different wellness workshop every Wednesday, 3 to 4 pm when classes are in session (not during finals week or summer), at the Student Health Center Mural Room. These

hour-long workshops provide info and tools for being mentally healthier. Topics include self-compassion, mindfulness, healthy thought patterns, how positive psychology relates to academic success, and improving academic focus. Read more on our [website](#) and [Facebook page](#).

ANXIETY TOOLBOX: This is a three-part workshop series that provides research-proven tools to help you better understand and cope with anxiety. Each of the three hour-long workshops provides info and experiential skills. Series are full for fall quarter, but more will be offered in winter quarter. Read more on our [website](#), and call us to get more information and sign up at (831) 459-2628.

MINDFUL LIVING: This is a three-part workshop series that uses mindfulness-based tools to increase insight and self-awareness and build coping. The skills learned apply to a range of issues, including managing stress and difficult emotions. Each of the three hour-long workshops provides info and experiential skills. Series are full for fall quarter, but more will be offered in winter quarter. Read more on our [website](#), or call us to get more info and sign up at (831) 459-2628.