



# reCAPS

Counseling & Psychological Services  
University of California, Santa Cruz

## All About reCAPS

Welcome to UC Santa Cruz's Counseling & Psychological Services (CAPS) newsletter, *reCAPS*. We aim to provide you with helpful wellness and mental health infor-

mation and updates on CAPS events and services. We publish *reCAPS* once a month during the fall, winter, and spring quarters. Archived issues can be found on our [website](#).

If you have any suggestions for or comments about *reCAPS*, feel free to contact the editor, Blair Davis, Psy.D., at (831) 459-5883 or [bjdavis@ucsc.edu](mailto:bjdavis@ucsc.edu).

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## A Wide Range of Services at CAPS

Ask students or staff what is the first thing that comes to mind when they hear *Counseling & Psychological Services (CAPS)*. Often, what they think of is individual counseling.

However, CAPS offers a wide variety of services besides one-on-one therapy, 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. This may be the case when someone is having trouble making a decision, just needs a little

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CAPS staff, September 2016.

## 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](#)!

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emotional support, or wants to find out more about services on and off campus. In these situations, Let's Talk is a great option. Let's Talk is a service offered by CAPS four afternoons a week at various locations around campus. Students can just drop in to Let's Talk and have a short consultation with a professional CAPS counselor. No sign-up is needed, and it's more casual than counseling at CAPS.

Another option for getting one-time help is through one of our Wellness workshops or a workshop led by our amazing Peer Educators. Our Wellness workshops are held at CAPS every Wednesday afternoon on topics such as self-compassion, mindfulness, thought patterns, positive psychology, and academic focus. Our peer-led workshops, held throughout the year, address stress management and other subjects.

When someone is seriously depressed or having other intense or complicated mental health or substance use issues, 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 be really useful. CAPS offers a few different self-help options. One is a service called WellTrack, an online program to address many common issues. With the CAPS access code (UCSCCAPS), you can use

WellTrack for free! CAPS also offers a wide range of self-help resources and tools on our [website](#).

A group is a great choice if your concerns have to do with relationships with other people or you just want the support of other students and to feel less alone. In a group, you get ideas and support from others who can relate to things you are going through. Some groups are "drop in" (meaning you can come when you want and don't need to sign up), and others require that you sign up and commit to attending for a quarter.

Sometimes, CAPS refers students off campus for open-ended therapy, intensive treatment for mental health or substance use problems, psychological testing, medication, or other services. CAPS makes referrals when students needs services that aren't available on campus or want or need ongoing therapy (as CAPS typically pro-

vides brief therapy). There are also times when therapy appointments on evenings or weekends are more convenient, something CAPS does not offer but many off-campus therapists do. Also, sometimes there is a wait time of several weeks at CAPS for a first appointment when we get really busy. Usually it's faster to get a therapy appointment off campus. CAPS can provide suggestions about off-campus referrals as well as other services students might need on or off campus.

CAPS offers other services, too, like this newsletter, our [Facebook page](#) and [blog](#), and special outreach events, to name a few. Check out our [website](#) to learn more about all of the services mentioned in this article, and more!

Former CAPS doctoral interns at a depression screening event.



## Dear CAPS,

*How can I have fun on Halloween without things getting out of hand?*

—Smart Partier

When celebrating Halloween this year, be smart! Legal trouble, alcohol poisoning, and other consequences of not using your head can bring your good time to an abrupt halt. Here are a few tips to keep you safe and smart this Halloween.

- For safety, don't wear a costume that includes anything that could be confused with a real weapon, especially a gun.
- Avoid costumes that are uncomfortable or hazardous (e.g., a mask you can't see out of).
- Out of respect for others, don't dress up as someone from another race or ethnicity or wear a costume based on cultural stereotypes. Read more about the "Culture, Not a Costume" campaign [here](#).
- If you are under 21, avoid drinking—you could get in trouble on campus or even arrested. Not fun!
- Use the buddy system: Travel in a group, and never go off with someone you don't know. Keep an eye on each other so you can help out your friends if they get into trouble.
- Keep your cell phone handy in case you get separated from your group and/or you get into a sketchy situation.
- Check with your college or other campus groups for fun stuff to do that doesn't involve drinking or drugs.

