

# Identifying and responding to students in distress

## EMERGENCY SITUATIONS

**Student Wellness Services**  
during weekday business hours  
613.533.2506

**Queen's 24 hr Emergency Report Centre**  
613.533.6111  
Blue lights with emergency telephones are located throughout 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 or shame;
- Expressed desire to die by suicide.

**Student Wellness Services 613.533.2506 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.

### ALCOHOL AND/OR DRUG 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 Health Sciences Centre **Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence Program** for medical care, STI and pregnancy prevention, and evidence collection.  
Phone **613.549.6666 ext. 4880** or go to **KHSC/KGH site Emergency Department** and ask for the Sexual Assault/ Domestic Violence nurse.

### Campus Information and Supports

- Barb Lotan, the Queen's University **Sexual Violence Prevention and Response Coordinator (SVPRC)**, provides support and information about roles and responsibilities related to disclosures, policy, counselling, reporting, and accommodation options. **613.533.6330**
- **Student Wellness 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

### PHYSICAL, MENTAL AND SEXUAL HEALTH

**Student Wellness Services**  
queensu.ca/studentwellness  
613.533.2506

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

**Health Promotion**  
613.533.6712

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

**TAO**  
Self-directed online mental health support 24/7. Sign up at [ThePath-ca.TaoConnect.org](http://ThePath-ca.TaoConnect.org)

### MENTAL HEALTH TRAINING

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

### PEER SUPPORT

**AMS Peer Support Centre**  
613.533.6000 ext. 75111  
Rooms 24 and 36, JDUC

**Graduate Peer Support Centre**  
613.533.2233  
Room 205, JDUC

**Rector**  
613.533.2733

**Residence Life and Dons**  
613.533.6790

**Big White Wall**  
Safe and anonymous peer support  
[bigwhitewall.ca](http://bigwhitewall.ca)

### SEXUAL VIOLENCE PREVENTION AND RESPONSE

**Sexual Violence Prevention and Response Coordinator**  
Barb Lotan  
B502 Mackintosh Corry Hall – Monday to Friday  
613.533.6330  
(direct confidential line)  
[bjl7@queensu.ca](mailto:bjl7@queensu.ca)

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

**Sexual Violence Bystander Intervention Training**  
[svbystander@queensu.ca](mailto:svbystander@queensu.ca)

### ACADEMIC

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

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

### OTHER

**Ban Righ Centre**  
This centre welcomes women of diverse backgrounds and all ages, especially those returning to university after a time away, and offers community, personal, practical and financial support.  
613.533.2976

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

**Equity Office**  
613.533.2563

**Four Directions Indigenous Student Centre (4D)**  
613.533.6970

**Human Rights Office**  
613.533.6886

**International Centre (QUIC)**  
613.533.2604

**Faith and Spiritual Life**  
613.533.2186

**University Ombudsperson**  
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

**Resolve Counselling Services**  
613.549.7850

**Kingston Health Sciences Centre**  
613.548.3232 (main line)

**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

**Human Trafficking Hotline**  
1.833.900.1010

**7 cups**  
24/7 emotional support chat rooms  
[7cups.com](http://7cups.com)

# Identifying and responding to students in distress

## Situations Requiring Attention

### ACADEMIC AND LEARNING CHALLENGES

Refer a student to faculty based 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 Student Wellness Services for the following reported behaviours:

- Excessive dieting;
- Desire to 'burn off' food intake;
- Preoccupation with clean eating;
- Uncontrolled binge eating;
- Induced vomiting after eating.

### MARKED CHANGES IN MOOD, APPEARANCE OR BEHAVIOUR

Refer a student to Student Wellness Services 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 Student Wellness Services 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 to the Human Rights Office regarding concerns about harassment (persistent, unwanted behavior including sexual harassment) or discrimination 613.533.6886.
- If the situation involves stalking or threat of harm, call Queen's 24 hr Emergency Report Centre. 613.533.6111

Call Student Wellness 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
- Say what you see

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

### LISTEN

- Listen non-judgmentally, without bias, having an open world view
- Meet in a private location, be patient and give your undivided attention

What can I do to support 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 Student Wellness Services for recommendations on how to approach the situation at ext. 32506;
- 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, 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. You can always come back and talk to me.