



Sharpen Services Overview

Sharpen offers a variety of services to improve mental health outcomes and decrease health disparities for both organizations and communities. Each of our services are outlined in detail through the links below:

Sharpen Technology System.	2
What is the Sharpen System?	2
Data Gathered from Sharpen System:	3
Sharpen’s Evidence-Based Courses.	4
Sharpen Customized Content.	4
Sharpen Research.	4
Sharpen Team	5
References Cited	6

Sharpen Technology System.

The benefits of the Sharpen system includes participant increase in:

1. **mental health awareness** and literacy through our award-winning, evidence based mental health trainings
2. **access** to evidence-based healthy coping toolkits
3. **engagement** in the discussion around mental health
4. **connection** to validated mental health screenings
5. **trauma-informed** school and community best practices
6. **help-seeking** and connection to treatment resources

What is the Sharpen System?

The Sharpen system is built through a social-ecological framework that improves the shared protective factors for mental disorders, suicide ideation and trauma. Sharpen provides (i) health promotion programs that build protective factors for resilience (universal/promotion); (ii) screening and targeted services to those who need more support (secondary prevention); and (iii) connection to intensive services to those who need care (tertiary intervention) as outlined in the figure to the left.



The library of Sharpen age-appropriate, psychoeducational content has been created with over 200 researchers in the field of public health, psychology and medicine and has shown to decrease stigmaⁱ, improve resiliency, mental health literacyⁱⁱ, and increase engagement with mental health treatmentⁱⁱⁱ. The Sharpen system has been part of over 50 research collaborations – list is available at www.SharpenMinds.com/Research. The

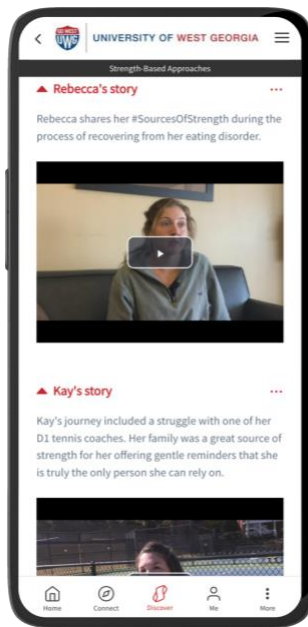
library of culturally-competent and evidence-based psychoeducational modules are grouped into four primary categories that relate directly to the shared protective factors. Our library improves: mental health literacy (MHL), emotional wellbeing (EW), mindfulness-based stress reduction (MBSR) and suicide prevention (SP) across diverse audience groups and populations.

Each Sharpen application contains a customized library of modular content that includes peer-focused documentary film footage. In addition, the modules are further customized based on “user story demographics” (parent, educator, high school student, veteran, etc.) specific to the organization deploying the app. For example, a high school student would see other high school student videos in their library of mental health literacy and mindfulness modules to decrease stigma and increase engagement.

In addition to a library of modular content, the Sharpen system connects individuals to mental health screening tools, referral pathways to community resources, and links to community organizations (such as free and reduced substance use and behavioral health treatment

providers) within their zip code as well as 988 and other crisis response support. *The aim is for every individual to receive access to the Sharpen protective content directly from their mobile device or computer, thereby increasing awareness of mental health and healthy coping mechanisms.*

Sharpen enables organizations or communities to deploy a vetted library of psychoeducational content through a multi-tiered system of support (MTSS). This provides end-users with immediate, audience-appropriate tools that increase both individual and community resilience. In addition to its robust content creation and delivery capability, Sharpen is a HIPAA compliant communication platform in which moderation and authorizations are controlled by the client organization's administration, and by Sharpen staff.



Sharpen's peer-to-peer, documentary film educational modules consist of a robust library of over 600 courses. The library is built using eight evidence-based protective factors shown through research to improve resilience, while offering a toolkit for creating a healthy social environment that encourages mental health awareness, prevention and recovery support. Most notably, users are immediately directed to a vetted library of resources in their zip code for appropriate treatment and support services. For example, a college student with symptoms of depression is directed to the university counseling center. In addition, the same student is provided connection and contact information for local support groups, along with protective coping tools and strength-based video stories of resilience. Users receive protective content that is pro-actively scheduled at a regular interval (for example, a mindfulness activity once per week on a Sunday evening). These activities normalize the daily conversation around mental health, decrease mental health stigma, and improve protection for the user through Sharpen's mindfulness based stress reduction (SMBSR) interventions.

