



For more information, contact:

Deborah Mower

816-994-1519

[dmower@ndbh.com](mailto:dmower@ndbh.com)

### **Program Launched to Help Universities Tackle Soaring Mental Health Demand**

Kansas City, Mo. – November 17, 2015 – Rates of anxiety and depression among college students in the U.S. have risen rapidly in the past decade. Students are showing up at college counseling centers only to discover they often must wait weeks and even months to see a mental health expert. In response, [New Directions Behavioral Health®](#) (New Directions) announced the launch of its [Student Assistance Program](#) to support and expand existing campus counseling services and resources.

“Academic success depends on good mental health,” said LeAnn Carlton, assistant dean for Student Affairs at [Kansas City University of Medicine and Biosciences](#) (KCU). “That is why it’s so important for our students to get the help they need when they need it. Knowing we have additional resources to support our students is critical should a crisis on campus occur or if our staff is unavailable.”

The Student Assistance Program is a life management resource that is coordinated with established campus resources to help students identify and manage challenging issues, such as a relationship struggle, academic anxiety or financial worry. Paid for by the university, the program provides students with 24/7 live phone support, access to confidential counseling, and online resources and tools.

Recent studies find that many colleges and universities are not prepared to handle the rising need for mental health services simply because they don’t have enough resources— especially licensed clinicians. With [suicide being the second leading cause of death among college-age students](#), waiting too long for help can be tragic.

“Parents, educators and students all have the same goal: complete a degree and graduate,” said Betsy Klein, vice president of Corporate Health Promotion and EAP for New Directions. “But without good mental health, academic success is hard to achieve. This program gives college and universities an extra resource to equip students to be their best.”

As Carlton concluded, “It’s our job as a university to connect our students to the support services they need—whether it’s with a tutor or a mental health provider—and the earlier we can help them the better.”

One of the fastest growing behavioral health care companies in the nation, New Directions helps people live healthy, balanced lives through managed behavioral health care services, Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs), organizational consulting and health coaching programs. For more information, visit [ndbh.com](http://ndbh.com).

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