

How Faculty & Staff Can Help

Faculty and Staff often have more access to AAPI students, rather than health providers. Students may be more likely to trust speaking with staff in academic roles, rather than to seek out counseling. At the same time, it is important to connect the student with a trained mental health professional.

If an AAPI student does share with you about their stress, here are some helpful tips:

- Validate that the student's distress is normal, and that it's good that they are talking about it.
- Remember that this may be the first time the student is disclosing of their distress to anyone.
- Keep in mind that due to various immigration, insurance, family, financial, geographic, and/or cultural issues, the student may not have access to mental health resources.
- Encourage the student to make an appointment with Counseling and Wellness Services (212-772-4931, www.hunter.cuny.edu/cws/counselingservices)
- Encourage the student to contact the HCAP Mental Health Educator, Marcia Liu (see back of brochure for contact info) to discuss mental health treatment options in the student's neighborhood.

Hunter College AANAPISI Project

The Hunter College AANAPISI (Asian American Native American Pacific Islander Serving Institution) Project is a grant-funded project aiming at improving services for Hunter's many AAPI Students. HCAP includes a mental health initiative, an English Language Learners initiative, as well as a Leadership program.

To learn more about the HCAP Mental Health Initiative, contact:

**Marcia Liu, Mental Health Educator
ML2138@hunter.cuny.edu.**

Faculty and Staff Information

ASIAN AMERICAN & PACIFIC ISLANDER MENTAL HEALTH



for more info on HCAP visit:
www.huntercap.org

Fall 2017
Marcia Liu, Ph.D.
HCAP Mental Health Coordinator

AAPI's at Hunter College

30%

Over 30% of Hunter College Students identify as Asian American/Pacific Islander (AAPI). AAPI students represent a diverse group of students, with various ethnic backgrounds, immigration statuses, trauma histories, socioeconomic means, religious beliefs, sexual and gender identities, and racial appearances. These intersecting identities contribute to various mental health needs.

AAPI Mental Health Symptoms

Many AAPI people experience their health as a mixture of *mental and physical symptoms*. As a result, AAPI Hunter students will often experience simultaneous physical ailments along with mental health difficulties.

Common distress symptoms include:

- **Fatigue, Low Motivation**
- **Low Mood/Feeling Blue**
- **Chest Pains, Stomach Aches**
- **Headaches, Back Pain**
- **Anxiety or Panic, Distractedness**
- **Nausea, Constipation, Diarrhea**
- **Self-Harm, Thoughts of Suicide**
- **Too Much or Too Little Sleep**
- **Substance Abuse**
- **Dizziness/Feeling Disoriented**
- **Flushing/Feeling Hot or Sweaty**
- **Overeating, Undereating**

AAPI Mental Health Stressors

Race-Related Stress

AAPIs are exposed to racial stereotypes that contribute to mental health distress. In particular, the *Model Minority Myth* is a stereotype that assumes AAPIs to be academically successful and in "better" health as compared to other groups of Color. This stereotype frequently builds pressure to excel at all costs, and to mask or hide symptoms of distress. It often also results in AAPI Mental Health Distress being overlooked or invisible.

Additionally, the Arab, Middle Eastern, Muslim, and South Asian (AMEMSA) community are increasingly profiled as being associated with terrorism and religious extremism. Research has also documented that such stereotypes are distressing and disruptive for individuals to experience.

For more information, go to:
bit.ly/FirstGen_AAPA

Familial and Cultural Stress

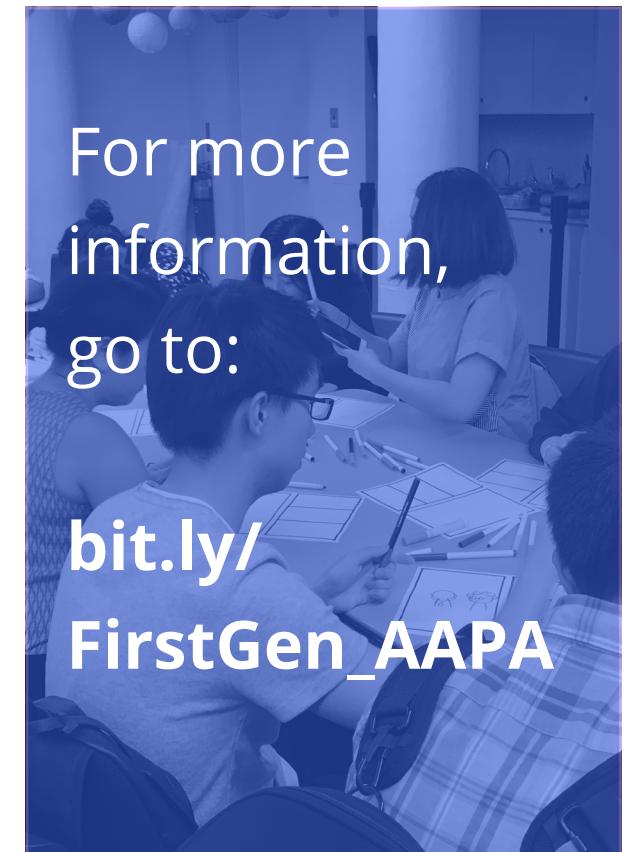
Many AAPI students at Hunter are the first in their families to attend college. Moreover, a large proportion of HC Students identify as immigrants, or as the children of immigrants. Such AAPI adolescents and young adults often serve as cultural brokers for their immigrant families, helping parents acculturate to US Society.

At the same time, children and parents frequently are in conflict with each other, as differences in values and experiences can present tension between generations. Especially for undocumented students, familial issues often qualify as the most distressing contributor to AAPI mental health.

Community Stigma and Mental Health

Although psychotherapy has been found to be helpful for college students in distress, AAPI communities often discourage people from seeking treatment. Mental Health distress is often viewed as a sign of familial weakness, and as a result, symptoms and related treatment are highly stigmatized in the community.

As a result, AAPI Hunter Students who experience mental health distress may know about the Counseling and Wellness center, but feel hesitant about seeking such services.



For more
information,
go to:
[bit.ly/
FirstGen_AAPA](http://bit.ly/FirstGen_AAPA)