

**George Brown Polytechnic
Student Mental Health Annual Report
2024-25**

January 21st, 2026

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Land Acknowledgment

George Brown Polytechnic is located on the traditional territory of the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation and other Indigenous peoples who have lived here over time. We are grateful to share this land as treaty people who learn, work, and live in the community with each other.

Introduction

This report fulfills the annual reporting requirements of the **Strengthening Accountability and Student Supports Act, 2024 (Bill 166)** and the Minister’s Directive on Student Mental Health. It provides an overview of the implementation and effectiveness of George Brown Polytechnic’s Student Mental Health Policy for the reporting period of September 1, 2024 to August 31, 2025. The report is submitted to the Academic and Student Affairs Standing Committee of the Board of Governors and the Ministry of Colleges, Universities, Research Excellence and Security (MCURES), and is made publicly available in accordance with provincial requirements.

Student Well-Being and Support

Student Well-Being and Support is a multidisciplinary department within the **Division of Student Success** that is responsible for advancing student mental health, well-being, accessibility, and inclusion across the Polytechnic. The department encompasses Counselling and Student Well-Being, Accessible Learning Services (ALS), Peer Mentor + (peer wellness programming), and Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services. Together, these services support students through a coordinated, whole-campus approach grounded in a stepped care model, which matches students to the least intensive, most appropriate level of support and allows them to move fluidly to more specialized or intensive services as needs increase. This approach emphasizes early intervention, timely access to care, academic participation, and equitable outcomes. The department works closely with academic areas and institutional partners to ensure students experiencing mental health challenges or disabilities can successfully engage in their studies.

Figure 1: Areas under Student Well-Being and Support



Summary of Student Mental Health Policy Objectives

The [Student Mental Health Policy](#) supports student success, well-being, and access to services by establishing a whole-campus, inclusive approach to mental health that aligns with provincial legislation and national standards. The policy emphasizes timely access to a broad range of culturally responsive supports, including counselling, peer wellness programs, crisis response, and academic accommodations. It affirms commitments to equity, privacy, and confidentiality, and promotes mental health through staff training, community partnerships, and data-informed planning to ensure students can fully participate in their education and thrive.

Programs, Services and Supports

George Brown Polytechnic offers a comprehensive continuum of mental health programs, services, and supports designed to meet the diverse and evolving needs of students. Counselling services provide confidential clinical support through intake and short-term therapeutic interventions, with a transition in May 2025 to a single-session counselling model that significantly reduced wait-times and improved responsiveness. Urgent counselling services ensure same-day or next-day access for students experiencing acute distress.

Case Management supports students with complex and intersecting needs, including significant mental health concerns, disabilities, and psychosocial or life-circumstance challenges that may affect academic participation. Case managers provide short-term, coordinated support focused on assessment, care planning, system navigation, and connection to appropriate on-campus and community resources, working closely with Accessible Learning Services, academic areas, and external partners as needed.

Peer Mentor Plus complements clinical services through student-led wellness supports, including drop-in spaces, one-on-one peer support, support groups, and community-building events. These low-barrier supports promote early help-seeking, social connection, and mental health literacy. Wellness workshops, facilitated by counsellors and trained peer mentors, provide skill-building opportunities focused on stress management, coping strategies, and resilience, offered in both in-person and virtual formats.

Service Overview – Counselling & Peer Supports

- **Counselling Supports:** Intake and short-term counselling with registered professionals, now delivered through a single-session model.
- **Urgent Supports:** Same-day or next-day counselling for students in distress, accessed through self-referral or institutional referral pathways.
- **Case Management:** Short-term, coordinated support for students with complex and intersecting needs.
- **Peer Mentor +:** Peer-led wellness spaces (Calm Zones), one-on-one support, support groups, and events.
- **Wellness Workshops:** Counsellor and peer-facilitated groups and workshops focused on mental health and well-being.
- **Employee Training:** Counsellor-led workshops delivered to employees on supporting students in distress.
- **Outreach and Mental Health Promotion:** Counsellor and Peer participation at student and Polytechnic events; mental health anti-stigma initiatives.



Student Mental Health Programs & Services Utilization and Impact Metrics

Key Metrics

In accordance with the requirements of Bill 166, the following table provides a summary of key utilization, access, and outcome metrics for student mental health programs and services delivered by Student Well-Being and Support during the reporting period. The data reflect the Polytechnic’s stepped and whole-campus approach to student mental health, with an emphasis on timely access to care, early intervention, and a range of clinical, preventative, and peer-based supports designed to meet diverse student needs.

