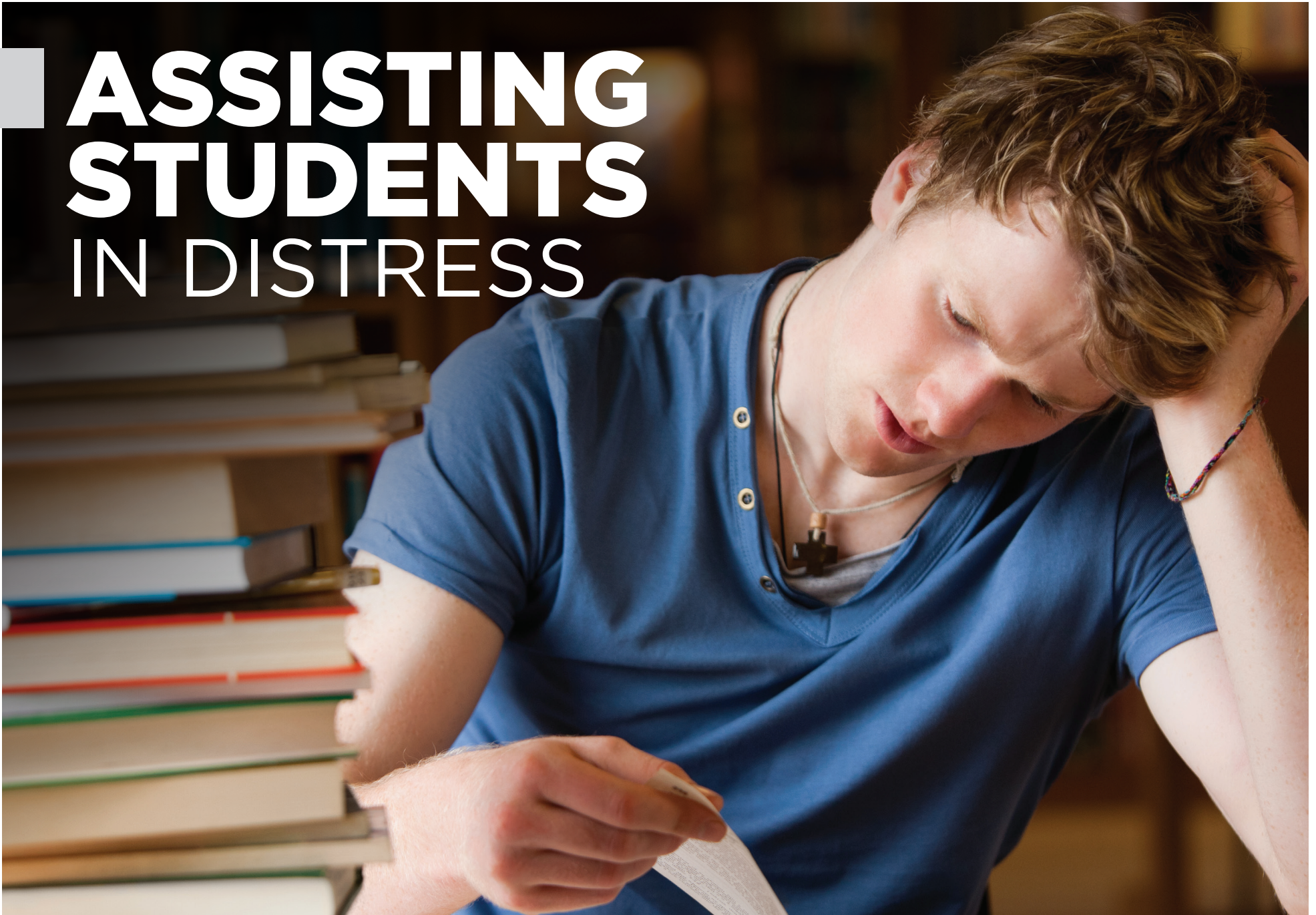


ASSISTING STUDENTS IN DISTRESS



UtahStateUniversity[™]
DIVISION OF STUDENT AFFAIRS

AGGIES **THINK.** AGGIES **CARE.** AGGIES **ACT.**

ASSISTING STUDENTS

IN DISTRESS

The purpose of this resource guide is to help you recognize symptoms of student distress and identify appropriate referrals to campus resources.

THINK

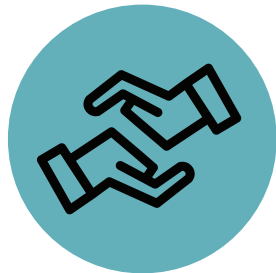


USU faculty and staff are in a unique position to demonstrate compassion for USU students in distress.

Both undergraduate and graduate students may feel alone, isolated, and even hopeless when faced with academic and life challenges. These feelings can easily disrupt academic performance and may lead to difficulties coping and other serious consequences.

