THE SHORTHORN
THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT ARLINGTON

Health and Wellness Guide

2026-2027

Pages 2–14: Physical health

Pages 15–23: Mental and social wellness

Improve sleep with these tips

Students should try to keep a regular sleep schedule and limit food and liquid intake before bed.

BY KENNEDY HARVEY
The Shorthorn staff

Good-quality sleep is important for college students to function, but it can be overlooked by busy students.

Sleep deprivation can negatively affect students' mental and physical health, increasing the risk of cardiovascular disease, depression, anxiety and other health concerns, said Christine Spadola, associate professor of social work, in an email.

Students looking to get better sleep should prioritize their sleep hygiene.

Sleep hygiene refers to daily habits students can incorporate to improve sleep or manage insomnia, according to the American Academy of Sleep Medicine.

While bedtime habits are important for sleep hygiene, students' behaviors during the day can also affect how difficult it is to sleep at night. Caffeine, alcohol and daytime naps can negatively impact nighttime sleep quality, she said.

Alcohol is commonly mistaken as a sleep aid, Spadola said. However, while consuming alcohol within four hours of bedtime may help some fall asleep initially, it will lead to more fragmented sleep later in the night and lower sleep quality, she said.

Students can remedy this by building sleep hunger through physical activity like walking and aerobic exercise. According to John Hopkins Medicine, aerobic exercise and physical activity can help people stay awake during the day while contributing to better sleep quality at night.

For those who do not have trouble falling asleep, daytime naps can increase alertness as long as they are before noon, Spadola said. Naps should be no longer than 10-30 minutes, according to Healthline, a health information website.

Students should aim to have a set wake-up time that they can maintain.

"Over time, you will also fall asleep at a regular time," Spadola said. "More research is pointing to the importance of sleep 'regularity' —sleeping at the same times, as a very important factor."

She recommends that on weekends, students try to wake up within an hour of their weekday time to keep their sleep schedule consistent.

Students should limit fluid and food intake right before bed and establish a relaxing environment with dim lights. If it has been over 20 minutes, students can get out of bed and do a quiet activity to decompress.

"Understand that sleep is important and do what you can to set the stage for 'good' sleep," Spadola said. "We say that sleep is like love, you can't force it."

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Here are ways for students to regulate their stress levels

Campus resources and mindful habits can help keep tension from becoming overwhelming.

BY DIEGO COLLAZO
The Shorthorn associate news editor

Stress and college students have become nearly synonymous. Whether it's a tightly packed schedule that comes with hours of homework or maintaining a life outside of school, students might face overwhelming pressures and challenges.

According to the American Institute of Stress, about 45% of American college students reported experiencing "more than average" stress, while only about 9% of students reported "no stress" or "less than average" stress in 2024.

Stress is the body's nonspecific response to a demand, according to the institute. However, stress is not always negative, as it's a natural response to life experiences.

Eustress, or "good stress," can help improve performance, according to the institute. Eustress can help with things like interview preparation by enhancing motivation, focus and effort. In the short term, stress can help with focus and attention

When stressed, the body releases hormones that increase heart and breathing rates and prepare muscles to respond, according to the institute. When these responses go on for longer than needed, one's health suffers.

Prolonged stress can affect multiple systems in the body, including the central nervous, endocrine, immune, digestive and muscular systems.

Prolonged stress and its health issues can be caused by a multitude of things. It also manifests in different ways for different people.

Nursing freshman Yamileth Lopez said time management, trying to balance schoolwork and an off-campus job, are the most stressful parts of being a college student.

Lopez said the most stressful times for her are when projects, midterms and finals approach.

"It sometimes can be draining," she said.

Lopez said she uses a planner to help her organize and stay on top of her workload. Along with using a planner, she also advises students to have a strong support system and remember to do the things they love to keep them sane.

For students dealing with stress, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention suggests limiting alcohol intake, getting enough sleep, moving more and practicing gratitude daily.

If those methods don't work, students might turn to a psychiatrist or other professionals for help.

For campus resources, students can reach out to Counseling and Psychological Services. CAPS helps students increase self-awareness, address mental health and emotional concerns and make positive changes in their lives, according to its website.

Students can schedule a counseling visit or consultation by calling 817-272-3671 or schedule a psychiatric visit by calling 817-272-2771. Eligible students have access to six free individual counseling sessions per semester, with a $10 charge for each additional visit.

Students can also download the TimelyCare app for free and have 24/7 access to virtual care services.



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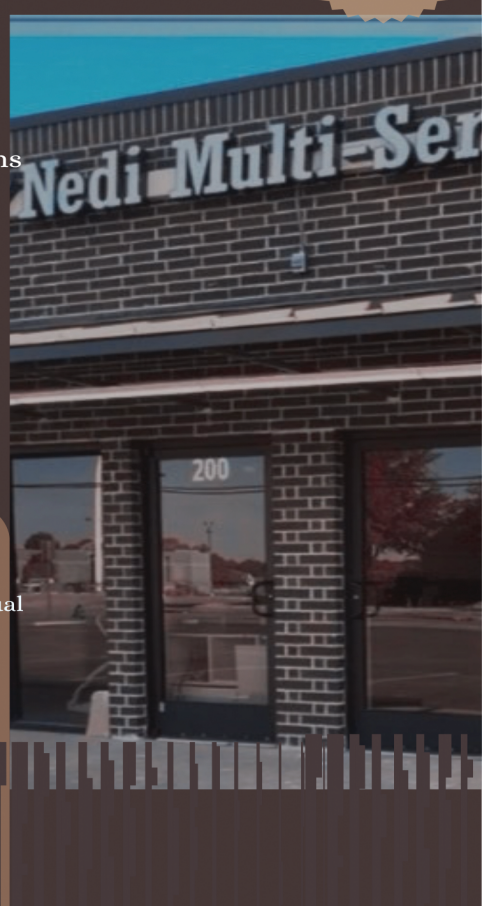
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Understanding reproductive health

UTA Health Services offers check-ups, prescriptions and more to keep students healthy.

BY ACADIA CLEMENTS
The Shorthorn senior staff

Students might not be aware of what is in their reproductive system, what the system does or how it can affect their lives.

The reproductive system is a collection of organs and a matrix of hormone production that work together. This system looks different for men and women, with varying organs that have the same goal: reproduction.

Jaquetta Reeves, College of Nursing and Health Innovation assistant professor, said reproductive health is much broader than pregnancy. Reeves said it refers to the physical, emotional and social well-being of people in relation to the reproductive system throughout a person's entire life.

Whether it's the start of a menstrual cycle, sexually transmitted infections or reproductive cancers, students should think about their reproductive health. Students should also have access to accurate information and appropriate healthcare, she said.

The reproductive system has many organs that help the system function.

For women, this system helps regulate their menstrual cycles, produce estrogen and keeps them healthy.

These are the female reprductive organs:

Ovaries: Small, oval-shaped glands that produce eggs, or oocytes, and estrogen.

Fallopian tubes: The tunnels where eggs travel to the uterus.

Uterus: A hollow, pear-shaped organ where the fetus resides during pregnancy.

Cervix: A lower, narrow canal between the uterus and the vagina.