If you are of legal drinking age ...

- Don't leave your drink unattended, and never accept a drink from someone you don't know.
- If you or someone else is making mixed drinks, measure how much alcohol is being used so you can keep track of how much you've had.
- Know your limits! The point is to have fun, not to be the drunkest one at the party. Plus, your friends want to have fun, too, not be your babysitter.

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"What if you could talk to the boy who scooped out your insides right now. What would you say?"

## Upcoming Events

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

**CAPS GROUPS:** CAPS is offering a variety of therapy and support groups this fall! A few weekly groups are still accepting new members, and we also have several drop-in groups, meaning you can come when you want to rather than having to sign up. Check out our [Groups web page](#) or call us at (831) 459-2628 for more info.

**MOVIES FOR MENTAL HEALTH:** CAPS is partnering with Art With Impact to offer this event, which features short student-made films on mental health, a panel discussion and free dinner! Thursday, Nov. 3rd, 5:30–7:30 pm in the Student Health Center Mural Room. Free, no sign-up required.

**EMBRACE YOUR LIFE:** EYL is a three-part workshop series that uses mindfulness-based tools to increase insight and self-awareness and build coping. The skills learned in EYL apply to a range of issues, including managing stress and difficult emotions. Each hour-long workshop provides info and experiential skills. EYL series start every week this quarter on different days

and times. Read more on our [website](#), or call us to get more info and sign up at (831) 459-2628.

**WELLNESS WORKSHOPS:** CAPS offers a different wellness workshop every Wednesday, 3:30–4:30 pm, at our central office. 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.

**LET'S TALK:** Let's Talk is a drop-in space where you can have a brief, confidential, one-time 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 from 1 to 3 pm at the following locations: Mondays, Bay Tree Building, 3rd floor (near Ethnic Resource Centers); Tuesdays, The Cove at Cowell (mobile building near the Provost House); Wednesdays, Cantu Queer Center; and Thursdays, Graduate Commons in Quarry Plaza. All registered undergraduate and graduate students are welcome to all locations of Let's Talk. Read more on our [website](#).

## Wellness Tip: Exercise for Mental Health

Regular exercise is good for the body. But did you know that it is also an effective way to improve your mental health? It can have a positive impact on stress and many other mental health issues. It also can help improve memory and sleep and boost overall mood. Research indicates that even modest amounts of exercise can make a difference—you don't have to go all out to feel the effects.

Take depression, for example: A number of studies show that exercise is often as effective as medication in reducing and preventing mild to moderate depression. One reason is that exercise promotes neural growth and reduces inflammation in the brain. What's more,

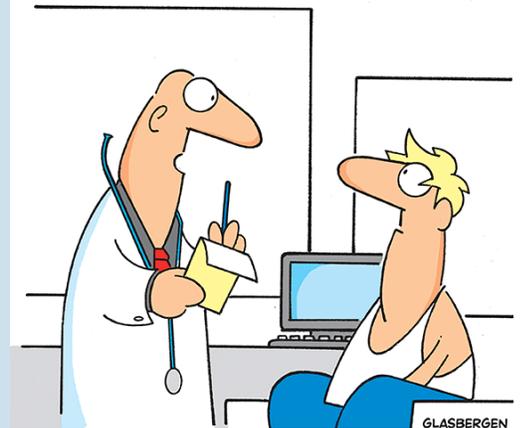
exercise releases endorphins and can boost energy, relieve tension, and serve as a distraction from thoughts that feed depression and worry. Exercise is good for reducing anxiety and stress, for similar reasons.

Did you know that exercise also helps with ADHD? Because physical activity boosts dopamine, norepinephrine, and serotonin, it can improve focus and attention, similar to how ADHD meds work.

Starting or amping up an exercise routine can seem daunting. Begin with activities that are not too strenuous for a few minutes a day a few days a week and build up the intensity, frequency, and length of workouts gradually.

Check with a medical professional before starting a new exercise routine if you have any injuries or health conditions.

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"I'm prescribing exercise. Think of it as a stress pill that takes 30 minutes to swallow."