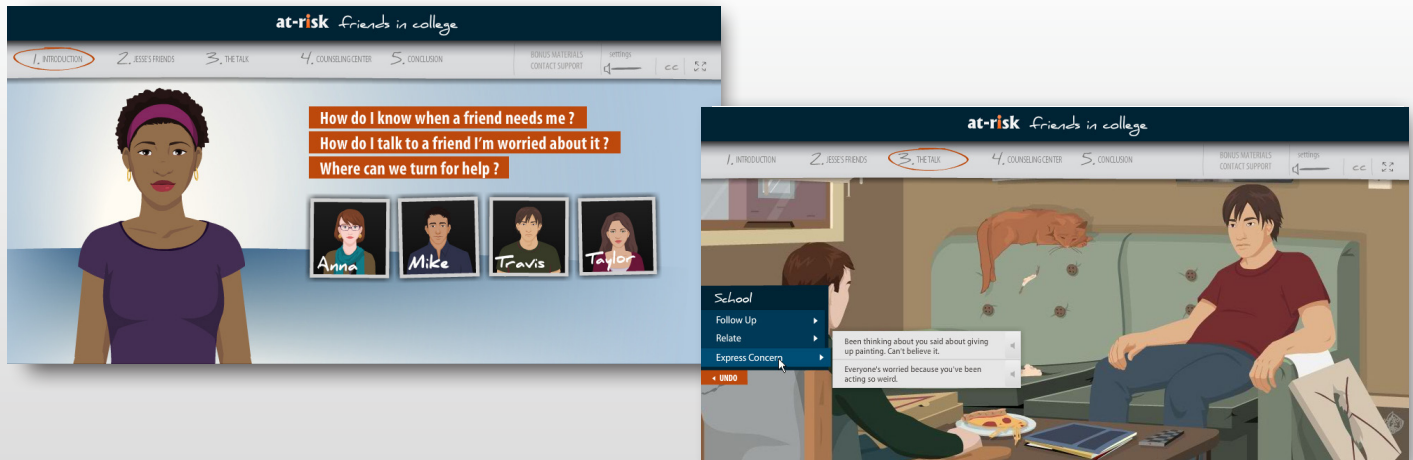


at-risk

for University Students

Identify and Refer Students in Mental Distress



OVERVIEW

30% of all college students report feeling so depressed it is difficult for them to function

6% of college students say they have seriously considered suicide in the past year

Close to 80% of students who commit suicide go unnoticed

At-Risk for University Students is an online, interactive gatekeeper training program designed for students and student leaders. The training consists of a 30-minute simulation in which students learn the common signs of psychological distress and how best to approach an at-risk student for referral to the counseling center. Using educational gaming technology, the simulation provides an engaging learning experience for today's millennial students who have grown up on video games.

SAMHSA SPRC/AFSP Best Practices Registry

At-Risk for University Students is listed in the Suicide Prevention Resource Center and American Foundation for Suicide Prevention Best Practices Registry for suicide prevention programs. The *At-Risk* programs are the first and only simulation-based training programs to be included in this prestigious national registry.

Unlike any other Web-based gatekeeper training program, *At-Risk* uses a virtual environment to enhance the learning experience. Users assume the role of a university student and engage in a simulated conversation with a fully animated student who shows signs of depression, suicidal thoughts, anxiety and drug abuse. By providing learners with hands-on practice, they become more confident and proficient in handling similar situations in real life.