Vagina: The birthing canal.

Vulva: The external portion of the female organs.

For men, this system's main jobs are to produce, maintain and transport sperm and protective fluid.

These are the male reproductive organs:

Testes: Oval organs that produce sperm and testosterone.

Epididymis: A C-shaped tube that transports and stores sperm cells.

Ductus deferens: A long, muscular tube that transports mature sperm to the urethra.

Urethra: A tube that carries urine and sperm outside the body.

This system also includes the penis and the ejaculatory ducts.

While this system is by and large used for reproduction through sexual intercourse, students can be exposed to bacteria and sexually transmitted infections, like gonorrhea and HIV. When sexually active, it is important to understand what is going on in the body and ways to prevent pregnancy and disease.

"I want students to think about being safe, and being safe when you're sexually active it's not just using condoms or some type of protection, but also getting yourself tested annually or quarterly," Reeves said.

Health Services director Dr. Angela Middleton said if students feel different than what they're used to, whether it's a rash, a difference in menstrual cycles or a lump or bump, they should get that looked at because they can be signs that something may be going on.

"Don't hesitate to come in and have a chat with one of our healthcare providers," Middleton said. "A lot of times, students will be worried about things that are actually very normal, so we can go over things like that with them."

Here are some resources available to students:

Health Services

If students have specific questions about their health, the clinic offers free visits to talk to a healthcare provider. Furthermore, the clinic can prescribe medicine and run tests and labs.

Health Promotions (Ransom Hall 301)

Students can use the service to talk about general sexual health, go over sexual intercourse and other topics. Students can also access the condom closet with free condoms.

CAN Community Health

Located on Matlock Centre Circle, the service provides STD and HIV testing and treatment, pharmacy services, PrEP services and dental care.

