

Case Study

Student Mental Health Emergencies: Using Custom Mobile Safety Apps to Save Lives

THE CHALLENGE

When picturing an emergency situation occurring at a university or college, one of the first things that comes to mind are campus shootings. Many events over the past 10 years have reminded us of these fears

However, it's easy to overlook emergency situations regarding an individual's mental and emotional state, as they do not always receive the same amount of attention in the media. These types of situations also require immediate intervention and the appropriate trained personnel to assist the individual as soon as possible.

According to Jack.org, an organization that acts as the Canadian national network of young leaders transforming how we think about mental health, suicide is the second leading cause of death for young adults, as it accounts for 24% of deaths among 15-24 year olds. Looking more closely at Canadian post-secondary students, a 2013 report from the Globe and Mail found that 9.5 percent of students said they had contemplated taking their own life in the past year and that 1.3 percent of students had actually attempted suicide.



DALHOUSIE
UNIVERSITY

Customer

Dalhousie University is a large public research university in Nova Scotia, Canada, with four campuses and more than 20,000 enrolled students.

Industry

Higher Education

Challenges solved

School Safety, Mental Health
Emergency Response

Solutions

- AppArmor



THE SOLUTION

AppArmor custom mobile safety apps are, generally speaking, loaded with the school's mental health resources and emergency contacts, and enabled with click-to-call features that allow the user to get in contact with staff immediately. A recent incident involving a student at risk due to their mental state demonstrates how both the student and responder were able to utilize the features of their school's mobile safety app, and protect the life of a student. The situation is recounted by a staff member from one of our partner institutions, Dalhousie University, and explains how the mobile safety app DalSAFE was able to assist both the student in distress and the response team:

THE SOLUTION

Despite being a prototype, the custom safety app provided the responder with a way to immediately contact the Mental Health Mobile Crisis Team so that they could reach the student. Without the safety app, the responder wouldn't have been able to contact the Mobile Crisis Unit with the same ease and quickness.

The benefit here is obvious: the custom mobile safety app aggregated the campus-specific safety resources and contacts, which provided the user and responder with a simplified path to assistance. The fact that the student reached out to a support team in an emotionally unstable condition is a powerful statement as well, and shows how users regard the app as a reliable resource.

"While we were still in the planning stages of DalSAFE, they sent me a working prototype of the app so we could explore its functionality. In short, it was an extreme test drive. One particular weekend, I was working as extra duty at an on-campus sporting event and was alerted to a student that was presenting as emotionally distressed. She disclosed that she made a suicide attempt earlier that day and made it clear that she planned to complete later that evening. I was the only one who had access to DalSAFE app and didn't have the contact information for the Mobile Crisis Unit otherwise. With just a touch of a button, I got in contact with the police mobile crisis team and they were on scene within minutes."

Jacob Macisaac
University Security Team
Dalhousie University

A custom mobile safety app gives students instant access to mental health resources and contacts, ensuring that students are informed on mental health issues and how to respond to issues with themselves or their peers.

To learn more, visit: www.motorolasolutions.com



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