



UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS
AT URBANA-CHAMPAIGN

ALMA MATER
TO THY HAPPY CHILDREN
OF THE FUTURE
THOSE OF THE PAST
SEND GREETINGS

Helping Distressed and Distressing Students

Stephanie Brown, Associate Dean, Office of Dean of Students
R.J. McNicholl, LCSW University of Illinois Counseling Center

illinois.edu



Student Challenges

- Increased responsibility and independence
- Academic and Personal Stress
- Complex Relationships
- Drugs and alcohol
- Pre-existing mental health history
- Emerging psychological problems

Faculty Role

- Recognize Signs of Distress
- Respond with care, concern and support
- Establish clear boundaries
- Educate about Resources
- Refer



AWARNNESS OF CULTURAL DIFFERENCES

Important to keep in mind

- Race
- Ethnicity
- Cultural Background
- Sexual Orientation



Campus Resources

- ***The Counseling Center***
 - Mental Health Counseling and Education
- ***McKinley Health Center***
 - Medical Services
- ***The Office of the Dean of Students***
 - Student Assistance Center
 - Behavioral Intervention Team
 - Emergency Dean Program
- ***Disability Resources and Educational Services***
 - Academic Accommodations, Coaching, Support
- ***University of Illinois Police***
 - Campus Safety



Mental Health Resources

University Counseling Center

217-333.3704

*Individual & Group
Counseling*

Urgent Appointments

Outreach & Consultation

Suicide Incident Reporting

www.counselingcenter.illinois.edu

McKinley Mental Health Clinic

217-333.2705

*Psychiatric Services
Evaluation and Consultation
Short-term counseling
Alcohol & Other Drug*


www.mckinley.illinois.edu



DRES

(Disability Resources and Educational Services)

217-333-4603

-  Students with documented visible or invisible disability and/or chronic health condition are eligible
-  Students must apply/provide documentation
-  Provide academic accommodations & support
-  Offer counseling, consultation, individual coaching, and testing services

<http://www.disability.illinois.edu>



Office of the Dean of Students

217-333.0050

Student Assistance Center

Educate students about University policies & procedures

Connect them to resources

Support students in crisis

www.odos.illinois.edu

Behavioral Intervention Team

Assess whether students pose threat to members of campus community

Interrupt any plans for targeted violence

Intervene to help address underlying issues driving the behavior



Office of the Dean of Students

217-333.0050

The Emergency Dean Program

- > On call after-hours program that operates from 5pm-8:30 am during week, all day on weekends
- > Staffed by full-time employees at University who volunteer their services
- > Supports students experiencing an emergency situation in which an immediate University response is needed and which cannot wait until the next business day.



Signs of Distress: Academic Indicators



Missed, late or incomplete assignments



Increased tardiness or absences



Repeated requests for extensions



Inconsistent or deteriorating quality of work



Disorganized work and/or presentation of ideas



Written or verbal expression of morbid, dark or violent thoughts



Disproportionate anxiety about course work and/or in response to grades



Signs of Distress: Behavioral Indicators

Exhibits high levels of emotionality, tearfulness, crying

Excessively demanding or dependent behavior

Expressions of anxiety, agitation

Odd social behavior-appears disconnected from situation

Nonsensical, incoherent speech,

Unpredictable and/or rapid shifts in mood

Expressions of worthlessness, hopelessness, despair

Unusually animated or withdrawn

Expression of suicidal thoughts

Angry outbursts, intimidating or aggressive behaviors



Signs of Distress: Physical Indicators

Deteriorating or poor hygiene, disheveled appearance, soiled clothes

Appears consistently fatigued and/or falling asleep in class

Appears confused, disoriented or out of touch with reality

Comes to class smelling of alcohol or appearing high

Noticeably slowed or rapid speech

Significant weight gain or loss



Options for Intervention

Consult with a colleague from one of discussed resources

Express concerns directly/privately to student

Make a referral

Offer support

Report to Behavioral Intervention Team

Contact University Police



The ANXIOUS Student



WHAT TO DO

- Talk to the student in private setting
- Remain calm and assume control in a soothing manner
- Focus on relevant information
- Speaking concretely and concisely
- Help the student develop and an action plan that addresses the main concern.