Figure 2: Student Well-Being and Support Statistics for 2024-25

Counselling & Student Well-Being

Key Indicator	2024–25 Result	Notes
Students served, counselling sessions	1,427 students	13% increase compared to 2022–23
Total counselling sessions	4,581 sessions	Follow-up clinical sessions
Average wait time (non-urgent)	5 days	Reduced following single-session counselling implementation
Urgent appointment requests	147 requests	Students requiring time-sensitive support
Urgent appointments delivered	135 (92%)	High rate of urgent appointment follow-through
Wellness workshop participation	248 participants	Preventative, skill-based programming

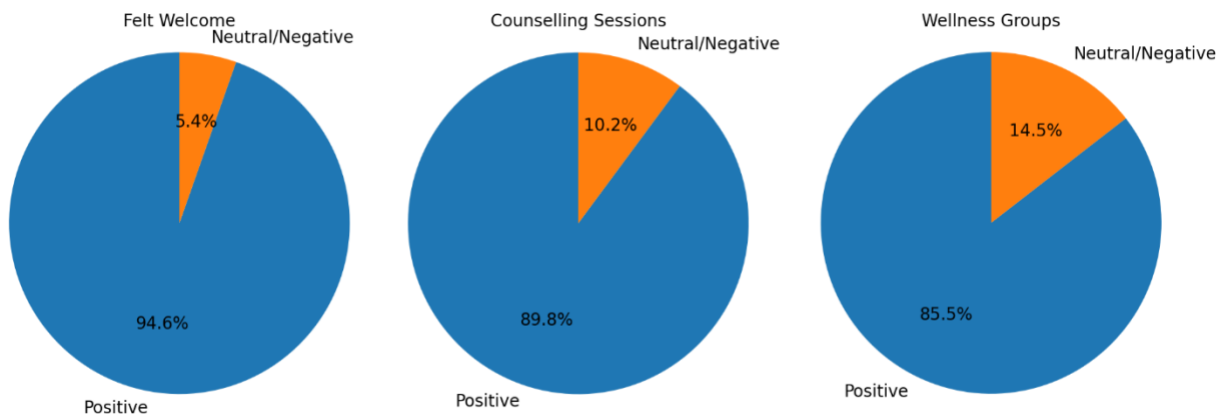
Peer Mentor + (Peer Wellness Supports)

Key Indicator	2024–25 Result	Notes
One-on-one peer engagements	215 interactions	Low-barrier peer support
Peer space attendance (Calm Zones)	2,380 visits	Informal well-being spaces
Peer-led student event attendance	472 participants	Community connection

Student Experience Survey Results - Counselling & Student Well-Being

This figure presents student responses to selected questions from the Counselling and Student Well-Being Survey, including perceptions of feeling welcome when accessing services and ratings of individual counselling sessions and counselling groups or wellness workshops. Results show the proportion of respondents reporting positive experiences compared to neutral or negative responses.

Figure 3: Counselling Survey Results



Data Collection

Utilization data for Counselling and Student Well-Being services is extracted by the department’s data administrator from the College’s clinical software system, Point and Click (PNC), which is used to record counselling appointments and service activity. Data for Peer Mentor + programming is drawn from internal service tracking systems.

Student experience data is collected through the annual Counselling and Student Well-Being Survey, administered electronically to students who accessed services during the reporting period. For the 2024–25 cycle, the survey was distributed to 700 students who used services between September and December 2024, with 206 responses received (29.43% response rate). Survey and utilization data are reviewed annually to assess service reach and effectiveness and to inform continuous improvement.

Policy Implementation and Effectiveness

Throughout the reporting year, George Brown Polytechnic continued to implement the Student Mental Health Policy through a coordinated, whole-campus approach. A key milestone was the transition to a single-session counselling model in May 2025, which reduced wait-times and improved equity of access across campuses and student populations. Counselling collaborated closely with internal partners, including Accessible Learning Services, the Office of Student Conduct and Support, the CARE Team, OAREHRS, and Public Safety and Emergency Management, to strengthen referral pathways and coordinated responses for students with complex needs.

Externally, the Student Association's partnership with the Cleveland Clinic expanded access to virtual health care, including psychiatric services, with reciprocal referral pathways established. Peer Mentor + programming, wellness workshops, and anti-stigma initiatives further embedded mental health promotion across academic and social environments.

Evidence from utilization data, student surveys, and internal reviews indicates that the policy has strengthened service responsiveness and student experience, while supporting high levels of satisfaction and timely access to care.

Challenges and Opportunities

Challenges

The primary challenges during the reporting period were increasing service demand, rising case complexity, and constrained staffing and resources. These pressures limited capacity for extended follow-up and placed additional demands on front-line staff. In addition, a growing number of students experienced housing and food insecurity, which compounded mental health concerns and affected students' ability to engage consistently in their studies. Ongoing stigma, uncertainty about help-seeking, and challenges navigating multiple services also remained barriers for some students.

Opportunities

Opportunities for improvement include further strengthening community partnerships to extend the continuum of care, enhancing collaboration with ALS, OAREHRS, Security and the academic areas for coordinated crisis response, and leveraging technology-enabled services such as virtual care. Expanding campus-wide mental health promotion and anti-stigma initiatives was also identified as a priority to support earlier intervention.

Future Plans

In 2025–26, George Brown Polytechnic will continue to strengthen partnerships with community mental health providers, including psychiatric supports accessed through the Cleveland Clinic. The department will deepen collaboration with ALS, OAREHRS, and Security to refine shared protocols and coordinated care pathways. Building on the success of recent anti-stigma initiatives, the Polytechnic will expand wellness programming, peer-led supports, and targeted outreach to promote belonging, resilience, and early access to care. Continued focus on identity-affirming and culturally responsive services will remain central.

