



Dear Colleagues,

Mental Health Awareness Month was established in 1949 to increase awareness of the importance of mental health and wellness in our lives, to celebrate recovery from mental illness, and to reduce the stigma surrounding mental health issues. It provides a platform for advocacy, education, and support for individuals struggling with mental health challenges, as well as their families, friends, colleagues, and communities.

There has been a lot of media coverage lately about CUNY campus protests, encampments, anti-semitism, harassment, and attacks on free speech, resulting in emergency pivots to remote work and course instruction.

Excessive consumption of news reports and social media can lead to information overload, which can have negative effects on mental health. Continuous exposure to negative news stories can lead to heightened feelings of fear, anxiety, and stress. Whether it's crises, disasters, or conflicts, the constant bombardment of alarming information can create a sense of threat, even if one is not directly affected.

Furthermore, social media algorithms often create echo chambers, reinforcing existing views and contributing to feelings of anxiety and division. This confirmation bias can distort our perception of reality and hinder our ability to see alternative perspectives.

Information overload can overwhelm the brain, leading to feelings of helplessness and a sense of being unable to control or make sense of the world. Additionally, the curated images of success and achievement on social media platforms can foster feelings of inadequacy and fear of missing out (FOMO), negatively impacting self-esteem.

Moreover, excessive use of news and social media can serve as a distraction from real-life interactions and responsibilities, leading to feelings of disconnection and loneliness. Social support networks are crucial for maintaining psychological well-being, and neglecting them can exacerbate mental health issues such as depression and anxiety.

It is essential to prioritize our mental well-being. Setting boundaries, curating sources, taking breaks, practicing mindfulness, meditating and seeking support when needed are crucial steps in managing the impact of media consumption on mental health.

The PSC Anti-Bullying Committee has compiled this set of resources for you and so that you will know that there is help available from the union's affiliates and elsewhere.

Free resources & services available to PSC members through our national union affiliates:

- **Calm App Premium Subscription**
<https://memberbenefits.nysut.org/free-member-benefits/calm-app>
- **NYSUT Peer Support Line**
<https://memberbenefits.nysut.org/free-member-benefits/peer-support-line>
- **AFT Trauma & Counseling Programs & Services**
<https://www.aft.org/benefits/trauma>

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

White House Proclamation on National Mental Health Awareness Month

<https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/presidential-actions/2024/04/30/a-proclamation-on-national-mental-health-awareness-month-2024/>

U.S. Surgeon General's Framework for Workplace Mental Health and Well-Being

<https://www.hhs.gov/surgeongeneral/priorities/workplace-well-being/index.html>

NYS Office of Mental Health

<https://omh.ny.gov>

NYC Mayor's Office of Community Mental Health

<https://mentalhealth.cityofnewyork.us>

National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI)

<https://www.nami.org>

Mental well-being is not merely the absence of mental illness but a holistic embrace of emotional, psychological, and social equilibrium. Your mental health is a priority. Your self-care is a necessity.

In Solidarity,

PSC Anti-Bullying Committee

<https://psc-cuny.org/issues/anti-bullying/>