How to Help a YSU Student in Distress

SIGNS OF DISTRESS

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

Immediately call YSU Police at (330) 941-3527 or 911 from a campus telephone.

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

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 advisors)

Submit a Penguin of Concern referral at: https://ysu.edu/concern-referral

Dean of Students (or designee) will notify the appropriate campus resources.

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 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” or “I don’t know how long I can stay here”)
- Student appears emotionally distraught, displays erratic behavior 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 communications contain material that raises concerns about suicide, homicide, and/or violence

Call YSU Student Counseling Services and ask to consult 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 it’s 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.

Submit a Penguin of Concern referral at:

https://ysu.edu/concern-referral

Dean of Students (or designee) will notify the appropriate campus resources.

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 experiences death of someone close, but denies suicidal/homicidal thoughts and shows no warning signs

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 consult 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

Submit a Penguin of Concern referral at:

https://ysu.edu/concern-referral

Campus Resources

YSU Police 330-941-3527
Student Counseling Services 330-941-3737
Dean of Students 330-941-4721
Title IX Coordinator 330-941-4629
Accessibility Services 330-941-1372
Resch Academic Success Center 330-941-3538
Mercy Health @ Wick 330-747-4660
Community Standards & Student Conduct 330-941-4704
Financial Aid and Scholarships 330-941-3505
Penguin Service Center 330-941-6000

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