CONVERSATION SIMULATIONS

In these role-play scenarios, the learner practices talking with a student, using open-ended questions, reflective listening and other motivational interviewing techniques to achieve several goals:

- Broach the topic of psychological distress
 - Motivate the student to seek help
 - Avoid common pitfalls, such as attempting to diagnose the problem or giving unwarranted advice
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INSTITUTIONAL BENEFITS

At-Risk for University Students provides a cost-effective solution that benefits academic institutions in several ways:

- Promotes early intervention
 - Increases student retention and academic performance
 - Reduces the stigma associated with mental illness
 - Increases visibility for campus mental health initiatives
 - Develops students' communication and intervention skills
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LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After completing the training, students will be better equipped to do the following:

- Identify common signs of mental distress, including verbal, behavioral and situational clues
- Apply best practices in approaching a friend or acquaintance showing signs of mental distress
- Understand how university counseling centers typically operate
- Identify and correct common misconceptions about counseling
- Contact their institution for help or for more information
- Recognize their own need for counseling services



CUSTOMIZATION AND SPECIAL FEATURES

At-Risk includes a number of components and other tools that can assist in marketing the product to stakeholders and learners:

Built-in Assessment

At-Risk is equipped with a built-in survey that collects feedback from your students about their experience with the course. A two-month follow-up survey also will be administered to collect longitudinal data.

Materials for On-Campus Promotion

At-Risk includes materials to assist in on-campus promotion of the course:

- Suggested language for an email to learners
- Customizable flyer
- PowerPoint presentation with guidelines
- An animated and narrated trailer about the program
- A list of suggested marketing strategies

Integration of Campus-Specific Information

Your school receives a customized “My Counseling Center” web page, where you can enter information about your counseling center and other campus resources. Users will be able to access/print this page while viewing the course.

24/7 Accessibility via the Web

Users can access *At-Risk* via a computer with internet access. The course saves the user’s progress along the way, thereby allowing users to complete it in multiple sittings.

Tracking

The course records the name and email address of each user as well as their progress throughout the course. This “Completion Report” is updated in real-time, and available to download from your Administrator Account.



TRAINING EFFICACY

National Study at 35 Universities

From September through December 2010, Kognito conducted a study among 944 students at 35 universities and colleges, which employed a quasi-experimental design to assess the effectiveness of *At-Risk for University Students*. Four hundred and three (43%) subjects were assigned to the experimental group and 541 (57%) were assigned to the control group. Sixty-eight percent of participants were women, 31% were men, and one was transgender (.4%). The average age of participants was 21.3 and 38% of participants were freshman. Subjects' gender, age and status as students were similar between the experimental and control groups.

Study results were analyzed using independent sample t-tests. Participants' responses in the experimental and control groups were compared on all dependent variables. Results were consistent and statistically significant at 0.01 level across demographic characteristics which suggest that *At-Risk for University Students* is effective for students regardless of age, gender, and school year as students.

The results of the study strongly suggest that:

1. *At-Risk* significantly increases students' ability to identify, approach and refer fellow students exhibiting signs of psychological distress, including depression, anxiety, and suicidal ideation
2. Students who complete *At-Risk* are more confident in their ability to help a suicidal student and are significantly more likely to intervene when faced with such a student
3. *At-Risk* is a highly engaging learning experience (based on course rating and the percentage of students who would recommend it to their friends)
4. *At-Risk* provides a realistic environment for practicing interacting with at-risk students

This study is the first phase of a comprehensive assessment being conducted by Kognito about the *At-Risk* series of gatekeeper training simulations. Future phases will include a comparison of *At-Risk* to other gatekeeper training programs, a longitudinal component to analyze changes in participants' behavior as gatekeepers over time, and an examination of responses to a situational judgment task to measure skill acquisition.

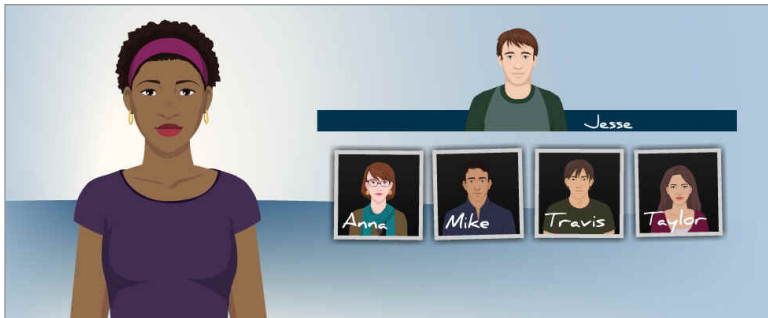
The result of this study will be submitted for inclusion in the SPRC evidence-based programs registry (Section 1) in February 2011, as well as for publication in several peer-reviewed journals.

