

Tips for Helping a Stressed Student

COMMON WARNING SIGNS

ACADEMIC PROBLEMS

- Excessive procrastination
- Uncharacteristically poor academic preparation or performance
- Repeated requests for extensions or special considerations
- Disruptive classroom behavior
- Excessive career or course choice indecision
- A pattern of absence or tardiness
- Avoiding or dominating discussions
- Verbal or written references to suicide or homicide
- Frequently falling asleep in class

INTERPERSONAL PROBLEMS

- Asking advisor/instructor for help with personal problems
- Dependency on an advisor/instructor
- Hanging around the office
- Avoidance of an advisor/instructor
- Disruptive behavior
- Inability to get along with others
- Withdrawal from friends
- Complaints from other students

BEHAVIORAL PROBLEMS

- Change in personal hygiene
- Dramatic weight gain or loss
- Irritability
- Alcohol/drug use
- Impaired speech
- Disjointed thoughts
- Tearfulness
- Intense emotion
- Inappropriate responses
- Difficulty concentrating
- Engaging in self-injury
- Sudden mood or behavior changes

If a student appears to be at imminent risk of causing harm to self or others, call **Campus Safety** at **914.323.5244** immediately.



Suggestions for Intervening

- Talk to the student privately to help minimize embarrassment and defensiveness.
- Listen carefully to the student and respond to both the content and emotion in the conversation.
- Discuss your observations and perception of the situation frankly and honestly with the student.
- Ask if the student is having any thoughts of harming self or others.
- Acknowledge inappropriate or strange behavior without being judgmental.
- Try to respect the student's value system even if you don't agree with it.
- Clarify the limits on your ability to help. Instead, offer to connect the student with experts trained to assist struggling students.
- Avoid making promises of complete confidentiality. (It is difficult to get others to help if you can't tell them what is happening.) Instead, you might promise to only share the information others might "need to know" to do their jobs.

How to Make a Referral

EMERGENCY REFERRALS

- If a student appears to be at imminent risk of causing harm to self or others, call Campus Safety at **888** or **914.323.5244** immediately.
- If the student does not appear to be at imminent risk and the emergency occurs between Monday – Friday, 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., call Student Health and Counseling Services at **914.323.7277**. Please be prepared to provide a description of the situation and someone will work with you to determine appropriate actions to most effectively help the student.
- If the emergency occurs outside of Student Health and Counseling Services office hours, call Campus Safety at **888**. An on-call counselor will be available to assist via phone.

NON-EMERGENCY REFERRALS

- Encourage the student to contact Student Health and Counseling Services directly at **914.323.7277** to schedule an appointment.
- Offer to let the student call from your office if you believe extra support and encouragement are needed.
- It might be helpful to share with the student that Student Health and Counseling Services is staffed by licensed counselors and medical providers, and that services are confidential.



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