

# LET'S

# Talk

# FAQs

## What is Let's Talk?

Let's Talk is a program for Western Washington University students that provides easy access to informal and confidential support and consultation with counselors from the Counseling Center. **Let's Talk is not psychotherapy and does not constitute mental health treatment.** Any student is welcome at any site. There is no appointment or fee necessary. Students are seen on a first-come, first-served basis, and usually there is not much of a wait. Students are asked to complete a short demographics form upon arrival, which also provides information about the scope of Let's Talk and limits of confidentiality.

## Where are Let's Talk locations?

Currently, Let's Talk is being held in the Multicultural Center Lounge on Wednesdays from 12:00-1:00 pm. We are in the process of finding an additional location so stay tuned!



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

Students come in with a variety of concerns and 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 for one of our counselors in the lounge. Some locations may have a small office or meeting space identifiable by Let's Talk signage. If the door is open, 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. Upon meeting, the counselor consultant will listen closely to your concerns, ask questions, provide support, perspective, and suggestions for resources.



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

If the counselor consultant is already meeting with someone, please take a seat nearby and wait to be seen. While you are waiting you can fill out the demographics form. The wait is usually not long. In a lounge space such as the Multicultural Center, please be respectful if you notice the counselor already talking to another student. If you are in need of immediate assistance, you can attend drop-in hours at the Counseling Center from 10am-2pm, Mon-Fri.

## **How is Let's Talk different from counseling at the Counseling Center?**

Counselors at the Counseling Center provide ongoing brief counseling, which usually consists of 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 Western Washington University 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 them at the Counseling Center in an on-going way.

## **I am waiting for my appointment at the Counseling Center. 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 the Counseling Center directly and explain your situation. The Counseling Center will help you get into appropriate services as soon as possible that may include getting connected to an outside provider in the area.

## **I went to the Counseling Center and spoke to a counselor. They recommended a referral to a therapist in the community. Can I just 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 the Counseling Center or case manager.

## **I am currently seeing a therapist at the Counseling Center, 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 the Counseling Center to request a 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 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 the Counseling Center or other resource would be useful to you and, if appropriate, assist you in getting connected.

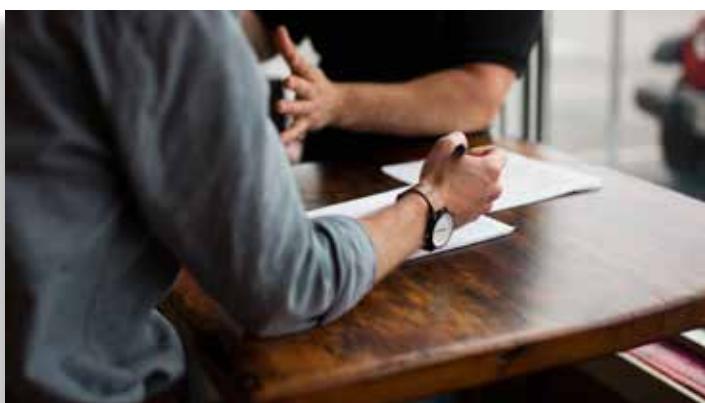


Photo by Nik MacMillan on Unsplash

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

Conversations with Let's Talk counselor consultants are confidential. However, certain exceptions exist that may require confidentiality to be broken. If there is reason to believe imminent risk of harm to yourself or others, indications of abuse of a minor or vulnerable adult, request for records by a court of law, for purposes of national security, or as indicated by law, confidentiality may be broken. Simple demographic information is 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 though brief notes made be added in the Counseling Center's electronic health system. In this case, the brief notes are not a part of the health record.

Some Let's Talk locations may not be entirely private. If you would prefer to talk with a counselor consultant in private, please let them know or consider attending drop-in hours at the Counseling Center.

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 or contact the Counseling Center at 360.650.3164.

*The Let's Talk Program at Western Washington University is based on the Let's Talk Program, which began at Cornell University. With permission, some material has been adapted or reproduced from the Cornell University's Let's Talk website. We would like to thank Matt Boone, LCSW, for his assistance in helping us launch this program on our campus. This successful model has paved the way for us and many others.*