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Supporting students with mental health problems

The HOPES Program



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Overview

Development of the HOPES Program

Concept of the Program

- Group and Individual Counselling
- Curriculum

Network and Cooperation

Public-Relation

Evaluation



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Development of the Program

„Task Force“ of people involved with students with mental health problems in their professional practice:

Career counsellor, university psychological counselling service, psychiatric outpatient services, vocational training, student services (studierendenwerk), disability rights officer

Concept, Pilot Study, Finance

First group started spring term 2000



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Concept of the Program

To support students with mental health problems to continue their studies after an interruption for treatment

Weekly group sessions to support organisation and planning, teach study skills, to provide social exchange and support, to deal with remaining symptoms

Individual psychological counselling

Information concerning special conditions to compensate for disability



Group Curriculum

- Individual goals are developed and discussed in the group at the beginning during the course and at the end of each term
- Study skills are taught on demand of participants
- Participants can deliver presentations to practice speaking in front of an audience
- Exchange and coping strategies to communicate with teachers and fellow students about mental health problems
- Coping strategies for dealing with remaining symptoms: studying according to individual means



Group Curriculum

- Group work is guided by the principles of Theme-Centred Interaction by Ruth Cohn
- Balance between the Group, the individual, the theme
- Each individual participants makes a statement about himself and being in the group at the beginning and the end.
- The group works on a specific theme throughout each session
- Everyone is responsible for themselves, Disturbance has priority



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Network and Cooperation

Board meets 3-4 times per year:

Career counsellor, university psychological counselling service, psychiatric outpatient services, vocational training, student services (studierendenwerk),
Disability Rights Officer

Disability Rights Officer: negotiation of special conditions for taking exams,
written assignments or duration of courses

Psychiatric Services: crisis intervention, outpatient services, psychotherapy



Disability

UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2006

“Persons with disabilities include those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.”



Evaluation

Flögel, Torsten (2005) *Evaluation des studienbegleitenden Dienstes „Hilfe und Orientierung für psychisch erkrankte Studierende“ (HOPES) an den Hamburger Hochschulen.*

Neuefeind, Daniel (2010) *Katamnesestudie des Projekts „Hilfe und Orientierung für psychisch erkrankte Studierende“ (HOPES)*



Evaluation: Flögel, T. (2005)

- Comparison of a group of 53 students who contacted HOPES with a control group:
- HOPES Clients scored significantly higher on all scales of SCL-90 than baseline
- HOPES clients scored significantly different to control group on 3 factors of a self-designed questionnaire:
 - Optimism and self-esteem
 - Verbal and social competence
 - Health-promoting resources



Evaluation: Flögel, T. (2005)

Pre-Post-Comparison

21 Students completed SCL-90 and self-designed questionnaire after having taken part in the HOPES program:

Global Severity of Symptoms was significantly reduced
significant difference on the scales psychoticism and depression

significant increase in self-esteem and optimism



Evaluation: Neuefeind , D. (2010)

Katamnestic study of 59 students who participated in HOPES program

25,4 % of HOPES participants were able to complete academic course

15,3 % were not able to complete their academic course

59,3 % were still studying

72 % of those were able to successfully pursue individual goals

HOPES participants take more time to complete their courses!



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Evaluation: Neuefeind, D. (2010)

Participants identified three helpful aspects

Coping strategies, study skills

Counteracting social isolation

Support to restart studying after a break for treatment



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Anti-Stigma and Public-Relation

Making mental health problems more visible

Postcard: „What do these people have in common?“



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Thank Your for your attention!

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Fotomaterial



Facts and Figures

- ca. 620 Professors
- ca. 4.100 academic Staff
- ca. 5.500 technical- and administrative staff
- About 39.000 Students in 6 Faculties:
 - Law
 - Economics and Social Sciences
 - Medicine
 - Educational Studies, Psychology & Sport
 - Arts
 - Mathematics, Information Technology und Natural Sciences

