

## **Transitions: A Study of College Life and Well-Being**

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This paper analyzes how first-year college students characterize stress and manage mental health in their first year at university. The mental health crisis on college campus is a growing concern with utilization of mental health services doubling in just 10 years. The goals of this study are to assess the prevalence of depressive and anxiety symptoms, along with typical stressors among first-year college students and examine associations between stressors and symptoms of depression and anxiety. We used two research techniques: a quantitative online survey sent to a random sample of first-year students at UNC and a qualitative in-depth interview of a random subset of survey respondents. This paper analyzes common stressors identified by first-year students and separates the prevalence of these stressors by key demographics (i.e. race, first generation status, sexual and gender minorities). Additionally, we study the individual behaviors of these students that impact mental health and coping with stressors. The purpose of this paper is to bring awareness to the mental health crisis and provide recommendations to Universities to concentrate strategies and services to assist first-year students in the transition to college.