

Tips for Helping a Stressed Out Student

UVA Counseling and Psychological Services

Common Warning Signs

ACADEMIC PROBLEMS

- Excessive procrastination
- Uncharacteristically poor academic preparation or performance
- Repeated requests for extensions or special considerations
- Disruptive classroom behavior
- Excessive career or course choice indecision
- A pattern of absence or tardiness
- Avoiding or dominating discussions
- Verbal or written references to suicide or homicide
- Frequently falling asleep in class

INTERPERSONAL PROBLEMS

- Asking advisor/instructor for help with personal problems
- Dependency on an advisor/instructor
- Hanging around the office
- Avoidance of an advisor/instructor
- Disruptive behavior
- Inability to get along with others
- Withdrawal from friends
- Complaints from other students

BEHAVIORAL PROBLEMS

- Change in personal hygiene
- Dramatic weight gain or loss
- Irritability
- Alcohol/drug use
- Impaired speech
- Disjointed thoughts
- Tearfulness
- Intense emotion
- Inappropriate responses
- Difficulty concentrating
- Engaging in self-injury
- Sudden mood or behavior changes

Suggestions for Intervening

- Talk to the student privately to help minimize embarrassment and defensiveness.
- Listen carefully to the student and respond to both the content and emotion in the conversation.
- Discuss your observations and perceptions of the situation frankly and honestly with the student.
- Ask if the student is having any thoughts of harming self or others.
- Acknowledge inappropriate or strange behavior without being judgmental.
- Try to respect the student's value system even if you don't agree with it.
- Clarify the limits on your ability to help. Instead, offer to connect the student with experts trained to assist struggling students.
- Avoid making promises of complete confidentiality. (It is difficult to get others to help if you can't tell them what is happening.) Instead, you might promise to only share the information others might "need to know" to do their jobs.

**All UVA students are eligible for emergency assessments and/or consultation.
EMERGENCIES:
(434) 243-5150 or 911**

If you are concerned about a student, you can call 434-243-5150 24 hours/day, 7 days/week and ask to speak with the on-call therapist. Consultation regarding concerns about students is available to UVA students, faculty, administrators, staff, parents, and other concerned community members.

How to Make a Referral

EMERGENCY REFERRALS

- **All UVA students are eligible for emergency assessments and/or consultation. For emergencies:** (434) 243-5150 or 911
- CAPS crisis and emergency consultation services are available 24 hours/day, 7 days/week. During business hours (M-F, 8am-5pm) students can call or walk-in to CAPS and speak to the on-call therapist.
- After business hours, students should call 434-243-5150 to connect with the CAPS after hours phone service, Fonemed. A registered nurse will assess students' mental health concerns and direct them to the most appropriate care.

NON-EMERGENCY REFERRALS

- Students can call CAPS at (434) 243-5150 during normal business hours to schedule a brief screening.
- Online tools like **SilverCloud**, free for all UVA students, are also great mental health resources.