

**Stressful Time for Students as Thousands Start College  
-Recent Survey Shows that 1 in 4 Adults would be Embarrassed  
About Seeking Professional Help-**

As thousands of excited students prepare to embark on their biggest adventure yet in the coming weeks, a recent survey by the Irish Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (IACP) reveals that almost 1 in 4 (23%) adults would be embarrassed to seek professional help for personal problems and only 6% of under 25's in Ireland would seek professional help to deal with personal issues.

The IACP today released the full results of a survey which highlights some key facts about the Irish and their attitudes to mental health:

- One in four (23%) over-65s in Ireland keep their personal problems and difficulties to themselves. This figure is nearly double the rate for the overall adult population (13%).
- While 70% of people said they would discuss problems with a friend or family member, only one in two (49%) over-65s would share their problems.
- A quarter (25%) of Irish people have ever attended counselling or psychotherapy, but only one in seven (14%) of over-65s have attended.

After a process that saw some entry requirements hitting their highest levels for decades, it's not just students feeling the pressure. Parents of college-goers are dealing with high levels of stress and personal issues as they guide their teenagers through application processes and prepare to watch their ambitious teenagers leave the nest in search of independence.

Over 53,000 students sat the leaving certificate this year and with over 40,000 starting college in the coming weeks there is a heightened need to equip them with the tools to effectively manage personal problems.

**Shane Kelly of IACP said:**

"Starting third level education represents a major change in students' lives – especially if they are living away from home for the first time. In addition college requires significantly more effort from students than secondary school. Most students find that they need to develop new skills in order to balance academic demands with the challenges of living away from home and the need to maintain a healthy lifestyle. Stress is a part of everyday life but students can reduce this by improving skills such as time management, stress management, and relaxation. Learning how to manage your responsibilities, accomplish your goals and still have time for rest and

relaxation requires that you practice good time management skills". Mr Kelly also offered tips for dealing with stress: "exercise regularly, during breaks from class, studying, or work, spend time walking outdoors, listen to music or just sit quietly, to clear and calm your mind. Seek the support of friends and family when you need to "vent" about situations that bring on stressful feelings" he said.

The full report can be found at <http://www.irish-counselling.ie/images/IACP%20Behaviour%20%20Attitudes%20Research.pdf>

Physical symptoms of stress include headaches, indigestion, sweaty hands, high blood pressure, dizziness, breathing heavily, feeling faint, sweating or a sudden change in your eating habits while other symptoms are feeling worried all the time or feeling cut off from reality.

For a directory of IACP-accredited and qualified counsellors and psychotherapists across every county in Ireland visit [www.iacp.ie](http://www.iacp.ie), or phone 01-2723427.

## **ENDS**

### **References:**

This research was carried out on behalf of the IACP by Behaviour and Attitudes Marketing Research Ltd.

### **About IACP:**

Established in 1981, the IACP identifies, develops and maintains professional standards of excellence in counselling and psychotherapy through education, training and accreditation. In promoting best practice and the professional development of its members, IACP holds at its core the protection of the public. Representing both the interests of clients and practitioners (over 3,500 nationwide), IACP provides a telephone referral helpline, an information service; and an online counsellor / psychotherapist / supervisor directory. IACP is a registered Charity (CHY 6615).

More information is available from the IACP's website [www.iacp.ie](http://www.iacp.ie).