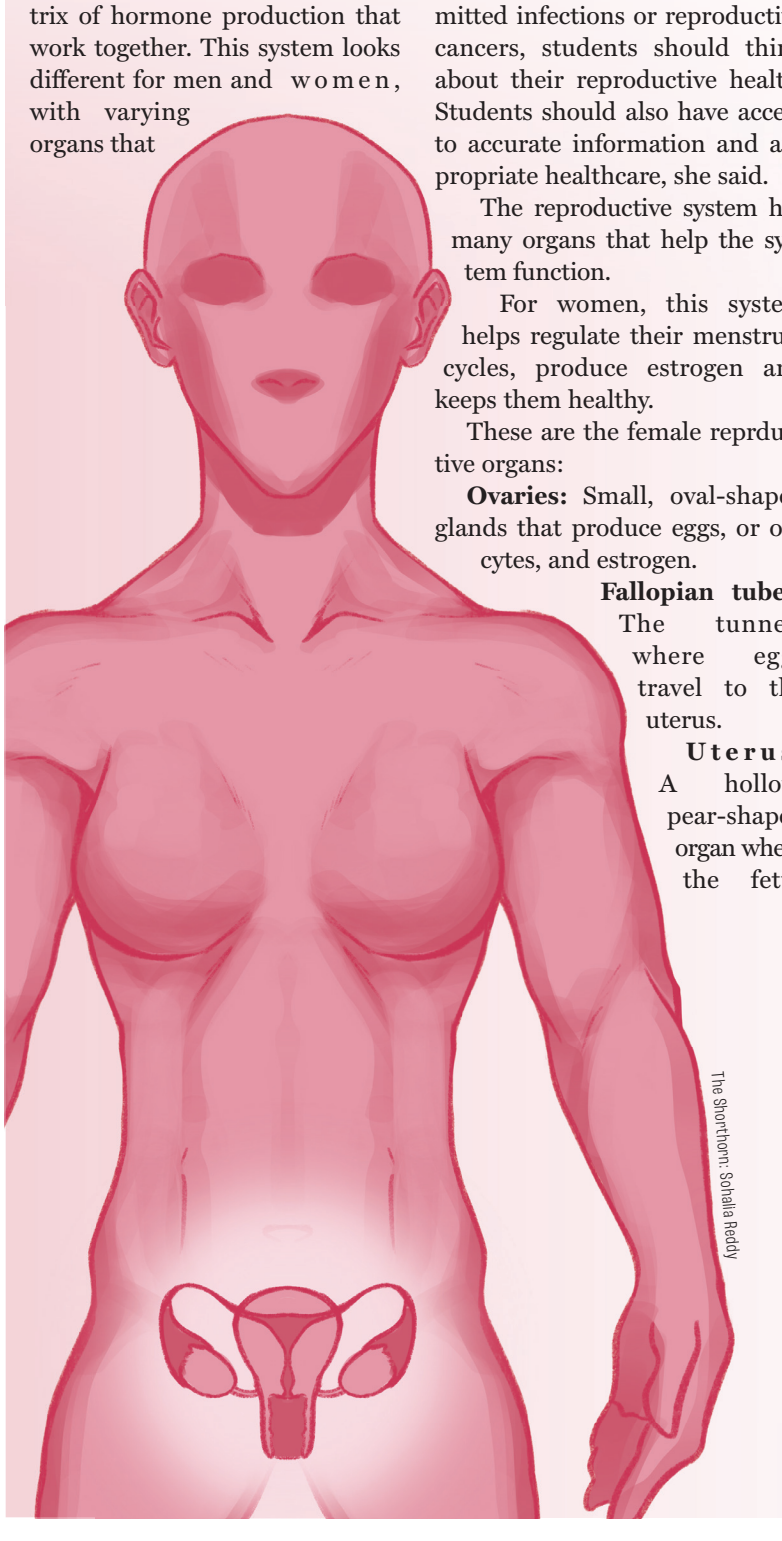
HELP Center for LGBTQ+ Health

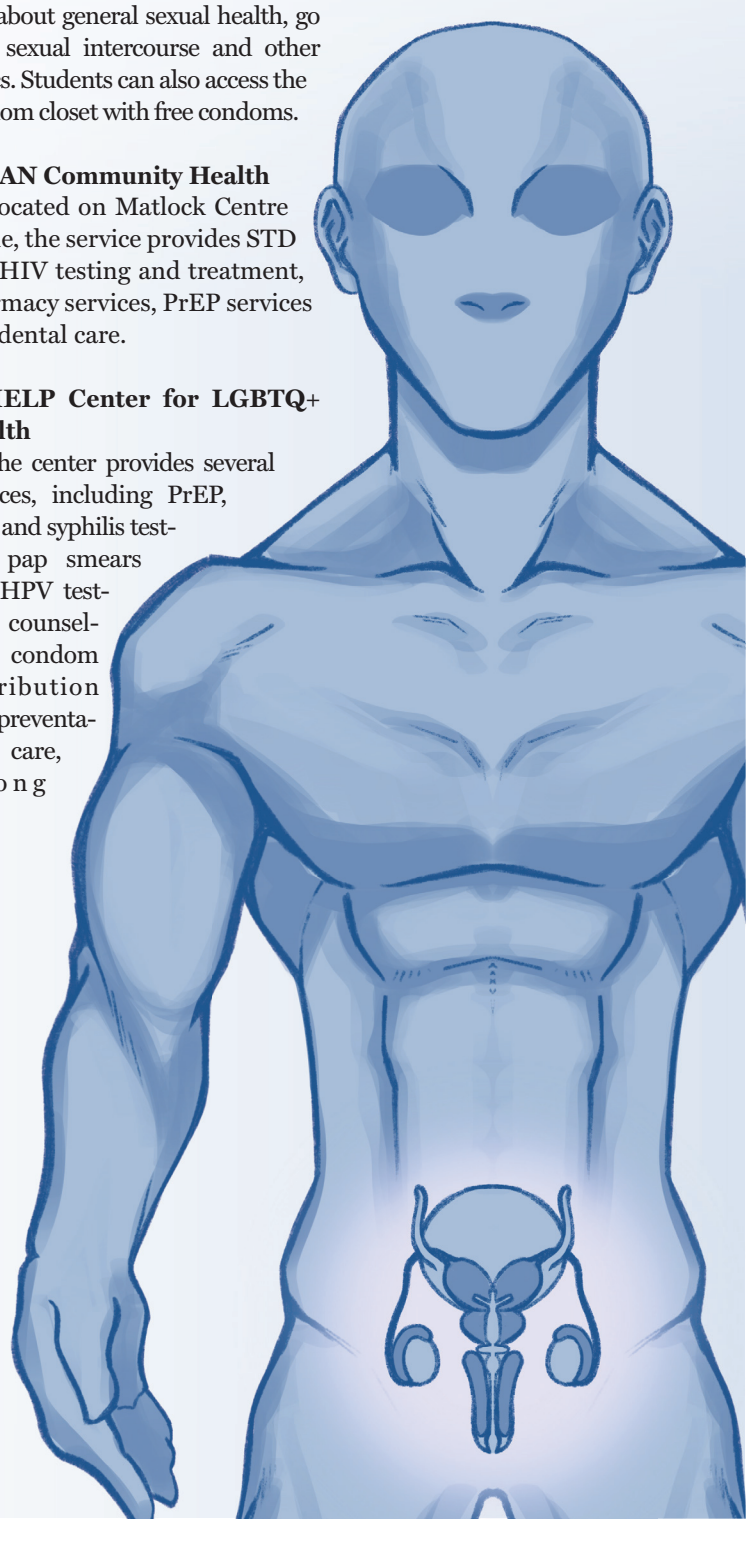
The center provides several services, including PrEP, HIV and syphilis testing, pap smears and HPV testing, counseling, condom distribution and preventative care, among other services.

Planned Parenthood

The organization provides many reproductive health services, including annual wellness exams, birth control, breast cancer screenings, cervical cancer services and gender-affirming healthcare, among other services.

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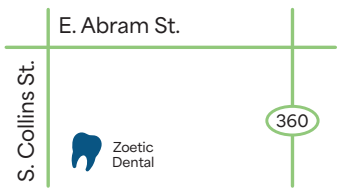
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Gym offers workout, dining, social areas

The Maverick Activities Center includes cardio equipment and various courts.

BY TY ROLAND
The Shorthorn sports editor

The Maverick Activities Center is more than just a gym. It's also an educational building, a study area, an event center, and during the renovation of the University Center, a designated place where students can hang out.

The building includes over 90 pieces of cardio equipment, 11 volleyball courts, 10 badminton courts, seven basketball courts, five racquetball courts, four multipurpose rooms, two indoor running tracks, an indoor soccer court, a game room, a climbing wall and a protein shake bar for students.

Josh Hale, assistant director of informal and special events at Campus Recreation, said the MAC acts almost like a replacement for the University Center while the building is under construction.

"We are essentially I like to call the UC 2.0 right now with the renovation of the UC taking place," Hale said. "We are a lounge space, a study space, an academic space, from just places to sit and mingle with friends, to do homework, to even get a shake from Shake Smart."

Just steps away from the Shake Smart, a Subway stand was added to the first floor of the Maverick Activities Center this fall. Students can find it at the bookend of the computer lab, next to the room where the esports team practices.

Some students, such as Braylen Brown, supply chain management junior who typically uses the machines in the weight room, said they welcomed the new restaurant.

"That would be very nice, I'm not going to lie, especially after a workout or preworkout," he said. "Go there, eat, then come here. It'd be a lot better than maybe getting Chick-fil-A or whatever."

Hale said Campus Recreation also hosts Food for Thought, a series of online presentations focused on science-based diets and nutrition. The series is presented from noon to 1 p.m. Wednesdays on Microsoft Teams by Stacie Ellis, UTA's registered dietitian.

Even the lesser-used areas of the MAC, Hale said, have been refurbished into spaces that see much more use than before, such as the racquetball courts being repurposed into table tennis rooms.

Even the lounge area upstairs, which previously had its borders defined by ceiling-to-floor curtains, has been walled off to block sound from the basketball courts and now operates as a presentation room.

"When we are looking at spaces inside the MAC, we are always looking at spaces that may be underutilized, and how can we essentially convert them or refresh them to be more student-focused and more utilized by students," Hale said.

Some of the building's biggest draws are its weight room and basketball courts. At nearly all hours the MAC is open, one can find students lifting or shooting hoops.

Many students, like industrial engineering junior Neftali Rodriguez, simply love the facility's availability.

"That's just really convenient since I have varying schedules," Rodriguez said. "It just allows me to come by, work out for however long I need to, then go along with the rest of my day."

The MAC is open from 6 a.m. to midnight on weekdays and noon to midnight on weekends.

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The Shorthorn: Treyson Abe

Students walk through the second floor of the Maverick Activities Center on Sept. 23. The center is open from 6 a.m. to midnight on weekdays and noon to midnight on weekends.



The Shorthorn: Treyson Abe

Cardio equipment is on the second floor of the Maverick Activities Center on Sept. 23. Students can use over 90 pieces of cardio equipment.

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Stretch to the limit with 8 yoga poses

Yoga combines movement, breathing and mindfulness to support physical and mental wellness.

STORY AND ILLUSTRATION BY
ANAYAH DARRETT
The Shorthorn staff

In the hustle of college life, students can find themselves without time to work out or decompress.

Yoga can relieve stress and pain while improving strength, mobility and immune system function.

The exercise is considered a form of moving meditation, bringing peace and balance in addition to the health benefits that support better sleep habits and anxiety management.

The Shorthorn has put together a yoga routine to guide students into a state of relaxation.

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Mountain pose

Stand tall with your feet firmly planted hip-width apart. The mountain pose is an entry-level pose that helps balance the mind and body before the exercise begins.



Upward salute

Transition by standing tall with the feet hip-width apart. Disperse the weight onto the outside of your feet, and raise your arms over your head. The upward salute opens up the upper body and stretches the stomach, aiding digestion.



Standing forward bend

Bring the body upright and back into the mountain pose. Fold forward, rolling toward the floor slowly and reaching the hands as far down as possible. The standing forward bend relieves lower back pain and improves hip flexibility.