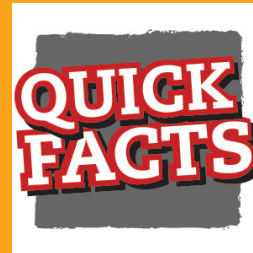


AVOID

- Overwhelming the student with information or complicated solutions.
- Arguing irrational thoughts.
- Devaluing the information presented.
- Assuming the student will get over the anxiety without treatment

Symptoms of anxiety

- *Agitation*
- *Panic*
- *Avoidance*
- *Irrational fears*
- *Loss of control*
- *Ruminations*
- *Excessive worry*
- *Sleep and eating problems*



The Demanding Student



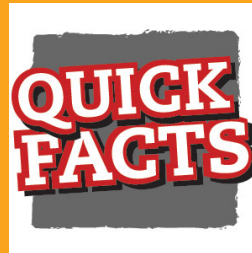
WHAT TO DO

- Talk to the student in place that is safe and comfortable.
- Remain calm and in control.
- Set clear limits on time and topic.
- Emphasize behavior that are and aren't acceptable.
- Respond quickly to disruptive in class behavior.
- Prepare for manipulative request and behaviors.



AVOID

- Arguing with the student
- Giving into inappropriate requests or being intimidated .
- Adjusting your schedule or policies to accommodate the student
- Ignoring inappropriate behavior that has impact on other students
- Feeling obligated to take care of student or feeling guilty for not doing so



Characteristics of Demanding Students

- *Sense of entitlement*
- *Inability to empathize*
- *Difficulty dealing with ambiguity*
- *Perfectionism*
- *Dependent*
- *Fears about handling life*



The Depressed Student



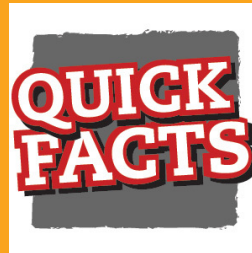
WHAT TO DO

- Talk to student in private.
- Listen and validate students feeling and experiences.
- Be supportive and express your concern about the situation.
- Ask if the student has thought about suicide.
- Discuss clearly and concisely an action plan, such as having the student immediately call the Counseling Center to make an appointment.
- Be willing to consider or offer an accommodation, if appropriate as a way to alleviate stress and instill hope.



AVOID

- Ignoring the student
- Downplaying the situation
- Arguing with the student or disputing the student is depressed.
- Providing too much information for the student to process.
- Expecting the student to stop feeling depressed without intervention.
- Assuming their family is aware the student is depressed.



Symptoms of depression

- *Hopelessness and worthlessness*
- *Deep sadness/Thoughts of suicide*
- *Inability to experience pleasure*
- *Irregular eating or sleeping*
- *Poor concentration*
- *Isolation and withdrawal*



The Suicidal Student



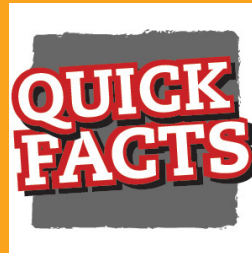
WHAT TO DO

- Talk to the student if possible in private.
- Remain calm and stay in control.
- Take the student's disclosure as a serious plea for help.
- Express care and concern, and assure the student you will help.
- Contact the Counseling Center for consultation.
- Complete a Suicide incident report form and send to counseling center.
 - *CAMPUS POLICY*
 - SUICIDE PREVENTION TEAM



AVOID

- Minimize the situation. All threats are need to be considered potentially lethal.
- Arguing with the student about the merits of living.
- Allowing friends to assume responsibility for the student with getting consultation from a professional.
- Assuming the family knows that the student has suicidal thoughts.



