

HELPING STUDENTS IN DISTRESS



St. Thomas
UNIVERSITY

This guide outlines warning signs of students in possible distress and how to approach and respond to those who seek help.

1 IDENTIFY

ACADEMIC INDICATORS

- Sudden decline in quality of work and grades
- Repeated absences
- Disturbing content in writing or presentations (e.g., violence, death)
- You find yourself doing more personal counselling during office hours
- Continuous classroom disruptions

PSYCHOLOGICAL INDICATORS

- Self-disclosure of personal distress that could include family problems, financial difficulties, depression, grief, or thoughts of suicide
- Excessive tearfulness, panic, irritability or unusual apathy
- Verbal abuse (e.g., taunting, badgering, intimidation)
- Expressions of concern about the student by his/her peers

SAFETY RISK INDICATORS

- Unprovoked anger or hostility
- Making implied or direct threats to harm self or others
- Academic assignments dominated by themes of extreme hopelessness, rage, worthlessness, isolation, despair, acting out, suicidal ideation, or violent behaviours

PHYSICAL INDICATORS

- Marked changes in physical appearance including deterioration in grooming, hygiene, or weight loss/gain
- Excessive fatigue or sleep disturbance
- Intoxication, frequent hangovers, or smelling of alcohol
- Disoriented, "out of it"

2 RESPOND

The most important information we can convey to a person in distress is that **WE CARE** and **THEY MATTER**. If you are not concerned about the student's immediate safety but believe they could benefit from additional support, here are some suggestions.

APPROACH

"I noticed you've missed quite a few classes lately. I'm here if you need or want to talk."

Trust your instincts, and pay attention to warning signs.

Inform students you are available if they'd like to talk.

RESPECT
the student's decision to accept or refuse assistance except in situations where you're concerned about their or other's safety. In these circumstances, please notify the Director of Housing & Community Standards.

SUPPORT

"It sounds like you're feeling overwhelmed. You're not alone. There are people and resources that can help you."

Listen openly and non-judgmentally.

Let the student know you care about what they are trying to communicate.

Let them know support is available.

REFER

"There are resources on campus to help you deal with these concerns. You're not alone, and if you'd like, I can help you connect with them."

Encourage the student to connect with available resources as soon as possible. Seeking early help may improve outcomes.

Provide the appropriate resources available to the student. Resource information is listed on the back of this guide.

Offer to help the student connect with campus resources.

3 REFER

Follow the **RESPONSE PROTOCOL** table to determine who to contact when faced with a distressed student.

Threats and/or disruptive behaviour

Direct or indirect reference to suicide

I am concerned about a student's behaviour and/or well-being but I do not think it is urgent.

I am not concerned about the student's immediate safety, but they are having significant academic and/or personal issues and could use support or additional resources.

Call 911 or Campus Security at 506-453-4830.

Call the Help Desk at 506-453-7213, ask@stu.ca or find us on the 1st floor in JDH

See table below for campus and community resources available.

CAMPUS SUPPORT SERVICES

Indigenous Student Services	Sonja Perley, Director	sperley@stu.ca JDH 211
Indigenous Student Services	Robbie Atwin, Indigenous Student Coord. Chelsea Harris-Carr, Future Wabanaki Coord.	ratwin@stu.ca charriscarr@stu.ca JDH - 2nd Floor
Student Success & Retention	Angela Finlayson, Director	afinlayson@stu.ca 506-371-4047 GMH-312
Accessibility Services	Amanda Manning, Manager - GMH-306 Bailey Gardner, Advisor - GMH-104	accessibility@stu.ca 506-453-7207 GMH 104
Campus Ministry	Claire Morrison, Campus Minister	campusministry@stu.ca 506-452-0636 HCH G14
Cultural Diversity Coordinator	Saa Andrew Gbongbor	sagbongbor@stu.ca 506-452-0565 - GMH 302
International Students	Carrie Monteith-Levesque, Coordinator	cmonteith@stu.ca 506-452-9593 - GMH 311
Student Success	Kath Hyndman, Student Success Coach	khyndman@stu.ca 506-452-9654 - GMH 305
Registrar's Office	Maureen Barnes Registrar Kate Crawford, Associate Registrar	registrarsoffice@stu.ca 506-452-0530 GMH 101
Academic Advising	Kelly Hogg, Advisor Alison Belyea, Advisor	advising@stu.ca 506-452-0530 GMH 101
Writing Centre	Heather MacDonald, Writing Centre Coordinator	hmac@stu.ca 506-452-0480 ECH 102
Health Services (Medical Clinic) (shared service STU/UNB)	26 Bailey Drive, C.C. Jones Student Services Ctr, 3rd floor	shc@unb.ca 506-453-4837
Counselling Services (shared service STU/UNB)	26 Bailey Drive, CC Jones Student Services, 2nd floor	counsel@unb.ca 506-453-4820
Housing & Community Standards	Cory Flynn, Director	cflynn@stu.ca 506-453-7213 GMH 303
Residence Life	Sylenah Beckford, Supervisor Jeremey Fowler, Supervisor	residencelife@stu.ca 506-452-0578 GMH 303
Campus Sexual Assault Support Advocate	Megen Gaudet, Advocate	csasa@svnb.ca 506-453-4530
Mental Health	Shane Clark, Mental Health Coord.	mentalhealth@stu.ca GMH 307

RESOURCES IN THE FREDERICTON AREA

Dr. Everett Chalmers Regional Hospital 700 Priestman Street	506-452-5400
Chimo Helpline (Toll-Free Number, 24 hour service)	506-450-HELP (4357) 1-800-667-5005
Bridge the gapp NB A new way to connect with guidance and supports for mental health and addictions.	https://nb.bridgethegapp.ca/
Fredericton After-Hours Mobile Crisis Team (Noon - 10pm daily)	506-453-2132
Fredericton Mental Health Services 65 Brunswick Street	506-453-2132
Fredericton Addiction Services 65 Brunswick Street	506-453-2132
Capital Region Mental Health and Addictions 65 Brunswick Street	506-458-1803
Sexual Violence NB www.svnb.ca	506-454-0437
Student Wellness provides students with free, confidential access to a counsellor any time, anywhere, via phone or internet. 1-833-549-3281 or studentbenefits.ca/studentwellness	

211 NB is a free, bilingual, confidential resource to help New Brunswickers navigate the network of community, social, nonclinical health and government services. **CALL 2-1-1** and trained staff will work to connect callers with services for both everyday needs and times of crisis. **211 NB** provides information and referral services 24 hours a day, everyday.

988 Free Suicide Crisis Helpline to provide moments of connection that create hope, support recovery and save lives. We help people connect to their strengths and find new ways to cope, live, and thrive.

In the event of a **MEDICAL EMERGENCY**, call **911** immediately.

**Afterwards, (if appropriate) contact the help desk via email at ask@stu.ca so we can connect with the student and offer support as needed.*