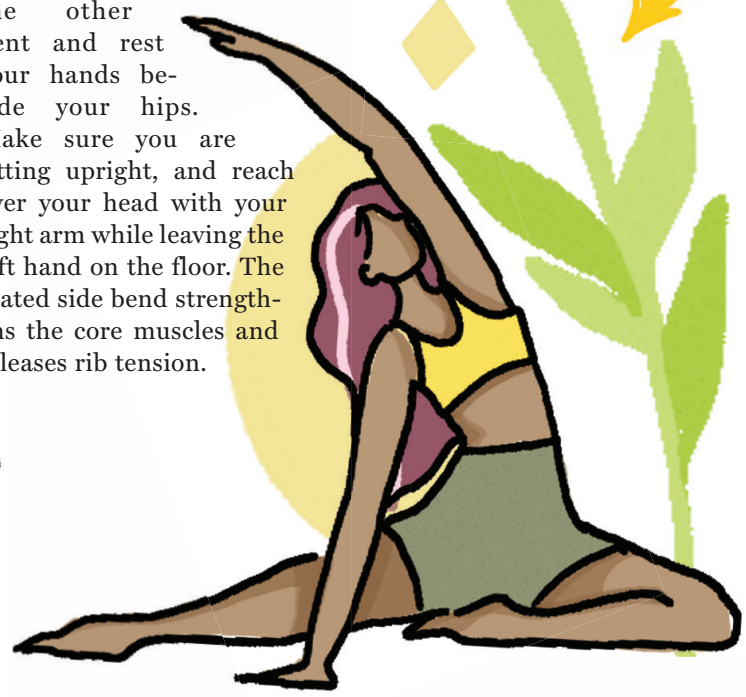
Downward dog

Get onto your hands and knees and place your feet under your body, keeping your knees slightly bent; keep your hands planted on the ground and push your body into a triangular shape. The downward dog decompresses the spine through the neck and lengthens the hamstrings.



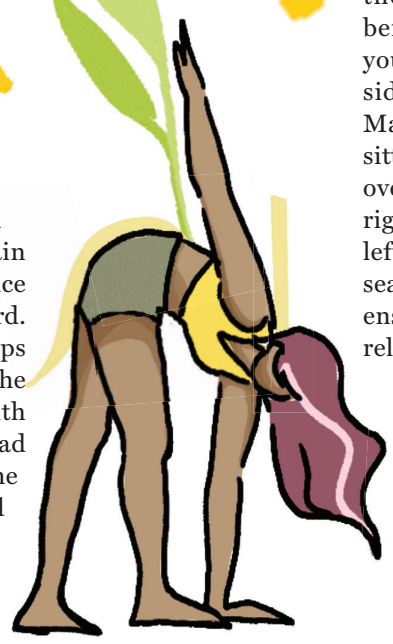
Cobra

Now lie down with your chin on the floor with the palms of your hands flat on the floor under your shoulders and your legs together. Pull your knees up and press your hips into the floor, lifting your head and chest off the floor without using your arms. The cobra counteracts the postural effects of prolonged sitting.



Seated side bend

Sit with one leg straight and the other bent and rest your hands beside your hips. Make sure you are sitting upright, and reach over your head with your right arm while leaving the left hand on the floor. The seated side bend strengthens the core muscles and releases rib tension.



Revolved forward bend

Revert to the mountain pose and jump to a wide stance with the toes pointing inward. Fold forward from the hips and place both hands on the floor, then twist the torso with one arm rising above the head and the other brushing the floor. The revolved forward bend improves spinal flexibility and range of motion.



Tree pose

Moving from the mountain pose, slowly slide the right foot up the left leg as high as you can balance. The tree pose helps increase balance and strength.

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BUILD A HEALTHY PLATE

Students should incorporate a mix of vegetables, fruits, grains, proteins, dairy and fats into their diets.

STORY AND ILLUSTRATION BY RYLEIGH HOOD
The Shorthorn design editor

Between the accessibility of fast food and restrictive views of healthy eating, it can be hard to settle into creating balanced meals in college.

However, good nutritional habits support steady energy and digestion, which can help students focus in classes and feel less tired during the day.

Balanced eating does not need to be complicated. It can be as simple as incorporating more diverse snacks and sides into one's daily meals.

By including the different food groups into meals, students can better round out their diet day to day.

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Healthy eating is essential

The U.S. Department of Agriculture offers balanced recipes online.

BY GABRIELLE JANKOWSKI
The Shorthorn staff

Healthy meals are important, especially for people who want to eat better without breaking the bank.

According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Healthy Eating Index, a tool providing data-driven understanding of diet quality, the average score for Americans between 19 and 59 years old is 57 out of 100.

The American Heart Association provides guidance for how to build a healthy plate, based on eating 2,000 calories a day.

The association recommends about 2.5 cups of vegetables, 2 cups of fruit, 3 to 6 ounces of grains, 3 cups of dairy, 5.5 ounces of protein and 9 teaspoons of fats and oil daily.

The USDA also offers recipes online that are healthy and affordable, along with resources on where to find affordable ingredients.

Included is a recipe for Mediterranean chicken and white bean salad.

Recipe
Total time: 20 minutes
Makes 4 servings

Ingredients
1 cup of cooked chicken thighs, skinless and diced
1 (15.5 ounce) canned low-sodium white beans, drained
1 cucumber peeled and diced into ½ inch pieces
¼ cup onion, peeled, chopped into ½ inch pieces
2 tablespoons of vegetable oil
¼ cup of lemon juice
1 tablespoon fresh or dried basil
¼ teaspoon of salt
¼ teaspoon of pepper
Pita bread (to serve)

Instructions
Combine the vegetable oil, lemon juice, basil, salt and pepper in a small bowl for the dressing.

Place the remaining ingredients in a large bowl and add the dressing, gently tossing together until combined. People can add additional vegetables like ¼ cup of diced bell pepper or celery.

Serve immediately with pita bread or refrigerate for up to two days.

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Meal prepping saves time and money

Having food prepared can help students eat out less and avoid extra stress.

BY GABRIELLE JANKOWSKI
The Shorthorn staff



The Shorthorn: Emmanuel Pizano

Fruit is sold during the Downtown Arlington Farmers Market on Sept. 12 on the corner of Front and Center streets. The U.S. Department of Agriculture offers free online recipes for easy healthy meals.

UTA offers many dining options for students, like the Connection Café and The Market at the University Center. For some, dining on campus is not convenient, resulting in them having to find other ways to eat.

One alternative students may find helpful is meal prepping. It can be customized to personal preferences to manage one's health through food.

Tyler Albers, executive chef for Maverick Dining, said he has found that meal prepping helps his family.

"I work pretty late nights, so I have to do some of the heavier lifting of prepping the meals so it's a lot quicker for my wife to put together for our kids," Albers said.

Making things easier is the name of the game. Prepping at least one meal can relieve some stress in daily life.

Eduardo Maya, an architecture major, said he finds meal prepping helpful. Maya said it helped him financially and with his health goals.

"It's cheaper than going out every time and kinda have an idea of what I'm eating, my goals for calorie intake," he said.

Maya said it also helps him manage his schedule.

"I don't have the time to actually cook every day," he said. "It's easier."

For many students keeping track of schedules, ensuring they have time to eat is vital for keeping up the energy needed for student success.

