

RED FOLDER

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The Student Counseling Center (SCC) &
Student Affairs

A quick reference guide for recognizing, responding to, and referring distressed students.



RECOGNIZE



RESPOND



REFER

HOW TO USE:

1. Recognize indicators of distress

Common indicators are listed inside.
Students may present with indicators not listed.

2. Respond appropriately

Each situation is unique. Use the tips
and decision tree to determine the most
appropriate response.

3. Refer the student

Use the list of resources on back cover
to refer the student to the most
appropriate campus resource.



RECOGNIZE

Indicators of Distressed Students

Look for groupings, frequency, and severity of behaviors, not just isolated symptoms.

Academic

- ☐ Sudden decline in quality of work and grades
- ☐ Frequently missed classes and assignments
- ☐ Disturbing content in writing or presentations
- ☐ Classroom disruptions
- ☐ Consistently seeking personal rather than professional advice
- ☐ Multiple requests for extensions/special considerations (a change from prior functioning)
- ☐ Doesn't respond to repeated requests for contact/meetings

Physical

- ☐ Marked changes in physical appearance (e.g., poor grooming/hygiene or sudden weight loss/gain)
- ☐ Strange or bizarre behavior indicating loss of contact with reality
- ☐ Visibly intoxicated or smelling of alcohol or marijuana
- ☐ Rapid speech or manic behavior
- ☐ Depressed or lethargic mood or functioning
- ☐ Observable signs of injury (e.g., facial bruising or cuts)

Psychological

- ☐ Self-disclosure of personal distress (e.g., family problems, financial difficulties, assault, discrimination, legal difficulties)
- ☐ Unusual/disproportionate emotional response to events
- ☐ Excessive tearfulness, panic reactions
- ☐ Verbal abuse (e.g., taunting, badgering, intimidation)
- ☐ Expressions of concern about the student by peers

Safety Risk

- ☐ Verbal, written, or implied references to suicide, homicide, assault or self-injurious behaviors
- ☐ Unprovoked anger or hostility/physical violence (e.g., shoving, grabbing, assaulting, use of weapon)
- ☐ Academic assignments dominated by themes of extreme hopelessness, helplessness, isolation, rage, despair, violence, self-injury
- ☐ Stalking or harassing
- ☐ Communicating threats/disturbing comments via email, correspondence, texting or phone call



RESPOND

Use these tips to determine the most appropriate response for a distressed student.

Stay Safe

Call TJU Public Safety (215-955-8888) or 911 if there is an imminent danger to the student, you, or anyone else.

Stay Calm

Take a few deep breaths to calm yourself. Use a calm voice when talking and asking questions.

Take Your Time

If this is NOT an imminently dangerous situation, take time to think through what might be the most helpful next step.

Seek Consultation

You are not alone. Ask those around you for help. Consult with a colleague, call another office on campus (see resources).

Use Active Listening

Make eye contact, give your full attention. Restate what the student says to make sure you understand what is causing the distress and/or what they are asking for help with.

Ask Direct Questions

Don't be afraid to directly ask the student if they are having thoughts of harming themselves or others (by asking, you are **not** instilling the thought).

Give Concrete Help

Help get them to the next step (e.g., contact the academic advisor with the student to make an appointment; help them call the Student Counseling Center to schedule an appointment).

Mandatory Reporting

In addition to referring a student to resources, any sexual or gender-based harassment or assault requires mandated reporting. For questions regarding mandated reporting, please contact the Title IX Coordinator at 215-951-2520.



REFER

Follow the decision tree to determine who to contact when you are concerned about a student who is distressed and/or disruptive. Emergency and campus resources are listed.

Is the student a danger to themselves/others OR does the student need some other assistance?

Yes

The student's conduct is clearly dangerous or threatening, including self-harm or harm to others.

Call 911 or Jefferson Campus Security: 215-955-8888.

No

I am not concerned for anyone's immediate safety, but the student is having significant academic and/or personal issues and could use some support.

Refer student to campus resources, as appropriate.

I'm Not Sure

The student is with me currently and shows signs of distress, but it is not clear how serious it is. I feel uneasy and/or really concerned about the student.

Call SCC 9a.m.-5p.m: 215-955-4357. If after 5p.m. or a weekend, go to Jeff ER, Main Hospital, at 10th & Sansom and ask for the Psychiatry Resident On Call. Hospital operator 215-955-6060.

The student is **not** with me currently, but I am concerned about what they said (in an email/call) OR what they did (acted bizarrely, were aggressive/disruptive) OR how they looked (unkempt, unwashed, or as if drugged/drunk).

Report to JeffBIT. If after 5 p.m. or a weekend SCC Emergency Pager is 1-877-656-7287 (enter call-back number).

Emergency Resources

TJU Campus Security
215-955-8888 or 811

Police, Emergency Assistance 911

Suicide and Crisis Lifeline 988

National Suicide Prevention Hotline
1-800-273-TALK

Women Organized Against Rape (WOAR)
24 Hour Hotline 215-985-3333

Urgent Resources

Student Counseling Center (SCC)
215-955-HELP (4357)
Emergency Line: 267-234-3736
33 S. 9th St, Suite 230

JeffBIT Behavioral Intervention Team
Submit a report online:
www.jefferson.edu/jeffbit

Office of Academic & Career Success (Student Affairs)
Edison Building, Suite 1800
215-503-6335

SKMC Office of Student Affairs and Career Counseling
1025 Walnut Street, Suite 116
215-503-6988
SKMC Administrator On Call 267-624-4183

Sexual Misconduct/Title IX Reports
www.jefferson.edu/titleix
Title IX Coordinator - 215-951-6830

What is JeffBIT?

Thomas Jefferson University created a Behavioral Intervention Team (JeffBIT) to provide support to faculty and students to help students displaying concerning, disruptive or inappropriate behavior that should be addressed but does not require immediate follow-up.

Additional Resources

Jefferson Occupational Health Network
33 S. 9th St, Suite 205
215-955-6835

Housing and Residence Life
Orlowitz Residence, Suite 103
215-955-8913

Student Accessibility Services
1800 Edison Building
130 S. 9th St.
215-503-6335

Academic Success
1800 Edison Building
130 S. 9th St.
215-503-2787

Office of International Affairs
1020 Walnut St.
Scott Memorial Library, 5th floor
215-503-4335

Career Success
1800 Edison Building
130 S. 9th St.
215-503-2787

Confidential Reporting
Jefferson Alertline: (888) 5-COMPLY or
Jefferson.Alertline.com