

Dear Ontario College Students:

Take care of yourself.

As you may know, Back to Work Legislation has recently passed, ending the College Strike. In theory we are happy that the strike is ending. However, this is not just Back to Work legislation, this is essentially Back to School legislation.

Many of the colleges, if not all of them, have made no indication of any sort of safety net or recovery plan to help ease students back into a learning environment or to help students through the condensed semester. We know that many students struggle with mental health, and that these events in particular have added to that.

We know it is challenging to students to face a return to school with condensed workloads, shortened holidays, and extended semesters. This is our reminder to you, and our request to you, to ***please take care of yourself***. Take the time to go to your classes, if you are able, and see hear what the plan for the semester is. Look into your school's extended drop dates for withdrawing without academic penalty. Consider your options, and make the choice that is right for you. Remember, your health and wellbeing is paramount.

No matter what you choose, we're proud of you. Although you may feel defeated, there is still opportunity for success, no matter which path you choose. We know you have the strength to succeed; we can't wait to watch it happen. Remember that you have so many people supporting you, even if we aren't there with you.

College can be a time of happiness, self discovery and education. Alternatively, it can also be a time for stress, financial crises and hardships as it has become as a result of the strike. We know many of you are struggling, and want to let you know we see you, hear you and support you. We are struggling too, and in order to conquer this we must stand united and help one another.

We have compiled a list of resources for those struggling with mental health, and for those who just need someone to hear them, to understand them and to listen to them. In addition to this list, please don't hesitate to try to access your college's counseling services. Many communities also offer free and low-cost mental health services, so be sure to see what is available near you.

**IF YOU FEEL UNSAFE, PLEASE CALL 911 OR GO TO YOUR NEAREST EMERGENCY ROOM.**

**Good2Talk**

**Call 1-866-925-5454**

*Good2Talk is a helpline specifically for post-secondary students. They are open 24/7.*

### **Kids Helphone**

**Call 1-800-668-6868**

**Visit <https://kidshelpphone.ca/>**

*Kids Helphone will put you in touch with a counselor. Intended for ages up to 18.*

### **YouthSpace**

**Text 778-783-0177**

**Visit <http://youthspace.ca/>**

*Text or visit their online chat service to talk with supportive volunteers. 6pm-Midnight*

### **The Lifeline App**

**Download on Google Play or The App Store**

*This free app can connect you to crisis centres, counsellors, and more.*

### **Suicide Prevention Lifeline**

**Call 1-800-273-8255**

**Visit <https://suicidepreventionlifeline.org/>**

*Reach out if you or a loved one is in distress, and get help quickly.*

### **Mental Health Helpline**

**Call 1-866-531-2600**

**Visit <http://www.mentalhealthhelpline.ca>**

*This helpline can help provide information about mental health services near you.*

A handful of our reps have offered to step up, and offer their ears, shoulders and inboxes. Although they are not trained counselors or therapists, they are more than happy to talk to you, listen to you and offer their support as a friend.

If you would like to reach out, we urge you to contact them. They offer a judgement-free outlet that you can reach out to. These are the reps who are available:

**Olivia Meyer** (*ASIST trained*), Sheridan College

**Julia Delaire**, Fleming College

**Cate (Elizabeth) Foulon**, Fanshawe College

**Riley Nowak**, Conestoga College

**Brook Glinski** (*ASIST trained*), Loyalist College

**Alysha Koster** (*Safetalk Trained*), Fanshawe College

**Georgie Passingham**, St. Clair

So, in summation: take care of yourself, and those around you in this trying time. Practice self care. Take a bubble bath, eat some chocolate, do some yoga, go for a walk, listen to music, spend time with your pets, talk to your friends, take deep breaths - whatever helps you get through. And if you need more help, you know where to come for resources and support. You are strong, you are capable, and you

can do this.

Be safe.

Sincerely,  
*Your Class Action Representatives*

(Ontario College Students Pursuing a Lawsuit)

*"Your illness does not define you. Your strength and courage does."*