The first step is planning. This is vital as it helps keep everything in order so that the process goes smoothly. Taking a day out of the week and planning what to eat is helpful for shopping and allows students to organize recipes and possible equipment they're going to use.

The second step is for students to know what they like. This is a personal thing; if students wouldn't eat it, why make it? Experimenting with ingredients and recipes can help them find what they like and feel more confident.

Third is for students to prep the ingredients by portioning out every meal or ensuring they know what needs to be cooked first.

Lastly is to pack the food up and safely store it.

Albers said he is used to restaurant industry containers, while his wife prefers to use glass containers with a snap-on lid that keeps the food airtight. He suggested using what works with the amount of food being made, basing it off of how much students plan on eating and how they are going to eat out of the container.

Keeping food stored properly is also important. The U.S. Department of Agriculture has a guide on how long certain foods can last refrigerated. If students don't plan on eating everything they made in a week, freezing some meals and having them ready to eat at a later time also helps.

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The Shorthorn: Ryleigh Hood

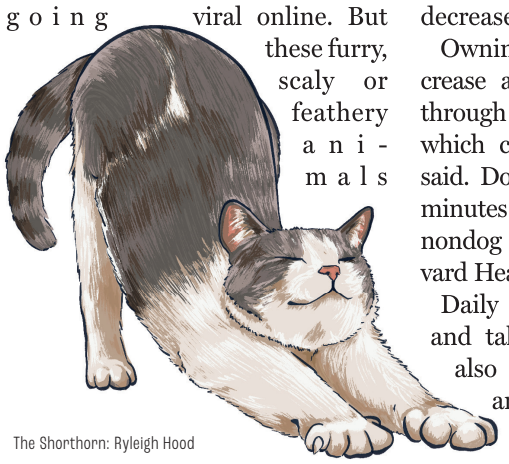
Pets decrease anxiety, improve health

Interacting with animals can provide people with comfort and calmness.

BY ACADIA CLEMENTS
The Shorthorn senior staff

Cats, dogs, reptiles, fish, rabbits, hamsters and guinea pigs. Domesticated animals have long been a familiar comfort for many. About 95 million households in America had a pet in 2025, according to a Forbes article.

Pets are cute, sometimes scary, mostly goofy and are prone to going viral online. But these furry, scaly or feathery animals provide more than just comfort.



The Shorthorn: Ryleigh Hood

Tracy Greer, psychology associate chair and professor, said pets provide several health benefits for their humans. Interacting with animals can decrease cortisol levels, a stress-related hormone, and lower blood pressure, according to a National Institute of Health newsletter.

Pets can also increase levels of oxytocin, a hormone involved in emotional bonding and regulation, Greer said. She said there are measurable changes that can be associated with owning pets, like a decrease in stress.

Owning some animals can increase a person's physical health, through activities like walking a dog, which can improve health, Greer said. Dog owners walk around 20 minutes more a day compared to nondog owners, according to Harvard Health Publishing.

Daily walks, playing with pets and taking pets on outings can also improve health physically and mentally.

"That kind of companionship can be really helpful in really combating loneliness," Greer said. "That is a huge positive impact for mental health."

According to the Human Animal Bond Research Institute, 1 in 5 Americans say they feel a lack of deep connection and understanding among others. When the organization surveyed pet owners, 80% said they turn to their pets for comfort when feeling lonely.

Pets can be a source of comfort and support. Dogs can be used as therapy animals, helping reduce patients' stress and anxiety. A study in the National Institute of Health showed that dogs could help students with ADHD focus in class, while another showed that children with autism spectrum disorder became calmer while playing with guinea pigs in the classroom.

Before adopting a pet, Greer said potential owners need to ask themselves several questions: How feasible is it that someone can care for a pet in their home? Are they home enough? Do they have the bandwidth to take care of the pet's needs, like paying for food or additional items?

"There's a degree of preparedness that's really important," she said.

While pets can benefit owners, they're not for everyone. For people allergic to certain animals, the health risks may outweigh the potential benefits. If someone is in a position where they cannot address their own needs, caring for a pet can be a challenging responsibility, Greer said.

If owning a pet isn't an option, there are other avenues. Fostering, going to animal cafés, and finding other places where someone can interact with animals can improve social skills and mental health and promote healthy habits.

"A lot of times, pets can be a really great source of comfort to people," Greer said.

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Fidget toys can enhance focus

The objects can help people regulate attention, energy and stimulation.

BY XIOANY COLLAZO
The Shorthorn staff

While some students tap their pencils, doodle or shake their legs, others reach for a fidget toy to stay focused and manage stress.

Joseph Allberg, assistant director of mental health and outreach promotion for Counseling and Psychological Services, said that although fidget toys were intended to keep children with attention deficits focused, they now help people of all ages, especially students.

A common misconception people have about fidget toys is that they are simply toys and can be a distraction. Allberg said fidget toys can help manage hyperactivity, have sensory applications and can help neurodivergent people manage environmental overstimulation.

Allberg said fidget toys serve as a self-regulation tool. If a person has high levels of energy or feels agitated and anxious, a fidget toy can be a conduit for that energy and cognitive focus. Grounding through a physical object can help pull a person from anxiety and make them focus on the present.

He said different sounds and textures found in fidget toys may be comforting to individuals, bringing concentration and calmness.

"When you provide structure you give your mind something to focus on," Allberg said.

The variety of fidget toys has grown over the years. Individuals can now choose from fidget spinners, fidget cubes, tangles and more.

"It's really about just finding your flavor," Allberg said. "There's a fidget everything now."

Because fidget toys are inexpensive, accessible and easy to use, they have increased in popularity, he said. Social media has also increased conversations about mental health and the number of people openly sharing their stories and coping methods.

"It's all about normalizing with social media," Allberg said.

On top of fidget toys, he recommends neurodivergent individuals or people with test-taking anxiety to seek accommodations.

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The Shorthorn: Emmanuel Pizano

Fidget toys are displayed on a table Sept. 30. Fidget toys are used by people of all ages to help them focus.

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Failure is an opportunity for growth

Students should separate personal identity from failures and learn from them.

BY HUDA QURESHI
The Shorthorn staff

Failure is an unavoidable part of life, often disruptive and uncomfortable, but it can also be illuminating if approached effectively.

Failure can be defined in various ways and can range from minor to major, but overall, failure is the act of falling short of one's expectations.

According to research published by the American Psychological Association, failure is difficult to learn from. This can lead to repeated mistakes, limited progress toward goals and feelings of inadequacy.

One way to address this is by separating personal identity from failures. This can be done by affirming narratives that confront failure neutrally and without judgement. If a student does poorly on an assignment, they should address the factors that led to the issue, like poor time management, instead of making any negative judgements about their identity.

Adam Annaccone, chief health and performance adviser for UTA Athletics, said he considers failure a data point in the overall journey toward achieving goals.

"It is an objective measure for us to consume and to make us better informed, but it's not ultimately the end result," Annaccone said. "You can have failure, but if you reflect on it and if you gather feedback and you learn from it, then it's not in a negative connotation. It actually can be spun into a positive aspect for individuals because you grow from it and you learn from it."

