

**BEGIN  
HERE**

# How to Help a Student Athlete in Distress

## SIGNS OF DISTRESS

Nervousness, agitation, or irritability	Tearfulness	Fearfulness
Seldom leaves their room/infrequent class attendance	Changes in academic performance/study behaviors Undue aggressive or abrasive behavior	Dependency (i.e. student who is excessively clingy)
		Frequent alcohol and/or drug use

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

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

Withdrawal from others (isolation)	Significant confusion	Appears depressed (frequent crying, insomnia, oversleeping, weight loss/gain, loss of pleasure)
Talks about or threatens suicide	Behavior that is bizarre, alarming, and/or dangerous	Appears/reports hopelessness or helplessness
Makes statements such as "I want this all to end" or "I can't go on anymore"	Makes statements about hurting or killing others	Engagement in self-harm (i.e. cutting)
	Marked change in behavior, mood, and/or hygiene	

**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 athlete 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  
If at an off campus location, call 911

Contact athletic trainer and notify them of the situation.

Athletic trainer will notify the Dean of Students at 330-717-2613

**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> 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 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 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

Contact athletic trainer and notify them of the situation.

**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

Contact athletic trainer and notify them of the situation.

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

**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.**

## CAMPUS RESOURCES

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

YOUNGSTOWN STATE UNIVERSITY



**Student  
Counseling  
Services**



# How to Help a Student Athlete in Distress

YOUNGSTOWN STATE UNIVERSITY



*Student Counseling Services*

**Provided by**  
Student Counseling Services  
Room 2110, Kilcawley Center  
330-941-3737