

For Staff and Faculty: A Resource KIT for Working with Distressed Students

Resource KIT:

- K** Know the warning signs
- I** Inform student of your concern
- T** Take action

Know the Warning Signs

IS PATH WARM?

According to the American Association of Suicidology, an individual at acute risk for suicidal behavior will most often display some or many of the following signs:

- I** Ideation
- S** Substance abuse

- P** Purposelessness
- A** Anxiety
- T** Trapped
- H** Hopelessness

- W** Withdrawal
- A** Anger
- R** Recklessness
- M** Mood Change

Inform Student of Your Concern

Starting a conversation with a student of concern...

It is an understandable and appropriate response if you feel nervous or anxious about the prospect of speaking with a student about your concern for him/her. Knowing that you may be the first and critical contact offering assistance and help to the student in distress may be daunting. However, your efforts greatly improve the student's continuing safety and future well-being.

Speak with the student in a location where the conversation will be private, e.g., after class or during office hours.

Initial statements or inquiries that are open-ended may encourage the student to speak, such as: *"I've worked (as a teacher or staff) in a campus setting for a number of years and have heard from students that the college experience can sometimes be difficult. I'm wondering how you are doing?"*

Take Action

- Be positive and offer the student hope that treatment can be helpful.
- Offer resource and referral information to the student.
- Develop a plan with the student to seek help.
- Ask if s/he needs your assistance to initiate referral contact.

How to make a referral:

- Encourage the student to call the Counseling Center at Ext. 2275.
- Offer to call for the student, if needed, with the student present. It may be appropriate to accompany the student to the Counseling Center if in crisis.
- In some situations it may be more appropriate to contact Public Safety (Ext. 2278), Health Center (Ext. 2288), or the Dean of Students' office (Ext. 2210).
- On nights and weekends, in the case of emergency, contact Public Safety (Ext. 2278) or Residence Life staff (Ext. 2461).
- Call the counselor at the Counseling Center (Ext. 2275) and ask for his recommendation on handling a specific situation.

After a short period of time we suggest that you check back with the student to see if he/she followed through with the referral.

Please remember – the Counseling Center cannot disclose personal information to you without the student's consent.

What the student can expect:

- Confidential, professional support at no cost.
- An unlimited number of sessions for as long as the professional staff member and student believe it's appropriate.
- If medication is indicated we will assist the student in accessing the needed services.