He said it is human nature to fail and then learn from those failures, which leads to growth. Annaccone said the process is like when an infant learns to walk. The key part of ultimately learning how to walk is picking oneself up after falling, an unavoidable part of learning a new skill.

"It's ingrained in us," he said. "If we weren't meant to fail, then I don't know if we would actually ever truly grow."

Growing from failure is difficult, but it's an important skill to practice, and it creates the opportunities necessary for success.



The Shorthorn: Anayah Darrett

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Alone time can carry health benefits

Being by themselves can give students balance, creativity and energy.

BY KENNEDY HARVEY
The Shorthorn staff

In the middle of a busy semester, students might benefit from spending time by themselves.

Alone time can increase creativity, social energy and foster self-exploration, according to VeryWell Mind, an online well-being platform.

Despite its positive benefits, solitude can be intimidating due to social stigma and a lack of experience with being alone.

However, students may need alone time if they notice they are short-tempered, easily irritated, bored, overwhelmed or having trouble concentrating. Solitude may also be needed if students start to feel anxious about spending time with other people.

For extroverts it might be challenging to find alone time, while it might come more naturally and be energizing for introverts, according to the website. Each person, regardless of personality type, has a different need for alone time and social interaction.

Students can find their own balance by planning when they would like to spend time alone and what they would like to do.

Downtime can be an opportunity for students to explore creativity and hobbies or to relax. Common hobbies include journaling, reading and crafting.

Students can also spend time taking a walk or a break from social media and devices. Other activities can include having dinner, going to the movies or going to concerts and events alone.

Solitude does not have to be a certain amount of time. Students can take a few minutes or longer, depending on their needs.

Setting boundaries regarding alone time might be difficult for those with family or other obligations. To make it easier, students should tell family members, friends or roommates that they need time alone.

Returning the favor and respecting others' boundaries when they need solitude can make it easier to discuss. Students might also have to consider flexibility when planning downtime.



The Shorthorn: Annie Tran

VeryWell Mind recommends reframing alone time as voluntary and productive solitude to overcome any personal fears.

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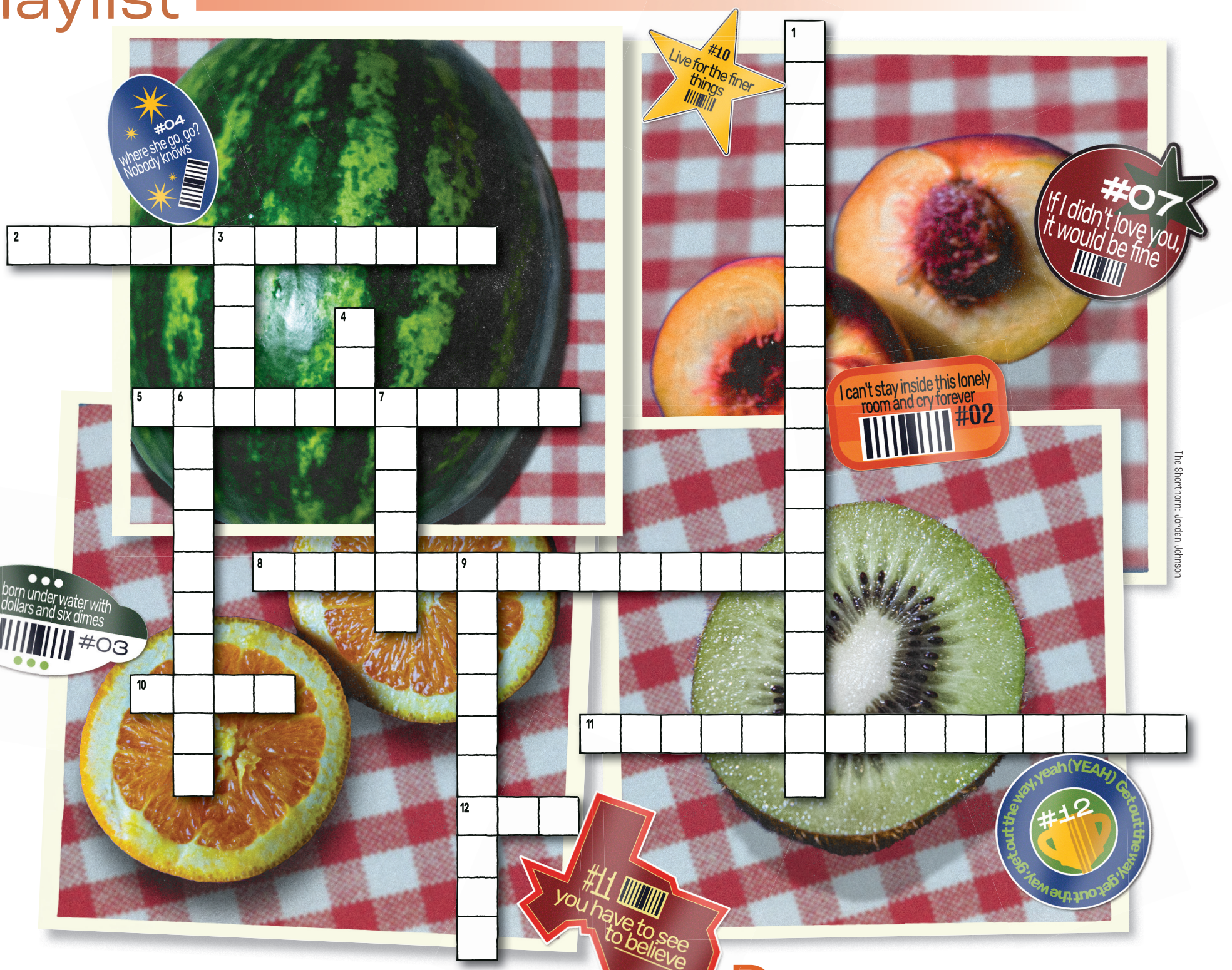
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Playlist



The Shorthorn: Jordan Johnson

Across

2. Sung by country music star Dolly Parton, this single is about a young woman contemplating attending a neighbor's party.

5. Released in 2022, this title track quickly garnered online virality due to the performing duo's alternative boom bap style and its ear-catching intro.

8. This song by the American rock band The Killers was nominated for best rock song at the 2005 Grammys.

10. This is the final song on R&B sister duo Chloe x Halle's third album.

11. This 1993 country hit by Little Texas can serve as an anthem for the Lone Star State.

12. Recognized by many as a quintessential hype edit song, this track is performed by a Southern California native, Jay Rock, featuring Kendrick Lamar.

Scan to listen to the full playlists

Down

1. Featured on her album "Mother" this Cleo Sol song is about self-love and acceptance.

3. Released in February 1997, this song served as the debut single for a Dallas-born neo-soul artist.

4. This Katseye track was released on the 2025 EP "Beautiful Chaos."

6. This Jack Johnson tune was featured on the "Curious George" motion picture album.

7. Featured on Chappell Roan's debut album, this song is named after a very popular warm beverage often served in the morning.

9. This is the second song on the "Dragon Age: Inquisition - The Bard Songs" soundtrack.

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6 cozy video games to relieve stress

Video games like "Stardew Valley" can help students relax.

