

'How Are You Doing Right Now?' Survey Report



October 15, 2024

Prepared for VPSL Renson Alva by Department of Research and Advocacy

Overview

This survey ran on the UASU Perks platform, September 29-October 4, 2024, as part of the Marketing and Communications Department's public engagement. It reached 1,492 respondents.

- 29% were struggling with their mental health (bottom two ranks of a five-point scale). First- and second-year students, ALES students, Engineering students, and Native Studies students had the lowest average responses.
- 33% of respondents have already spoken to someone about their mental health this semester, higher than the 19% of respondents who haven't yet but intend to.
- 71% rated their mental health as 3 or lower on a scale of 1-5, with midterms approaching. This figure stands in contrast to the 29% who rated their mental health at a 4 or 5, highlighting a concern among students at this point in the semester.
- Respondents who felt that talking to someone about their mental health would not be beneficial also tended to rate their mental health lower at 1 or 2.
- On average, 47% of respondents are aware of the resources available for mental health support, including the Peer Support Centre, through the SU Health and Dental Plan, and the UofA Crisis Hub.

"With a month of classes behind you and midterms around the corner, how would you rate your mental health right now?"

- 5 (just peachy): 6%
- 4: 23%
- 3 (pretty mid): 42%
- 2: 19%
- 1 (I'm seriously struggling): 10%

The average response was 2.97. First- and second-year students had lower average responses than upper-year students (2.9 versus 3.0-3.1). The lowest average responses came from ALES (2.80), Engineering (2.85), and Native Studies (2.40).

"Do you think you would benefit from talking to someone about how you're feeling?"

- I think so, yes: 33%
- I don't know: 37%

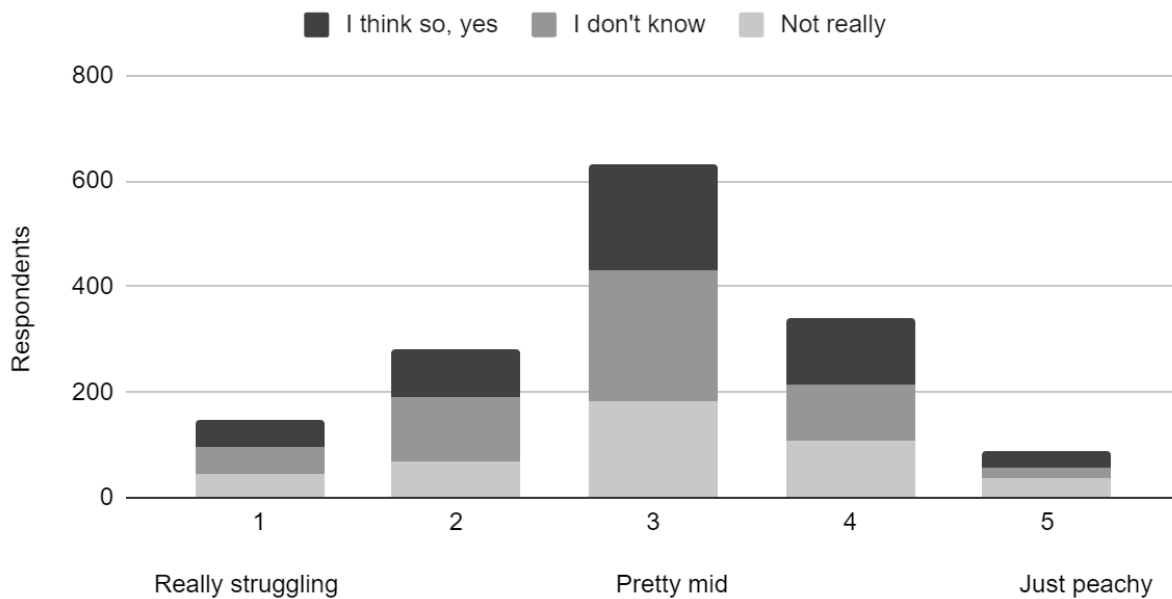
- Not really: 30%

'I think so, yes' respondents tended to increase by year of study (e.g. 31% of first-years, 38% of fourth-years).

