

Carleton University Library Therapy Dog Program

Erika Banski
Carleton University Library, Ottawa, Canada

Studies show that exposure to therapy dogs at colleges and universities has positive effects on student health by reducing stress, anxiety, loneliness, homesickness.

Carleton University Library's Therapy Dog program was introduced in 2017 at the end of the winter semester, a high-stress period for students working on term papers and studying for exams.

Therapy Dog visits were scheduled 2x/week in April and December, 1x/week during semester; announcements made via Library News, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and poster.

Students responded immediately, approaching the dog, sitting with him, petting him, giving treats, chatting with the handler and each other, taking photos, and inviting friends to join.

"... the tweet announcing Uncle Steven as our therapy dog was the most liked and most engaged with tweet we'd had in the library until then" (S. Gullikson).

Therapy dog work is continued today by the Carleton Therapy Dogs team who make scheduled visits to the library and other venues on campus.



UNCLE STEVEN

THE LIBRARY THERAPY DOG