BY NOAH LITTLE
The Shorthorn opinion editor

As the semester moves forward, students may need low-cost, low-stakes ways to decompress.

According to an article published in JMIR Serious Games, a multidisciplinary journal, commercial video games are a great addition to traditional therapy and mental health practices.

Video games are an inexpensive, readily accessible and internationally available resource for the mitigation of some mental health issues, according to the article.

No matter a student's preferred console, these six cozy games could enable relaxation while keeping the brain engaged.

'Tiny Glade'

According to Steam, "Tiny Glade" is a small diorama builder where players can create whimsical castles, cozy cottages and romantic ruins.

The game can be played on any PC with Windows or macOS not using Intel processors.

'ReStory'

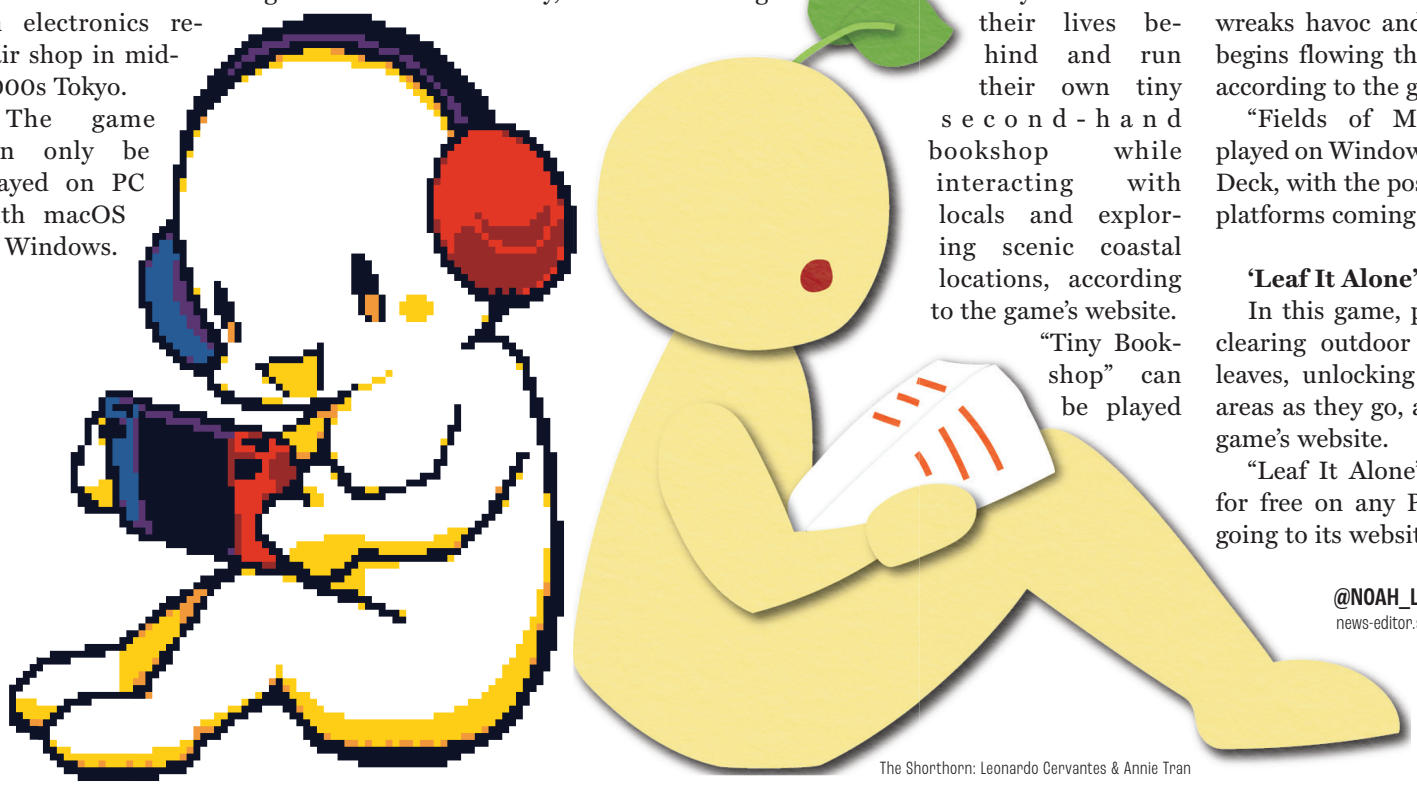
According to Steam, players can restore iconic video game consoles, cell phones, music players and other nostalgic devices while running an electronics repair shop in mid-2000s Tokyo.

The game can only be played on PC with macOS or Windows.

'Stardew Valley'

In this game, players have inherited their grandfather's old farm in the sleepy town of Stardew Valley, where they can explore the area and become part of the local community, all while making the farm of their dreams, according to the game's website.

"Stardew Valley" can be played on most platforms, including consoles.



The Shorthorn: Leonardo Cervantes & Annie Tran

'Tiny Bookshop'

Players can leave their lives behind and run their own tiny second-hand bookshop while interacting with locals and exploring scenic coastal locations, according to the game's website.

"Tiny Bookshop" can be played on most platforms.

'Fields of Mistria'

Much like "Stardew Valley," this game allows players to create their dream farm. Players help restore the town of Mistria after an earthquake wreaks havoc and strange magic begins flowing through the land, according to the game's website.

"Fields of Mistria" can be played on Windows PC and Steam Deck, with the possibility of other platforms coming soon.

'Leaf It Alone'

In this game, players focus on clearing outdoor areas of fallen leaves, unlocking new tools and areas as they go, according to the game's website.

"Leaf It Alone" can be played for free on any PC or laptop by going to its website.

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Relax by reading these 6 cozy novels

Comforting stories can help students relieve stress from classes.

BY SAIRAM MARUPUDI
The Shorthorn engagement editor

Books can provide an outlet for decompression as students navigate classes and work.

A study published in the National Library of Medicine suggests reading for pleasure can contribute to well-being by providing opportunities for relaxation and escapism.

Whether readers prefer magical coffee shops, small-town witches or quiet bookstores, these six cozy books offer an escape from the stress of the semester.

'The Very Secret Society of Irregular Witches' by Sangu Mandanna

Mika Moon is one of the few witches in Britain, where they are expected to hide their magic and avoid one another.

Her isolated life changes when she is invited to the mysterious Nowhere House to teach three young witches how to control their powers.

'The Kamogawa Food Detectives' by Hisashi Kashiwai, translated by Jesse Kirkwood

Hidden along a quiet street in Kyoto, Japan, the Kamogawa Diner offers its customers more than a place to eat.

Father-daughter duo Nagare and Koishi Kamogawa work as food detectives, tracking down ingredients, recipes and memories to recreate meaningful meals from their customers' pasts.

'Welcome to the Hyunam-Dong Bookshop' by Hwang Bo-Reum, translated by Shanna Tan

Burned out after following the path she thought she was supposed to take, Yeongju leaves her career and opens a neighborhood bookshop in Seoul, South Korea.

The slice-of-life novel focuses on books, community and learning how to build a fulfilling life outside of traditional expectations.

