

# Identifying and responding to students in distress

2016-2017



## EMERGENCY SITUATIONS

### WEEKDAY BUSINESS HOUR EMERGENCIES

**Counselling Services**  
Ext. 78264 (from any campus phone)  
613.533.6000 ext. 78264 (from off campus)

**Queen's 24 hr Emergency Report Centre**  
Ext. 36111 (from any campus phone)  
613.533.6111 (from off campus)  
911

### AFTER HOUR EMERGENCIES

**Queen's 24 hr Emergency Report Centre**  
Ext. 36111 (from any campus phone)  
613.533.6111 (from off campus)  
911

## Situations Requiring Immediate Referral/Reporting

### DIRECT OR INDIRECT REFERENCE TO WANTING TO DIE / SUICIDE

Regardless of the circumstances or context, ANY reference to wanting to die / suicide should be taken seriously and a mental health professional should be contacted.

Warning signs might include:

- Expressed feelings of worthlessness, helplessness, or hopelessness;
- Expressed thoughts that the world, their family and friends would be better off without them;
- Expressed feelings of powerful guilt;
- Expressed desire to die by suicide.

**Counselling Services 613.533.6000 ext. 78264 or Queen's 24 hr Emergency Report Centre 613.533.6111 or 911**

### THREATS OR DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOUR

- Any type of physical violence causing bodily harm (self or other);
- Specific threats of violence or harm.

### BEHAVIOURS OF CONCERN

- Incoherent or unintelligible;
- Cannot be calmed.

### DRUG AND ALCOHOL ABUSE OR MISUSE

- Potential drug overdose;
- Potential alcohol poisoning.

**Queen's 24 hr Emergency Report Centre at 613.533.6111 or 911**

### SEXUAL VIOLENCE

Immediate options for safety and medical attention:

- Call **911** or **Queen's 24 hour Emergency Report Centre at 613.533.6111**.
- The Kingston General Hospital (KGH) **Sexual Assault and Family Violence Program** for medical care, STI and pregnancy prevention, and evidence collection.  
Phone **613.549.6666 ext. 4880** or go to **KGH Emergency Department** and ask for the Sexual Assault/ Family Violence nurse.

### Campus Information and Supports

- Barb Lotan, the Queen's University **Sexual Violence Prevention and Response Coordinator**, provides support and information about counselling, reporting, and accommodation options. **613.533.6330**
- **Counselling Services 613.533.6000 ext. 78246**
- **Health Services 613.533.2506**

Information about behaviours that give rise to a risk of harm to self/others may be forwarded pursuant to university response process/protocols (e.g. student at risk, threat assessment), in the interest of health and safety.

## Who to Contact

### HEALTH AND COUNSELLING

**Student Wellness Services**  
queensu.ca/studentwellness

**Counselling Services**  
613.533.6000 ext. 78264

Contact information for all outreach counsellors can be found at [queensu.ca/studentwellness/counsellingservices](http://queensu.ca/studentwellness/counsellingservices)

**Health Promotion**  
613.533.6712

**Health Services**  
613.533.2506

**Telehealth Ontario**  
Free confidential advice from a registered nurse 24/7  
1.800.797.0000  
TTY 1.866.797.0007

### MENTAL HEALTH EDUCATION

**Student Wellness Services** offers workshops and programming for faculty, staff and students. See [queensu.ca/studentwellness](http://queensu.ca/studentwellness)

### PEER SUPPORT

**AMS Peer Support Centre**  
613.533.6000 ext. 75111

**SGPS Student Advisor Program**  
advisors@sgps.ca

**Rector**  
613.533.2733

**Residence Life and Dons**  
613.533.6790

### SEXUAL VIOLENCE PREVENTION AND RESPONSE

#### Sexual Violence Prevention and Response Coordinator

Barb Lotan  
b502 Mackintosh Corry Hall – Monday to Friday  
8:30 am – 4:30 pm  
613.533.6330  
(direct confidential line)  
bjl7@queensu.ca

**Sexual Assault Centre Kingston**  
613.544.6424 – 24/7

### ACADEMIC

**Accessibility Services**  
Academic accommodations for students with disabilities.  
613.533.6467  
TTY 613.533.6566

**Student Academic Success Services (SASS): Learning Strategies The Writing Centre**  
613.533.6315

### OTHER

**Ban Righ Centre**  
Support for mothers and/or women returning to studies  
613.533.2976

**Campus Security and Emergency Services** (24/7 Inquiries)  
613.533.6733

**Equity Office**  
613.533.2563

**Four Directions Aboriginal Student Centre**  
613.533.6970

**Human Rights Office**  
613.533.6886

**International Centre (QUIC)**  
613.533.2604

**University Chaplain**  
613.533.2186

**University Ombudsman**  
613.533.6495

### COMMUNITY

**Addiction and Mental Health Services – Kingston, Frontenac Lennox & Addington**  
24/7 Crisis  
613.544.4229  
Administration  
613.544.1356

