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NEW mtvU & ASSOCIATED PRESS POLL SHOWS HOW STRESS, WAR, THE ECONOMY & OTHER FACTORS ARE AFFECTING COLLEGE STUDENTS' MENTAL HEALTH

New York, NY – March 19, 2008 – [mtvU](http://mtvU.com), MTV's 24-hour college network, in partnership with The Associated Press, today unveiled the results of a new poll examining the impact stress, mental health struggles, the Iraq war, slumping economy, campus security and other issues are having on today's college students. The study shows that despite a battery of serious pressures, students are generally happy – though stress levels run high on campus, and a majority report they have been unable to finish school work and even withdrawn from friends because of stress. Further, a distressing number of students say they've had suicidal thoughts and intentionally injured themselves. The wars in Iraq and Afghanistan have personally touched half of all college students, heaping more stress atop worries about academic performance and a looming recession. Detailed findings include:

I. HAPPINESS VS. STRESS

In the face of stress and uncertainty, nearly two-thirds of college students say they're generally happy, with the same percentage reporting they have enjoyed life most or all of the time during the past three months. Six in ten were hopeful about the future during this same time period. And despite recent high-profile campus tragedies, 86% say they feel very or somewhat safe at their school.

At the same time, the study shows that stress is taking a serious toll on the everyday lives of college students.

- 80% feel stress in their daily lives, with 39% feeling it frequently (45% of females and 34% of males).
- In the past three months, 63% say they've been so stressed they couldn't get school work done and over half (55%) didn't want to hang out with friends or participate socially because of stress.

- More than a third felt like a failure, or that they had let people down, and 42% felt lonely during this same time period.

II. LEADING STRESSORS

Staying on top of school work and getting good grades are the most prevalent stressors on college campuses, with 74% and 71%, respectively, saying these pressures contributed a lot or some what to their daily stress in the past three months. Money matters followed close behind, with 62% saying financial concerns drove a lot or some of their daily stress. Family issues and relationships were next, with roughly half deriving stress from these factors. Spring Break also registered, with nearly half (45%) saying they worry about being in shape for Spring Break and the same percentage concerned they won't have enough money to enjoy it.

III. EFFECTS OF WAR IN IRAQ

On the five-year anniversary of the Iraq war, half of college students say they know somebody who has been mobilized to serve in either Iraq or Afghanistan. Of those personally touched by the war:

- 55% say they experienced some/a lot of stress related to this person's service.
- 57% think the U.S. government has done a somewhat or very poor job of providing veterans returning from Iraq and Afghanistan with medical and psychological treatment.
- 66% think it is somewhat/very difficult for service members to readjust in the U.S. after they have served.

68% of all college students believe the U.S. made a mistake in going to war with Iraq.

IV. DEPRESSION, SUICIDAL THOUGHTS AND GENERAL MENTAL HEALTH

Stress, in and of itself, is not always a bad thing and can often be a motivating factor when managed correctly. When stress becomes excessive and impacts a student's ability to function, it can have severe consequences, especially for students with a mental health condition. The mtvU/AP poll reaffirms that mental health struggles are common amongst the college audience and continued efforts are needed to educate students on resources they can access for help. Of those surveyed:

- 34% felt depressed in the last three months.
- 8% have intentionally injured or cut themselves in the same time frame.
- 16% have a friend who has talked about ending their life in the past year and 9% have contemplated suicide themselves.
 - Among those with a diagnosed mental health condition, the numbers rise dramatically, with 23% reporting they have seriously considered suicide (vs. 6% undiagnosed).
 - Of the 9% who said they have considered suicide in the past year, half said they have considered talking to a counselor or professional, but only a quarter have actually received such help.

56% of students are confident where or whom they could turn to for help if they were suffering serious emotional distress – their top three selections are friends, parents and siblings – however, 52% are not too familiar or not at all familiar with their on-campus counseling resources. 26% have considered seeking professional help since they began college, but only 15% actually have. Also, of those diagnosed with a mental health condition, 44% have encountered at least some difficulty in following a treatment plan while at college.

Additional findings from this poll can be found at <http://www.halfofus.com/press.aspx>.

The mtvU and Associated Press study caps a month of special mtvU programming designed to address the many unique stressors college students encounter this time of year – including mid-terms, starting their careers, feeling out of shape at Spring Break and more. These latest efforts are part of mtvU and The Jed Foundation’s ongoing, Emmy-nominated “Half of Us” campaign, designed to reduce the student suicide rate, fight the stigma of mental health on college campuses and connect students to the help they need. The backbone of the campaign is www.HalfOfUs.com, with an abundance of educational and support resources. The site also features poignant testimonials from Mary J. Blige, Pete Wentz of Fall Out Boy, Billy Corgan of The Smashing Pumpkins, Max Bemis of Say Anything, Brittany Snow, independent hip hop MC Cage and college students from diverse backgrounds openly discussing their personal struggles with serious mental health issues.

Methodology

The mtvU/Associated Press poll was conducted February 28 – March 6, 2008 and included interviews with 2,253 undergraduate students at 40 randomly chosen four-year schools across the country. The survey was conducted for the Associated Press and mtvU by Edison Media Research of Somerville, N.J., under the direction and supervision of AP’s polling unit. The poll has a margin of error of +/- 3.0%.

About The Associated Press

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About mtvU

Broadcast to more than 750 college campuses and via top cable distributors in 700 college communities nationwide, mtvU reaches upwards of 9 million U.S. college students – making it the largest, most comprehensive television network just for college students. Twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week, mtvU can be seen in the dining areas, fitness centers, student lounges and dorm rooms of campuses throughout the U.S, as well as on cable systems from Charter Communications, Verizon FiOS TV, Suddenlink Communications, AT&T u-Verse and nearly 70 others. mtvU is dedicated to every aspect of college life, reaching students everywhere they are: on-air, online and on campus. mtvU programs music videos from emerging artists that can’t be seen anywhere else, news, student life features and initiatives that give college students the tools to advance positive social change. mtvU is always on campus, with more than 500 events per year, including exclusive concerts, giveaways, shooting mtvU series and more. For more information about mtvU, and a complete programming schedule, visit www.mtvU.com.

mtvU also owns and operates the College Media Network, the largest interactive network of online college newspapers in the US, and RateMyProfessors.com, the Internet’s largest listing of collegiate professor ratings. The College Media Network comprises 550 campus publications that serve institutions including Brown University, the University of Illinois, the University of Southern California, the University of Texas at Austin and Duke University, with a combined enrollment of over 5.5 million students, reaching an average of 5 million unique users each month. RateMyProfessors.com reaches approximately 2.9 million college students each month, via the site’s more than 6.6 million student-generated ratings of over 1,000,000 college professors.

MTV Networks, a unit of Viacom (NYSE: VIA, VIA.B), is one of the world's leading creators of programming and content across all media platforms. MTV Networks, with more than 150 channels worldwide, owns and operates the following television programming services - MTV: MUSIC TELEVISION, MTV2, VH1, mtvU, NICKELODEON, NICK at NITE, COMEDY CENTRAL, TV LAND, SPIKE TV, CMT, NOGGIN/THE N, VH1 CLASSIC, MTVN INTERNATIONAL and THE DIGITAL SUITE FROM MTV NETWORKS, a package of 13 digital services, all of these networks trademarks of MTV Networks. MTV Networks connects with its audiences through its robust consumer products businesses and its more than 300 interactive properties worldwide, including online, broadband, wireless and interactive television services and also has licensing agreements, joint ventures, and syndication deals whereby all of its programming services can be seen worldwide.

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