'The House in the Cerulean Sea' by T.J. Klune

Linus Baker lives a quiet life working as a caseworker for the Department in Charge of Magical Youth until he receives a highly classified assignment.

What begins as another government assignment gradually forces Baker to reconsider his ideas about family, belonging and the life he wants to live.

'The Crescent Moon Tearoom' by Stacy Sivinski

Three sisters run a magical tearoom where they use tea leaves to tell their customers' fortunes. Change sweeps in and challenges their close-knit family.

The novel blends witchcraft, baked goods and sisterhood with a cozy autumn atmosphere.

'The Wishing Game' by Meg Shaffer

Lucy Hart has always found comfort in the Clock Island books, a children's series she loved growing up, and dreams of creating a better life for herself and the child she hopes to adopt.

When the author of the series announces he'll be writing a new book, Lucy and others must compete for the chance to win the only copy.

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Students connect on campus through organizations, events

Clubs and informal communities can provide opportunities to socialize.

BY NANDA ACHARYA
The Shorthorn staff

UTA is notoriously categorized as a commuter school. Many students leave campus shortly after their classes end, creating a lack of social exposure. However, some students might want to know how to establish their social life on campus.

Computer science senior Michelle Phan said she took the initiative to socialize with people on campus when she was a freshman by joining different clubs.

The club she was mainly a part of was the Society of Asian Scientists and Engineers, she said. The organization helped her meet new people through social events and volunteering opportunities where everyone worked toward the same goal, she said.

Phan said a good way to find information about student organizations is through Instagram.

"A lot of organizations on campus post all of their events, and you can also see pictures that they post," she said. "You can see what they do, the type of people that are there."

Phan encourages underclassmen to join campus clubs instead of going home after class because it made her college years more worth it.

"I've made a lot of friends through these organizations that I still keep up with today," Phan said. "My college experience wouldn't have been as enjoyable if I hadn't joined those clubs."

Computer engineering sophomore Julian Rodriguez said the skating culture at UTA has helped him find connections on campus.

Rohen Stiles, another skater and an artificial intelligence for business freshman, said in college, it's easier to talk to people compared to in high school.

"If you really wanted to, you could talk to anybody," he said.

Rodriguez, who transferred to UTA, said the campus has a lot more diversity than his previous school, which he finds intriguing.

He said there is a good avenue for social events at UTA.

"There's plenty of resources on campus, and there's plenty of places to go, events to go to, social events, but it's up to you to look for them and to actively go do that for yourself," he said.



The Shorthorn: Leonardo Cervantes

More information on campus events can be found on the UTA events calendar website. MavEngage provides information on student organizations.

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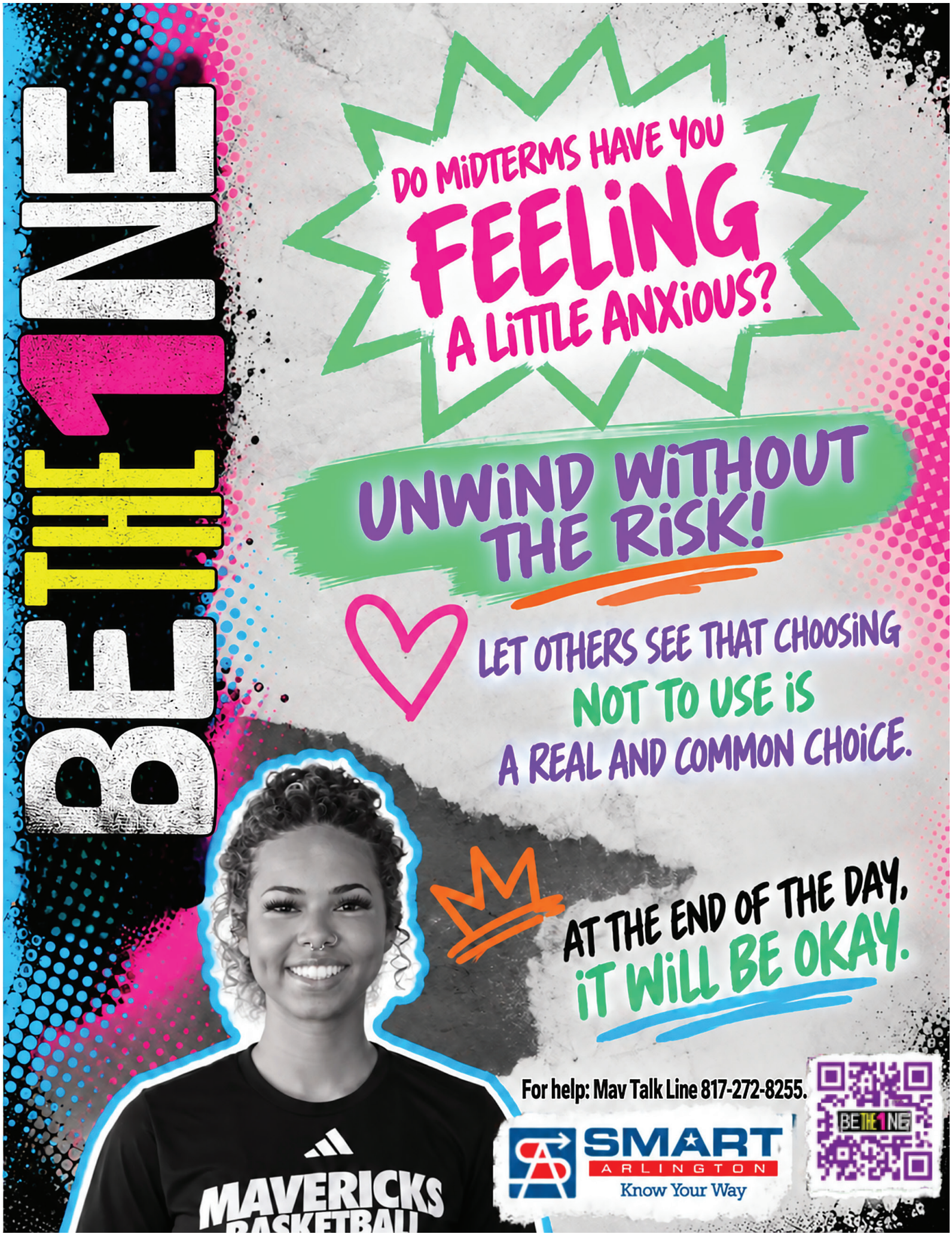
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*Subject to change without notice. Receive a $250 reward when you open a new primary free checking account and perform the following actions within the first 90 days after account opening: sign up for eStatements, make monthly deposits totaling $500 or more per month for three consecutive months, and conduct 10 or more qualifying debit card transactions per month for three consecutive months. One $250 offer per individual. New primary checking accounts only. Must be 18 years or older to qualify. Must present promo code CHECKING250 at time of account opening. Offer valid through November 30, 2026. Checking account holders meeting qualification criteria will automatically receive $250 reward deposited into their checking account within 60 days of meeting qualification criteria. Qualifying transactions include debit card purchases and exclude ATM withdrawals/deposits and transactions through payment service providers such as Venmo, CashApp, Zelle, and others.

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CREDIT UNION