

UR RESOURCE CARD

HELPING A STUDENT IN DISTRESS

TYPICAL CONCERNS FOR UR STUDENTS:

College Life

- Adjusting to workload
- Higher expectations of self
- Transitioning to college or program
- Difficulty fitting in
- Conflicts with friends/roommates
- Distress about romantic relationships
- Problems with family
- Financial pressures - self or parents

Identity Issues

- "Who do I want to be?"
- "What can I do with my new freedom?"
- "What do I want to do with my life?"
- Self-image / self esteem

Psychological Issues

- Anxiety, depression, etc.
- Previously diagnosed conditions
- Temptation to self-medicate

SYMPTOMS OF DISTRESSED OR DISTRESSING STUDENTS:

Problems with Academic Performance

- Behavior represents a change in academics
- Excessive absences or tardiness
- Repeated requests for special considerations
- Increased concern about grades despite satisfactory performance

Unusual Behavior

- Listlessness, lack of energy, or falling asleep in class
- Hyperactivity, irritability, or heightened anxiety
- Marked changes in personal hygiene
- Extreme mood changes or displays of emotions
- References to suicide or homicide
- Indications of persistent or prolonged unhappiness

Traumatic Change in Relationships

- Death of family member or close friend
- Difficulties in relationships such as romantic, friend, roommate, or family

RESPONDING TO DISTRESSED OR DISTRESSING STUDENTS:

OBSERVE: Be familiar with the symptoms of distress and address them when present. Pay close attention to direct communications and implied or hidden feelings.

INITIATE CONTACT: Don't ignore strange, inappropriate or unusual behavior. Talk to the student privately, in a direct and matter-of-fact manner, indicating concern. Name specific worrying behaviors.

OFFER SUPPORT AND ASSISTANCE: Be open and avoid judgment. Summarize what the student has told you to clarify the situation. Encourage positive action by helping the student define the problem and generate coping strategies. Suggest other resources that the student can take advantage of: friends, family, clergy, or professionals on campus.

- "I'm so sorry you're having difficulties. Would you like to talk about them?"
- "Sounds like you are really struggling with _____. Many people find it helpful to talk with someone in confidence who is outside of the situation."
- "You know, we have some really excellent counseling professionals on campus. Would you like me to help get you connected to them?"

UNIVERSITY REFERRALS:

University Counseling Center (UCC)

(585) 275-3113 (Available 24/7)

Same-day appointments and walk-ins are available for students in immediate crisis.

University Health Service (UHS)

(585) 275-2662

The CARE Network

rochester.edu/care

Public Safety

(585) 275-3333

Interfaith Chapel

(585) 275-4321

Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETL)

(585) 275-9049

Center for Academic Support

(585) 275-2354

Visit UCC's "Resources for Faculty and Staff" for more tips. When dealing with a student in crisis, consultation with UCC is highly encouraged.
www.rochester.edu/uhs/ucc