



University of Science & Technology

Tips for Recognizing & Assisting Students in Distress

Responding to a student in distress or crisis may be uncomfortable and pose challenges. You are encouraged to seek assistance and support from the Critical Incident Task Force or S&T Counseling. Below are guidelines for recognizing and responding to common warning signs.



RECOGNIZING WARNING SIGNS

As a member of the S&T campus community, you may become aware of warning signs that indicate a need for intervention.

Marked Changes in Academic Performance or Classroom Behavior

- Poor performance, excessive absence, tardiness, or lack of preparation
- Unusual or changed pattern of interaction
- Excessive anxiety
- Exaggerated or inappropriate emotional response

Unusual Behavior or Appearance

- Depressed mood
- Restlessness, very rapid speech, irritability, or disruptive behavior
- Change in personal hygiene or appearance
- Swollen or red eyes
- Dramatic weight loss or gain

References to Suicide, Homicide or Death

- Expressed thoughts of helplessness or hopelessness
- Overt references to suicide or homicidal threats
- Isolation from friends or family

Common Issues

- Academic performance concerns, struggles
- Interpersonal conflicts (arguments, romantic break-ups, etc.)
- Financial Hardships

HOW TO TALK TO STUDENTS ABOUT YOUR CONCERNS (NON-EMERGENCY)

Be Available

Talk to the student in private and give your undivided attention
Patient, concerned listening may be enough to help the student feel supported

Listen

Listen in a sensitive, non-threatening way and express your concern without judging

Communicate

Let the student talk
Communicate understanding by paraphrasing what the student has told you

Give Hope

Assure the student that things will get better
Express there are options and suggest resources (friends, family, campus professionals)

Maintain Boundaries

Maintain clear and consistent boundaries and expectations

Refer to Other Resources When:

The problem is more serious than you feel comfortable handling
You have helped as much as you can and further assistance is needed
You think your personal feelings about the student will interfere with your objectivity
The student admits that there is a problem, but doesn't want to talk to you about it

RESOURCES

CITF WEBSITE: <http://stuaff.mst.edu/citf/>

RECOGNIZING & RESPONDING TO STUDENTS IN DISTRESS
<http://stuaff.mst.edu/resources/faculty.html>

AskListenRefer: <http://asklistenrefer.org/mst>

Online Suicide Prevention Training Program designed to support the campus community in preventing suicide.

CONTACTS

S&T POLICE: police@mst.edu, 341-4300

CITF: citf@mst.edu, 341-4292

PATTI FLECK: pfleck@mst.edu, 341-4211

BARB PREWETT: bprewett@mst.edu, 341-4292

WEBSITE: <http://stuaff.mst.edu/citf/>

REPORT A CONCERN: http://communitystandards.mst.edu/behavior_form.html