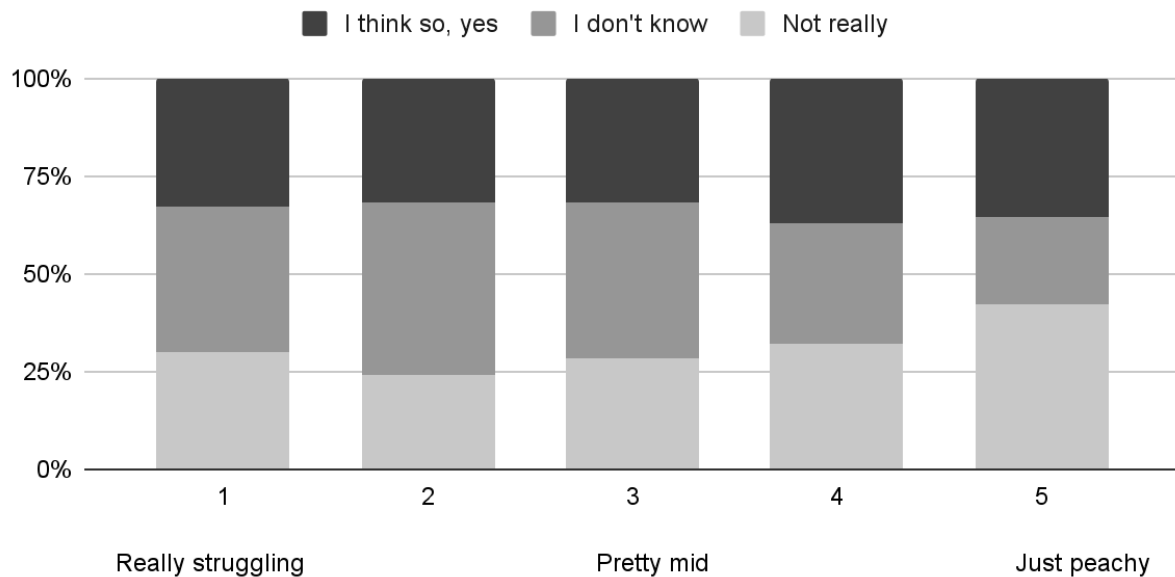
112 respondents felt they would not benefit *and* rated their mental health a 1 or 2 out of 5 in the previous question. These students were evenly distributed: they were not overrepresented in any particular faculty or year of study with any statistical significance.

Proportions stayed more or less consistent no matter how respondents had rated their mental health in the previous question. Students who feel they are doing well also still feel that they would benefit from talking to someone. Simultaneously and concerning, students who are struggling are not particularly more likely to feel they would benefit from talking to someone. This suggests that standard mental health awareness campaigns may not be enough; without other kinds of resources and supports, they may miss or fail to get through to a significant portion of students who are struggling with mental health.

"Do you think you would benefit from talking to someone about how you're feeling?"



"Do you think you would benefit from talking to someone about how you're feeling?" (100% stacked to show proportions)

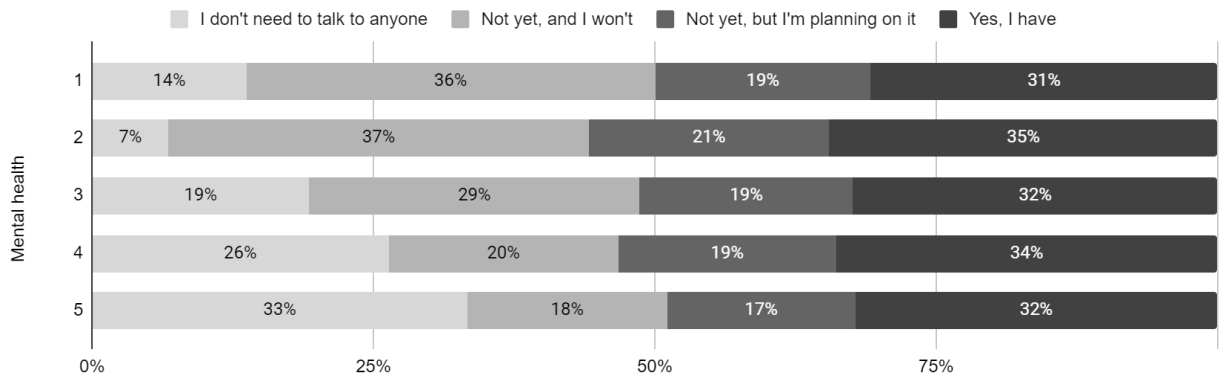


"Have you already talked to someone about your mental health this semester?"

- Yes, I have: 33%
- Not yet, but I'm planning on it: 19%
- Not yet, and I won't: 29%
- I don't need to talk to anyone: 19%

Rates of 'I don't need to talk to anyone' tended to be lower for early-year students (~17%) than for upper-year students (19-21%).

Rates of 'Yes, I have' and 'Not yet, but I'm planning on it' were consistent across self-assessed levels of mental health. Students who were struggling had high rates of 'Not yet, and I won't.'



"Did you know...?"

- "...that you can drop-in or make an appointment for confidential help from the Peer Support Centre? (uasu.ca/psc)" — Yes: 58%
- "...that your UASU's Health & Dental plan gives you 24/7 access to Empower Me, a confidential health and wellness service?" — Yes: 38%
- "...about the University of Alberta Crisis Hub (uab.ca/crisis) that can help connect you to the right campus or community support for your health and well-being?" — Yes: 46%