Factors of suicide risk

- *Suicidal ideation/thoughts*
- *Pessimistic view of future*
- *Alienation and isolation*
- *Death as a means of escape*
- *Substance abuse*
- *Self-harm behaviors*



Suicide Incident Reporting

- The University of Illinois takes the issue of suicide very seriously and wants to ensure the safety of the campus community.
- SIR Program has been active since 1984.
- Collaborative team developed to address these issues.
- The Counseling Center and McKinley Mental Health Department provide these four sessions free of charge or students can chose to see a community professional.
- *In the event that the University is presented with a **credible report** that a student has threatened or attempted suicide, engaged in efforts to prepare to commit suicide or expressed a preoccupation with suicide, that student will be required to attend **four sessions of professional assessment**. These sessions are designed to foster the students' willingness and ability to maintain a reasonable concern for their own self welfare.*
- Confidentiality
All records associated with the reported incident are kept separately by the Suicide Prevention Team. The Suicide Prevention Team is staffed by the Counseling Center and McKinley Health Center.
- All records associated with the mandated assessment are protected by federal and state laws regarding confidentiality.



Suicide Incident Referral Form

<https://go.illinois.edu/SIRF>



The SEVERLY DISORIENTED OR PSYCHOTIC Student



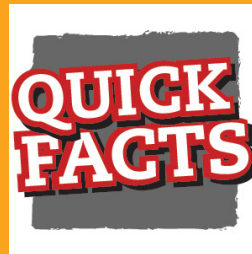
WHAT TO DO

- **CONSULT** to assess the student's level of dysfunction.
- Speak to the student in a direct and concrete manner regarding your plan to get help.
- Accompany the student to the Counseling Center or Mckinley Health Center , or arrange for the police to provide assistance to get student to a local hospital or emergency room.
- Recognize that psychotic states can involve extreme emotion or lack of emotion and intense fear to paranoia.
- Recognize a student in this state may be dangerous to self and others.



AVOID

- Assuming the student can care for themselves
- Agitating the student
- Arguing unrealistic thoughts
- Assuming the student understands you
- Allowing friends to care for the student without professional advice.
- Getting locked into one way of dealing with the student.
- Assuming others know about the situation.



Symptoms of psychosis include:

- *Disorganized speech/behavior*
- *Odd or eccentric behavior*
- *Lack of emotion*
- *Bizarre behavior may indicate hallucinations*
- *Serious misinterpretation of reality*
- *Inability to track normal communication*



The Aggressive or Violent Student



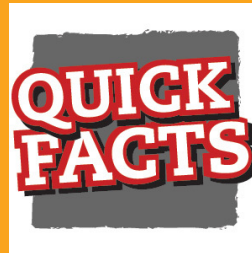
WHAT TO DO

- Assess your level of safety.
- Remain in a visible area with means of exit.
- Explain to the student unacceptable behavior.
- Stay calm and gain control of the situation.
- Uses a time out strategy (ask them to take a break, reschedule meeting, etc..)
- Contact police if you feel unsafe or others students are reporting feeling unsafe.
- Consult with a professional/BIT TEAM



AVOID

- Staying in the situation in which you feel unsafe
- Meeting alone with the student
- Engaging in screaming match with the student or escalating the student.
- Ignoring signs that the student's anger is escalating.
- Touching the student or crowding them.
- Ignoring your gut reaction that you are in danger.



Indicators of potential violence:

- *Paranoia/mistrust*
- *Unstable academic history*
- *History of violence*
- *Fascination with weapons*
- *Impulse control problems*



Key Themes to Remember



To Do

Talk with the student in a **safe/** private setting

Remain Calm and in Control

Be supportive

Listen effectively



Avoid

Assuming too much responsibility

Invalidating or Arguing

Embarrassing the student

Ignoring negative behavior that has an impact on others



Additional Resources

Counseling Center Emergency Information

- <http://counselingcenter.illinois.edu/emergency-0>

Kognito At-Risk Suicide Prevention Training

- <http://counselingcenter.illinois.edu/emergency/kognito-risk-suicide-prevention-training>

Responding to Disruptive or Threatening Student Behavior: A Guide for Faculty and Staff

- http://www.odos.uiuc.edu/studentAssistance/downloads/disruptive_behavior.pdf

We Care: Sexual Misconduct Support, Response, and Prevention

- <http://wecare.illinois.edu/>