The Sharpen technology is easy to implement through Single Sign-On (SSO) and/or integration with existing LMS platforms, allowing users to access educational resources for coping, thriving, nourishing, and healing in one, discreet location. Users are not required to access external sites, which often leads to attrition with technological interventions^{iv}. Furthermore, the unique design allows providers or clinicians the ability to deploy the Sharpen app in seconds via text message which improves continuity of care. The videos within the app adapt to the available bandwidth at a user's current location, helping address broadband barriers. Sharpen also allows researchers the ability to embed consent, surveys and assessments into the technology and receive results instantly. Sharpen can seamlessly integrate into any Application Programming Interface (API) to allow, for example, Qualtrics surveys to tie into the user experience without having to leave the app. Sharpen's robust CMS offers each organization within the ecosystem a real-time dashboard of de-identified user data and the ability to allow all institutional researchers that are part of the network access to a full range of data collected throughout the entire ecosystem.

Data Gathered from Sharpen System:

The de-identified data that is provided to clients and/or qualified research partners, includes:

- 1) the number of courses, videos, and posts viewed;

- 2) the amount of content consumed (length of time spent on a video or length of time spent on a course);
- 3) Number of local resources viewed/consumed;
- 4) Time on the application;
- 5) Group and social activity on the application (whether user joins a support group, etc.);
- 6) Daily, monthly, weekly, active users on the app;
- 7) Number of times buttons for support or mentoring are accessed;
- 8) Invitations from user to others to join Sharpen,
- 9) Times of day user accesses platform and content,
- 10) The total number of users that engage mental health and suicide awareness,
- 11) Sharpen Resiliency Scale (an individualized scale outlining the protective factors increased on the app,
- 12) quiz and feedback scores from SMHL courses completed,
- 13) quiz and feedback scores from SMBSR courses completed, and
- 14) engagement data regarding the proactive mental health “mini modules” that are deployed via SMS or email.

Sharpen’s Evidence-Based Courses.

The Sharpen system contains award-winning, evidence based courses that can be accessed outside of the full Sharpen service. The library within Sharpen contains over 4,000 films and 600 modules on over 100 topics. We offer the courses through customized integration with other platforms or learning management systems. This enables us to provide all participants with access to protective content regardless of the delivery format.

Sharpen Customized Content.

The core competency of the Sharpen co-founders lies within creating engaging, content that normalizes the discussion around mental health. Our team can work with any partner agency or organization to determine the best customized content recommended for the specific audiences being served.

Sharpen customizes content based on each module created. The process typically entails a thorough strategic planning session with the Sharpen team, collaboratively developing a methodology for filming documentary style interviews with key stakeholders, filming and editing the films, assembling the films into Sharpen modular content, evaluating the modules after they are created (typically through IRB pre- post- and/or focus group participation).

[Examples of Sharpen’s content are available here.](#)

Sharpen Research.

The original reason for designing the Sharpen platform was to invite inter-disciplinary researchers into the platform in order to reduce the average time it takes for research to

translate to various populations. As a result, Sharpen has engaged with over 200 researchers who have been involved in the creation, design, implementation and evaluation of our programs. Often our team can collaborate on grant writing efforts that help bring these important research projects to life.

The Sharpen team is currently involved in over 25 research collaborations, including with Stanford Medical School, NYU Langone, Emory University, Kennesaw State, University of Georgia, Medical University of South Carolina, Edward Via College of Osteopathic Medicine, Spartanburg Regional Healthcare System, University of West Georgia and UC San Diego.

Sharpen Team.

The Sharpen platform, created by Robyn Hussa-Farrell and Tim Farrell, has been extensively designed based on 20 years of research in mental health prevention in both school and community settings. Hussa-Farrell spent 20 years as a health educator in public and private schools, delivering prevention and resiliency programs in collaboration with interdisciplinary research teams. She has deployed and scaled multi-tiered mental health literacy and suicide prevention programs in 15 states and throughout Resilient Schools initiatives.

Hussa was invited to direct the suicide prevention task force in the Upstate of South Carolina for five years, in collaboration with Dr. Alex Karydi at the Education Development Center and Zero Suicide Initiative.

Throughout her journey, Hussa-Farrell partnered with her long-time collaborator, Tim Farrell (an award-winning, New York City journalist and documentary film producer) to create a robust and engaging psychoeducational library of over 4,000 videos featuring national researchers, practitioners and individuals with lived experience sharing stories of strength. In the course of their work, they have collaborated with national organizations such as Bloomberg Philanthropies, PurposeBuilt Communities, and Esther Dyson's HICcup / Way to Wellville initiative.

In 2014 they created the Sharpen platform to deploy their award-winning programs and scale evidence-based mental health prevention programs to dozens of state agencies, local nonprofits, and behavioral health coalitions.

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