**Pet Stress Away**

**Using Dogs to Help Students Cope with Stress**

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**Problem**

College students are under stress. Without healthy coping strategies, stress can lead to undesirable consequences. Colleges offer programs to help, but many are underutilized.

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**Background**

- 85% of college students report feeling stress on a daily basis.¹
- Just petting a dog has been proven to reduce blood pressure and pulse and alleviate stress.²

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**Assessment Plan**

Induce Stress

Take Quiz

Relieve Stress

Sit

Pet Dog

Students reported stress on a scale of 1 (low) to 10 (high) after each step.

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**Results and Recommendations**

Petting dogs reduced stress levels twice as much as sitting. Colleges should provide access to dogs to enable students to relieve stress in a healthy way.

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**Cost - Benefit**

- Little to no monetary cost
- Fun and healthy way to relieve stress
- Institutionalizes a new program at WPI

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**Long-Term Outcome**

The student club PAWS (Promotion of Animal Welfare Society) will use our project to institutionalize a therapy dog program at WPI.

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**References**