**Good2Talk**  
Post-secondary student helpline – 24/7  
1.866.925.5454

**K3C Community Counselling Services**  
613.549.7850

**Kingston General Hospital**  
613.548.3232

**Mental Health Helpline – Ontario**  
Help in 170 languages  
1.866.531.2600

**Telephone Aid Line Kingston (TALK)**  
Crisis 7 pm – 3 am  
613.544.1771



OFFICE OF THE  
VICE-PROVOST AND  
DEAN OF STUDENT AFFAIRS

Gordon Hall, Room 300  
Queen's University  
Kingston, Ontario K7L 3N6

If you have questions or comments about this folder, or would like additional copies, or alternative formats, please contact the Office of the Vice-Provost and Dean of Student Affairs at 613-533-6944 or [vpdean.sa@queensu.ca](mailto:vpdean.sa@queensu.ca).

Based on a concept from McMaster University with thanks

# Identifying and responding to students in distress

## Situations Requiring Attention

### ACADEMIC AND LEARNING CHALLENGES

Refer a student to faculty or academic advisors for the following reported concerns:

- Serious academic concerns;
- Considering withdrawal;
- In jeopardy of failing;
- Changes in academic performance (deterioration in quality of work, frequently missed assignments and classes, excessive procrastination, avoidance of participation);
- Listlessness or falling asleep in class.

### DISORDERED EATING

Refer a student to counselling for the following reported behaviours:

- Excessive dieting;
- Uncontrolled binge eating;
- Induced vomiting after eating.

### MARKED CHANGES IN MOOD, APPEARANCE OR BEHAVIOUR

Refer a student to counselling for the following changes in regular behaviour:

- Withdrawal from social interactions or academic work;
- Notable changes in energy levels or appearance;
- Unusual behaviour (unexplained crying, laughing to self, rapid speech, disorganized thinking, suspiciousness);
- High levels of irritability;
- Changes in relationships or social behaviour (withdrawal, isolation or dependency).
- Significant weight loss or gain;
- Physical symptoms (nausea, headaches, problems with eating, excessive or disrupted sleeping);
- Changes in hygiene or dress;

### DIFFICULTY IN COMMUNICATING AND/OR DISTORTIONS OF REALITY

Refer a student to counselling for the following reported behaviours:

- Difficulty communicating (difficulty forming thoughts, completing sentences, irrational conversations);
- Distortions of reality;
- Difficulty concentrating or communicating.

### HARASSMENT AND DISCRIMINATION

Refer a student with concerns about harassment (persistent, unwanted behavior including sexual harassment) or discrimination to the Human Rights Office, 613.533.6886. If the situation involves stalking or threat of harm call Queen's 24 hr Emergency Report Centre.

Call Counselling Services at 613.533.6000 ext. 78264 or Student Health Services at 613.533.2506 or Queen's 24 hr Emergency Report Centre at 613.533.6111

See reverse for more resources

## What To Do and Say

### APPROACH

- It is OK to ask and express concern
- Be specific about the behaviour that worries you

I've noticed you've been absent from class lately and I'm concerned about you.

### LISTEN

- Listen non-judgmentally, having an open world view
- Meet in a private location, be patient and give your undivided attention

Is there anything I can do to help you?

### SUPPORT

- Acknowledge their thoughts and feelings in a compassionate way
- Offer hope and reassure them you are concerned and want to help

It sounds like you're feeling out of place.

### REFER

- Provide student with resources
- Offer to make the call with the student

If you'd like, I can call and book the appointment for you while you are here with me.

## Making a Good Referral

- Point out that help is available and seeking help is a sign of strength and courage rather than weakness. Acknowledge that seeking help can be scary;
- Research resources (see the back of this folder), contact Counselling Services for recommendations on how to approach the situation at ext. 78264;
- If the student appears reluctant, you can help by:
  - Offering to contact the resource on their behalf while they are in your office
  - Offering to sit with the student while they make the initial contact themselves
  - Accompanying the student to the appointment if appropriate and you feel comfortable
- Provide the student with take-away materials and information (contact numbers, locations, etc.);
- Offer to follow-up with the student, but don't insist on knowing what the student has done.

## If a Student Says "No" to a Referral

- Respect their decision. Accepting or refusing assistance must be left up to the student, except in emergencies, when life is in danger;
- Don't force the issue or trick them into going;
- Try and leave the door open for later reconsideration.

I respect your decision. I hope you will keep these options in mind. My door is always open.