

BEGIN
HERE

How to Help a Student in Distress

SIGNS OF DISTRESS

Nervousness, agitation, or irritability
Seldom leaves their room/infrequent class attendance

Tearfulness
Changes in academic performance/study behaviors
Undue aggressive or abrasive behavior

Fearfulness
Dependency (i.e. student who is excessively clingy)
Frequent alcohol and/or drug use

Express your concerns to the student, pointing out your observations and asking about their situation

Are you worried about the student's safety or do you see possible warning signs? **WARNING SIGNS** include (but are not limited to):

Withdrawal from others (isolation)
Talks about or threatens suicide
Makes statements such as "I want this all to end" or "I can't go on anymore"

Significant confusion
Behavior that is bizarre, alarming, and/or dangerous
Makes statements about hurting or killing others
Marked change in behavior, mood, and/or hygiene

Appears depressed (frequent crying, insomnia, oversleeping, weight loss/gain, loss of pleasure)
Appears/reports hopelessness or helplessness
Engagement in self-harm (i.e. cutting)

YES

NO

DIRECTLY ask about your concerns and/or the warning signs

DIRECTLY ask about suicide/homicide as it relates to the displayed warning sign(s)

Do you believe the student is in imminent danger?

DO NOT LEAVE STUDENT ALONE

YES (imminent danger is clearly present)

EXAMPLES:
Student disoriented, found unconscious or unresponsive

Student tells you that they have ingested pills beyond the recommended dose (whether student confirms it is a suicide attempt or not)

Student is threatening immediate danger to self (i.e. threatening to jump out a window, ingest pills, shoot self, etc.)

Student attempts, or threatens to cause physical harm to someone else or people in general

Immediately

call YSU Police at (330) 941-3527 Or 911 from a campus telephone

WRITE DOWN :

Everything you know about the situation (who, what, where, & when)

Any information you have about the student's difficulties (including history)

A number where you can be reached Give this information to YSU PD (to assist emergency treatment providers) and to your department head.

Faculty or Staff:

Contact your department head/supervisor and inform them of the situation

Submit a Person of Concern referral at <https://ysu.edu/concern-referral> using the information you wrote in the step above.

UNCLEAR (whether imminent danger exists)

EXAMPLES:

Student reports a history of self-injurious behaviors (i.e. cutting or burning) and now states a desire to engage in the behavior again

Student is found intoxicated or appears to be under the influence of substances

Student makes statements that are suggestive of suicidal/homicidal thinking that are not overtly indicative of imminent danger (i.e. "I don't know if I can keep going")

Student appears emotionally distraught and does not respond to your attempts to calm them

Student experiences a sudden stressful event (i.e. death, breakup, divorce) and seems emotionally unstable/inconsolable OR the student's response seems unusual (i.e. uncontrollable crying over a failed exam, no apparent response to the death of an immediate family member, etc.)

Student's work assignments, and/or communications contain material that raises concerns about suicide, homicide, and/or violence

Call YSU Student Counseling Services and ask to speak with a counselor at (330) 941-3737.

Provide all the relevant information you have about the student and the situation to the counselor. The counselor will work with you to determine the proper course of action.

If no counselor is available and during business hours (M-F, 8 am-5 pm) leave call back information where you can be reached and nature of concern with support staff.

If after hours call 330.941.3737 and press "1" after brief message to be connected to Mental Health Professional who can assist you

Faculty or Staff

Contact your department head/supervisor and inform them of the situation

Document relevant details about the situation (who, what, where and when) and any background information you have about the student's difficulties.

Note:
If at any point you believe the student's Imminent Danger status may have changed, return to the Imminent Danger steps outlined in this flowchart. Do not leave student alone.

NO (imminent danger is clearly not present)

EXAMPLES:

Student is very upset about the end of a romantic relationship, but denies suicidal/homicidal thoughts and shows no warning signs

Student reports anxiety and depression, but denies suicidal/homicidal thoughts and shows no warning signs

Student's best friend recently died, but denies suicidal/homicidal thoughts and shows no warning signs

As much as you and the student are comfortable, listen and provide support; but do not act as the student's therapist

Discuss counseling services and/or other university resources that might be helpful and address any concern the student might have about these resources. If you need assistance in determining the appropriate resource(s), or about how to refer, contact YSU Student Counseling Center (330)941-3737 during normal business hours and ask to speak with a counselor.

Should you decide to refer to Student Counseling Services:

Please know that we would like to hear your concerns about the student and your beliefs about the urgency of the situation

Consider calling with the student, or accompanying the student to Student Counseling to initiate counseling services.

Continue to follow up with the student as appropriate; contact Student Counseling if you observe a significant change.

Consider submitting a Person of Concern referral at <https://ysu.edu/concern-referral> for outreach by the Office of Student Outreach and Support.

CAMPUS RESOURCES

YSU Police 330-941-3527
Student Counseling Services 330-941-3737
Student Outreach and Support 330-941-4721
Title IX Coordinator 330-941-4629
Disability Services 330-941-1372

Center for Student Progress 330-941-3538
Student Health 330-747-4660
Student Conduct 330-941-4704
Financial Aid 330-941-3505
Registrar 330-941-6000

YOUNGSTOWN STATE UNIVERSITY



**Student
Counseling
Services**