

# REFERENCE GUIDE

## RESPONDING TO STUDENTS IN DISTRESS

### FOR FACULTY AND STAFF

THE OFFICE OF CASE  
MANAGEMENT

124 TOWERS CONCOURSE

(607) 274-7731

ITHACA COLLEGE

ITHACA.EDU/ICARE

## IF YOU SEE SOMETHING, SAY SOMETHING

Ithaca College faculty and staff are in a unique position. If you have frequent contact with a student, you may be the first person to see something distressing.

Initiate the conversation. Say something if a student leaves you feeling worried, alarmed, or threatened.

## DO SOMETHING

If you are aware that a student is exhibiting concerning behaviors or other signs of distress, complete an ICare Referral (at [Ithaca.edu/icare](http://Ithaca.edu/icare))

Your expression of concern may be a critical factor in getting a student the support they need.

## OFF CAMPUS CONTACTS



### National Suicide Prevention Line

1(800) 273-TALK (8255)

### The Trevor Project Lifeline

1(866) 488-7386

### Crisis Text Line

Text CONNECT to 741741

### Advocacy Center

(607) 277-5000

### Tompkins County Mental Health

(607) 274-6200

### Cayuga Medical Center

(607) 274-4011

## TIPS & REMINDERS

- **Safety first:** The welfare of the campus community and our students is top priority. When a student displays threatening or potentially violent behavior, call for help.
- **Be direct:** Don't be afraid to ask students directly if they are feeling confused or having thoughts of hurting themselves or others.
- **Be proactive:** Engage students early on; set limits on disruptive behaviors.
- **Listen sensitively and carefully:** Use a non-confrontational approach and a calm voice. Avoid doing or saying anything that could be perceived as threatening, humiliating, intimidating, and/or shaming.
- **Document and consult:** Always document your interactions with a distressed student and consult with your department chair/supervisor after any incident.
- **Refer to resources:** Identify available resources and encourage the student to seek help. Schedule another meeting to follow-up.

## ON CAMPUS CONTACTS



|   |   |
|---|---|
| Office of Public Safety (OPS)                                 | 274-3333  |
| Center for Academic Advancement                               | 274-1001  |
| Career Services   | 274-3365  |
| Office of Case Management                                     | <a href="http://ithaca.edu/icare">ithaca.edu/icare</a> 274-7731             |
| Center for Health Promotions (BASICS, THRIVE)                 | 274-7933  |
| Center for Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, And Social Inclusion | 274-3222  |
| Center for LGBT Education, Outreach, & Services               | 274-7394  |
| Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS)                  | 274-3136  |
| Hammond Health Center   | 274-3177  |
| Office of International Programs                              | 274-3306  |
| Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards             | 274-3375  |
| Muller Chapel   | 274-3103  |
| Office of New Student & Transition Programs                   | 274-1908  |
| Office of Residential Life                                    | 274-3141  |
| Office of Student Engagement                                  | 274-3222  |
| Student Accessibility Services                                | <a href="http://ithaca.edu/sas">ithaca.edu/sas</a> 274-1005                 |
| Student Financial Services (SFS)                              | 274-3131  |
| Title IX Coordinator<br>& Deputy Coordinator                  | 274-7761<br><a href="http://ithaca.edu/share">ithaca.edu/share</a> 274-5136 |
| Writing Center  | 274-3315  |

Is the student a danger to self or others? Does the student need immediate assistance?

NO

I am not concerned for the student's immediate safety. The student is having academic and/or personal issues. They would likely benefit from support/additional resources

Refer the student to appropriate resources. See above page for options.

I'M NOT SURE

Student shows signs of distress, but I am unsure how serious it is. My interaction has left me uneasy and/or concerned about the student

FOR CONSULTATION CALL:

- CAPS at (607) 274-3136
- Office of Case Management at (607) 274-7731
- OPS at (607) 274-3333

FOR COORDINATED CAMPUS RESPONSE:

- Submit an ICare referral at **[Ithaca.edu/icare](http://Ithaca.edu/icare)**

YES

The student's behaviors are clearly and imminently reckless, disorderly, dangerous, or threatening and are suggestive of harm to self and/or others

CALL THE OFFICE OF PUBLIC SAFETY AT (607) 274-3333 FOR IMMEDIATE ASSISTANCE

Submit an ICare referral at [Ithaca.edu/icare](http://Ithaca.edu/icare) after contacting Public Safety

## Assisting Students in Distress

### Recognizing Indicators

Be alert to the following indicators of a student in distress. Look for groupings, frequency, duration, and severity.

#### Academic Indicators

- Sudden decline in quality of work and grades
- Repeated absences
- Disorganized/inconsistent performance
- Multiple Requests for extensions
- Overly demanding of faculty/staff time and attention
- Bizarre content or disorganized thinking in writings or presentations
- Behaviors that interfere with classroom (or activity) engagement

#### Physical Indicators

- Deterioration in grooming, hygiene, or weight loss/gain
- Excessive fatigue/sleep disturbance
- Intoxication, hangovers, or smelling of substances
- Disclosure of substance use to "cope"
- Disoriented, "out-of-it", or often forgetful
- Garbled, rambling, tangential, disconnected, or slurred speech
- Bizarre behavior
- Strange ideas/beliefs, delusions, or paranoia
- Isolation. withdrawal from peers

#### Psychological Indicators

- Excessive self-disclosure of personal distress
- Unusual/disproportional emotional response to events
- Major shift in mood
- Excessive tearfulness, panic reactions, irritability, or unusual apathy
- Verbally abusive (e.g. taunting, badgering, intimidation)
- Expressions of concern about the student by peers
- Antagonistic or impulsive behaviors
- Recent major stressor (e.g. loss of loved one, relationship break up, etc.)

#### Safety Risk Indicators

- Unprovoked anger or hostility
- Physical violence (e.g. shoving, grabbing, assault, use of weapon)
- Implying or making a direct threat to harm self or others
- Vague statements about suicide or homicide
- Academic assignments dominated by themes of hopelessness, rage, worthlessness, isolation, despair, acting out, suicidal ideations, violent behaviors
- Stalking or harassing others
- Communicating threats via email, texting, or phone calls,
- Appears hopeless or helpless