

Let's Talk 2021-22

Frequently Asked Questions

What is Let's Talk?

"Let's Talk" is a program for Northwestern students that provides easy access to informal and confidential support and consultation with counselors at Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS). Any student is welcome at any site and we have virtual options as well. Students will not be charged any fee for utilizing the Let's Talk program and won't be asked to complete any official CAPS paperwork. The meeting will last approximately 20-30 minutes.

What are the Let's Talk locations/hours?

Beginning Fall 2021, Let's Talk is available in-person and virtually at the following locations on the Evanston campus and consultations begin the week of October 4.

In-person Let's Talk hours:

Women's Center (2000 Sheridan Road) every other Monday Noon-1 pm starting 10/4 with Kanika Wadhwa, LCPC (services provided in English and Hindi)

Student Enrichment Services (Foster Walker, House 6) every Thursday 2-4 pm with Maya Oyarbide-Sanchez, LCPC (services provided in English and Spanish)

Mudd Library (2nd floor of Mudd Hall, Rm 2117 Across from the Maker Lab) every Friday 11:30 am-12:30 pm with one of 3 CAPS Doctoral Interns- Kent Crick, MA, Nicholas Gensmer, MS and Andrew Walsh, MS, MA.

Virtual Let's Talk hours:

Every other Monday noon-1 pm with Haley Braun, Psy.D- Post-Doctoral Fellow at CAPS (10/11, 10/25, 11/8, 11/22 and 12/6)

Every Monday 10-11 am and Thursday 3-4 pm with Sabaahath Latifi, LCPC from Khalil Center (starting 10/4)

How do I connect to Let's Talk in-person?

Pick a location/time that works for you and follow signs for the private office space designated inside the building to meet the Let's Talk consultant. Students are seen on a first-come, first-served basis, and usually there is not much of a wait. Please remember to have your mask on for a safe and smooth check in with our Let's Talk consultants.

How do I connect to Let's Talk virtually?

We are currently offering virtual Let's Talk consultations via Zoom at specific times in the week. Please check the virtual hours provided for each location and book your appointment using the link in the scheduling section on the main Let's Talk page.

You will be asked to complete a quick form so the Let's Talk consultant has your basic information and other non-required questions that you can decide to answer or skip. Simply log in to Zoom (you can choose audio only v/s video) a couple minutes prior to the start of the meeting using the link you received in the confirmation email. You will be placed in the virtual waiting room and the Let's Talk consultant will let you into the meeting promptly at the start of the session. Speaking with a counselor consultant can provide insight, solutions, and information about other resources. The meeting will last approximately 20 minutes.

What are common concerns that people bring up at Let's Talk?

Students come in with a variety of concerns; no topic is off limits. Some common concerns students talk about include:

- stress
- sadness
- worry/anxiety
- adjustment/culture shock
- cultural barriers
- relationships
- building friendships
- homesickness
- academic performance
- difficulty concentrating or paying attention
- family problems
- financial struggles
- sleep difficulties

- romantic relationship
- sexual orientation/gender identity

What happens at a visit to Let's Talk?

When you come to the site, look to see if the office door is open. If it is, please come on in. If the door is closed, knock on the door and have a seat in a nearby chair and wait a few minutes until the counselor consultant comes to greet you. When you two meet, the counselor consultant will listen closely to your concerns, possibly ask questions and provide support, perspective, and suggestions for resources.

What should I do if the Let's Talk counselor consultant is already meeting with someone?

If the counselor consultant is already meeting with someone, the assigned office door will be closed with a sign indicating that the office is occupied. In this case, knock on the door and please have a seat in a nearby chair and wait for the counselor consultant to come out and greet you. The wait is usually not long.

How is Let's Talk different from counseling at CAPS?

Counselors at CAPS provide ongoing counseling, which usually consists of weekly or bi-weekly 50 minute appointments. Let's Talk is not formal counseling; it is a drop-in service where students can have an informal consultation with a counselor consultant from time to time.

Who should visit Let's Talk?

Let's Talk is open to all Northwestern graduate and undergraduate students. Let's Talk is the best fit for the following people:

- Students who are not sure about counseling and wonder what it's like to talk with a counselor.
- Students who are not interested in ongoing counseling but would like the perspective of a counselor.
- Students who have a specific problem and would like someone with whom to talk it through.
- Students who have a concern about a friend/family member and want some ideas about what to do.

I think I have a problem that would benefit from counseling, but I don't know anything about it. Would going to Let's Talk help me figure out what to do?

Absolutely. The counselor consultant will help you talk through your issues and help you determine the best way to get help. If you feel comfortable with the counselor consultant, it is sometimes possible to meet with him or her at CAPS in an on-going way.

I am on the waitlist at CAPS and I would like to see someone sooner. Can I stop by Let's Talk in the meantime?

If you believe you need to be seen sooner and you no longer can wait for services, it's best to call CAPS directly and explain your situation. CAPS counselor will help you get into appropriate services as soon as possible that may include getting connected to an outside provider in your area.

I went to CAPS and spoke with a counselor. They recommended a referral to a therapist in the community. Can I come to Let's Talk instead?

Since regular counseling appointments are not available at Let's Talk, following up with the referral is a good idea. If you have questions about your referral please contact CAPS.

I am currently seeing a therapist at CAPS and would like to talk with someone sooner than my next appointment. Can I go to Let's Talk?

If your next appointment is not soon enough, it is best to contact your counselor directly to see if they can see you sooner.

I am currently seeing a therapist at CAPS, and I'm not happy with the way things are going. Can I go to Let's Talk instead?

The best thing to do in your situation is to talk directly with your counselor or call CAPS to request counselor change. Counselors are eager to get your feedback, positive or negative. Often, an open conversation about your concern helps smooth out any wrinkles and helps get things back on track.

What else do I need to know?

Although Let's Talk counselor consultants are professionals, Let's Talk is not a substitute for psychotherapy or formal counseling and doesn't constitute mental health treatment. Let's Talk counselor consultants provide informal consultations to help students with specific problems and to introduce them to what it's like to speak with a counselor. Your Let's Talk counselor consultant can help

you determine whether formal counseling at CAPS would be useful to you and, if appropriate, assist you in getting connected at CAPS.

Let's Talk visits are confidential. Are there any limits to confidentiality?

Conversations with Let's Talk counselor consultants are confidential. However, one exception is that counselors may need to share information in a situation in which safety for yourself or others is a concern.

Let's Talk counselor consultants keep brief written notes of their contacts with students only in the event that there is an emergency, or when a student is referred to CAPS. In these situations, other CAPS counseling staff may see these notes. Information is also collected about attendance, so that we can keep track of the students we are serving and those we need to continue serving.

Let's Talk visits are never reported on a student's official university record.

We don't want anything to be a barrier to students accessing help. If you have further questions about confidentiality, we encourage you to discuss them with a Let's Talk counselor consultant.