

RED FOLDER

Purpose of the Folder:

The University of Minnesota is deeply committed to the physical and emotional well-being of our students. We can all play a part by noticing worrisome behavior and responding with compassion. By sharing your concerns and intervening early you can help maintain a healthy and safe campus. This folder is designed to help you recognize indicators of student distress and how to respond and refer the student appropriately.

... worry less about saying the "right thing" than saying something ...


Indicators of Distress

| Academic: | Physical: | Personal/Interpersonal: | Indicators of Risk: |
|--|--|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Repeated absences • Decline in quality of work or classroom performance • Essays or creative work that indicate disturbing content including, extreme hopelessness, social isolation, rage or despair • Classroom disruptions | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marked changes in physical appearance including deterioration in grooming, hygiene or weight loss/gain, changes in typical clothing. • Excessive fatigue, nodding off • intoxication, hung over, or smelling of alcohol • Appearing sick or ill, repeated reports of headache or digestive problems | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tearfulness • Expressions of hopelessness, worthlessness or shame • Exaggerated personality traits (e.g., more withdrawn, animated, or irritated than usual) • Direct comments about distress, family problems, or other difficulties • Expressions of concern by other classmates or peers | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implied or direct threats of harm to self or others • Self-injurious or destructive (out of control) behavior • Written work that is dominated by themes of despair, hopelessness, suicide, violence, death, or aggression. |

The 4R Model

| Suggestions for Practice and Application | |
|--|---|
| RECOGNIZE | <p>Key questions to guide your conversation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Which areas of the student's life are most impacted? • Are the indicators of distress in multiple areas? • What seems to be the biggest area of concern? |
| ROLE | <p>Clear about personal boundaries and professional limitations; focus on behaviors and actions that can be of most use</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attend/Connect/Listen to the student or your colleague • Consult about the situation generate options for follow up • Liaise with professional staff as needed. |
| RESPOND | <p>The content of what you say will vary depending on the situation. However, there are some general guidelines you can follow to frame your response:</p> <p>Affirm and validate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reinforce help seeking behavior and requests for assistance <p>Empathize</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refrain from judgments about what "should" happen or what the student "should" do • Recognize that students are often scared and intimidated to talk about their concerns • Be willing to talk about the emotions that you're hearing and observing <p>Clarify</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To ensure accurate understanding • To build on past successes as you assist in identifying next steps |
| RESOURCES | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clarify locations and hours prior to meeting with student if possible • Does this warrant urgent consultation? |

Notes:



WHAT TO DO:

A few tips when helping a student in distress

- ✓ *If possible, gather information before you intervene. Knowing where to refer a depressed or anxious student ahead of time might save time and increase the student's confidence in you.*
- ✓ *Ensure privacy when you talk and choose a time when you are not preoccupied or rushed. If you are concerned about your safety or about anyone's behavior being misinterpreted, ask your supervisor or a trusted colleague to join you and explain why to the student.*
- ✓ *Be honest and direct; it's often best to talk in very concrete terms about what's happening.*
- ✓ *Communicate hope by reminding the student that there are always options, and things tend to look different with time.*
- ✓ *Respect the student's value system and culture.*
- ✓ *Follow up in a reasonable length of time.*
- ✓ *Recognize that the student may not immediately welcome or act upon your interventions, but you may plant a seed that blossoms later and it is never wrong to communicate kindness and concern.*
- ✓ *Consult with other professionals about your concerns by contacting any of the offices listed on right.*

Notes:

CRISIS INFORMATION

Crisis / Urgent Consultation is available at SCS and Boynton Monday - Friday, 8:00 - 4:30.

No appointment is needed to speak with a counselor for an urgent need.

If you are in a life-threatening emergency, call 911.

Or for 24-hour phone counseling, call

Crisis Connection

☎ (612) 301-4673

U of M Textline: Text "UMN" to 61222

ESSENTIAL NUMBERS

Boynton Mental Health Clinic

☎ (612) 624-1444

Student Counseling Services

☎ (612) 624-3323

Disability Resource Center

☎ (612) 626-1333

International Student and Scholar Services (ISSS)

☎ (612) 626-7100

Aurora Center

☎ (612) 626-9111

Behavioral Consultation Team

☎ (612) 626-3030

OSA Care Manager

☎ (612) 625-2517

RESPONDING TO BEHAVIORS OF CONCERN IN THE CLASSROOM

| Behaviors of Concern | Best Practices | Key Contacts |
|--|---|--|
| <p>Behaviors that make it difficult for routine work or teaching to take place due to the negative impact it has on those around.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Failure to comply with directives • Unruly or abrasive actions • Monopolizing classroom discussion | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speak with student privately • Avoid escalating by debating or engaging • If student continues to disrupt, ask student to leave the classroom • If student is uncooperative in leaving the classroom, contact security | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Center for Educational Innovation [612-625-3041] • Student Conflict Resolution Center [612-624-7272] • Office for Student Conduct and Academic Integrity [612-624-6073] |
| <p>Behaviors that cause concern for the personal well-being of that student.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marked changes in performance and/or appearance • Repeat requests for special considerations • Appearing overly nervous | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speak with student privately and use the 4R model • Document all conversations and observations • Encourage student to meet with counselor • Do not promise absolute confidentiality • Contact your supervisor or direct report | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student Counseling Services [612-624-3323] • Boynton Mental Health Clinic [612-624-1444] • Disability Resource Services [612-626-1333] • Int'l Student and Scholar Services [612-626-7100] |
| <p>Irrational behavior that makes others feel uncomfortable or scared.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disjointed thoughts • Incongruent and/or inappropriate emotional responses • Frequent or high levels of irritability • Suspicious or paranoid thoughts • Assignments with concerning themes | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If there's no immediate threat, speak with student privately • Express concern for behavior and set limits • Do not reinforce delusions • Acknowledge feelings without supporting mispercep | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student Counseling Services [612-624-3323] • Boynton Mental Health Clinic [612-624-1444] • Behavioral Consultation Team [612-626-3030] • OSA Care Manager [612-625-2517] |
| <p>Behavior that threatens the safety or well-being others.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harassment or stalking • Brandishing a weapon • Specific threats of physical harm • Intimidating behavior • Suicidal threats/gestures | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact security immediately • If student poses a danger to others, dismiss the class; address later • Avoid contact and speak calmly • Do not attempt to keep the student from leaving the room | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Campus Police / 911 • Student Counseling Services [612-624-3323] • Boynton Mental Health Clinic [612-624-1444] • Behavioral Consultation Team [612-626-3030] • OSA Care Manager [612-625-2517] |

RESPONDING TO STUDENTS IN DISTRESS PROTOCOL

Follow the chart to determine first steps in helping a student in distress