A complete report of this study can be found at:

http://www.kognito.com/atrisk/us/kognito_survey_student_version.pdf

*Research Suggests:
At-Risk increases the
learner's ability to
effectively approach
and refer an at-risk
student*

WALKTHROUGH OF THE LEARNING EXPERIENCE



1 Identification

Learners are introduced to their peer coach, Morgan, who guides them through the simulation. Morgan is a highly relatable character with the persona of a typical Resident Assistant. She introduces another student named Jesse. Jesse has four good friends, but he's concerned that one of them is showing a lot of warning signs of emotional distress.



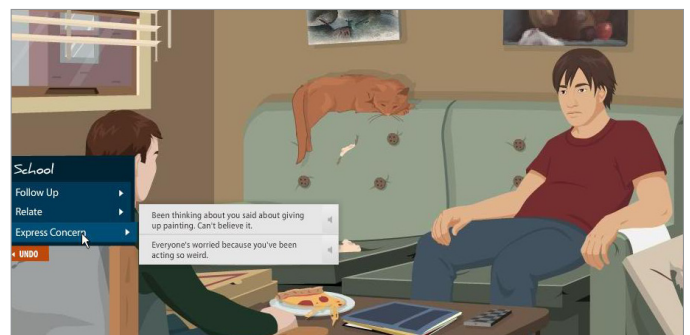
Learners are asked to explore four different social circumstances throughout the school year to locate warning signs related to Jesse's friends. Every time a learner discovers something that is a potential warning sign, they rate the warning sign in terms of severity. Each warning sign can be attributed to one of Jesse's friends, and by the end, the learner will have to decide which student is most at-risk.

The symptoms exhibited by the students reflect those that often indicate the most common and most severe psychological illnesses among young adults:

- Alcohol/Substance Abuse
- Depression
- Eating Disorders
- Bipolar Disorder
- Post Traumatic Stress Disorder
- Social Phobia
- Panic Disorder

2 Approach

Once the learner has correctly identified which of Jesse's four friends to speak with, they enter into Phase II of the course: Approach. A short activity teaches ideal times and locations to broach the topic, as well as strategies for deciding what wording to use to minimize the chance that the student will become overly defensive or aggressive.



Snapshot of Sample Conversation Menu

Once the learner has been briefed on these strategies, they begin an exercise to actually practice them. Learners engage Travis in a simulated conversation, using Jesse as their avatar. The learner navigates the conversation by choosing dialogue options that appear on-screen. When users make a selection, they hear it voiced by Jesse and watch the way Travis responds. Based on users' selections, other dialogue options will appear or disappear from the menu.



Snapshot of Advice Provided to User

Throughout the conversation, Morgan occasionally appears, offering feedback and advice. Here are some examples of what she might talk about:

- Using “I” statements
- Asking about specific behavior
- Engaging in active listening
- Asking about suicide directly, if it seems relevant



Scenarios provided to user to investigate friends' behaviors

3 Referral

Once Travis opens up and learners begin to understand what may be causing his behavior, the conversation is paused and Morgan reappears to discuss referral to the counseling center. She gives users an interactive quiz where they are asked questions about counseling services. These questions are designed to alleviate common misconceptions about counseling and provide information common to most college counseling centers. Once learners complete the quiz, they return to the conversation to refer Travis to a counselor. The same functionality exists here that existed in the first part of the conversation. The conversation ends when Travis agrees to go to the counseling center.

4 Completion

Once learners complete the course, they receive a certificate of completion. At that point, they are provided with access to a printable summary of best practices and asked to complete an online survey.

CONTACT INFORMATION

If you have any questions, please contact us at
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