You may be the first person to notice signs indicating a student is in distress. **THINK:** Has your student displayed academic, psychological, physical, or safety risk indicators? Have you noticed any changes in a student's performance or behavior?

CARE



Students exhibiting troubling behaviors in your presence are likely having difficulties in various settings, including the classroom, with roommates, with family, and in other social settings.

Show your **CARE** about your students by speaking up if someone leaves you worried, alarmed, or threatened. Trust your instincts.

ACT



Sometimes students cannot or will not turn to family or friends. **ACT!**

Your expression of concern may be a critical factor in saving a student's academic career or even their life.

DISTRESS INDICATORS

ACADEMIC INDICATORS

- Sudden decline in quality of work and grades
- Repeated absences
- Disturbing content in writing or presentations (e.g., violence, death)
- Seeks more personal counseling rather than academic
- Continuous classroom disruptions

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 ideations, violent behaviors

PHYSICAL INDICATORS

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

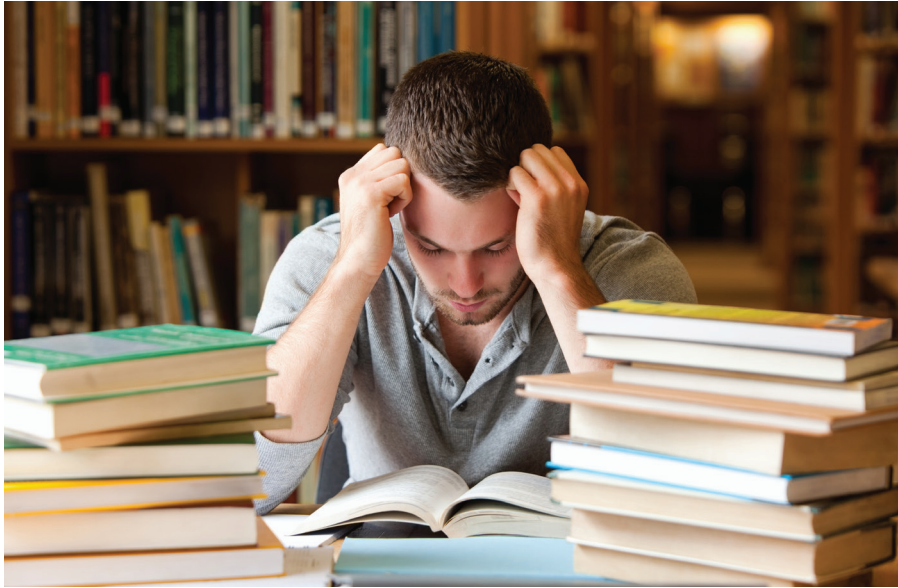
PSYCHOLOGICAL INDICATORS

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

The Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) permits communication about a student of concern in connection with a health and safety emergency. Observations of a student's conduct or statements made by a student are not FERPA protected.

ASSISTING STUDENTS

IN DISTRESS



DISRUPTIVE STUDENTS

A student whose conduct is clearly and imminently reckless, disorderly, dangerous, or threatening, including self-harmful behavior.

TO GET HELP OR REPORT AN INCIDENT

If you are concerned for your own or others' safety due to a student's threatening behavior, call 911 or USU Police at 435-797-1939.

DISTRESSED STUDENTS

A student with persistent behaviors such as:

- Sad
- Irritable
- Withdrawn
- Confused
- Overly anxious
- Lacks motivation and/or concentration
- Seeks constant attention
- Demonstrates bizarre or erratic behavior
- Expresses suicidal thoughts

IF A STUDENT IS CAUSING DISRUPTION BUT DOES NOT POSE A THREAT

If you believe there is a safety risk, contact USU Police.

1. Ensure your safety in the environment.
2. Use a calm, non-confrontational approach to diffuse/de-escalate the situation.
3. Set limits by explaining how the behavior is inappropriate.
4. If the disruptive behavior persists, notify the student that disciplinary action may be taken. Ask the student to leave. Inform the student that refusal to leave may be a separate violation subject to discipline.
5. Immediately report the incident to the appropriate resource.

RESOURCES & TIPS

BE PROACTIVE

Engage students early on. Pay attention to signs of distress and set limits on disruptive behavior.

BE DIRECT

Don't be afraid to ask students directly if they are under the influence of drugs or alcohol, feeling confused, or having thoughts of harming themselves or others.

LISTEN SENSITIVELY AND CAREFULLY

Use a non-confrontational approach and a calm voice. Avoid threatening, humiliating, and intimidating responses.

SAFETY FIRST

The welfare of the campus community is the top priority when a student displays threatening or potentially violent behavior. Do not hesitate to call for help.

FOLLOW THROUGH

Direct the student to the physical location of the identified resource.

CONSULTATION AND DOCUMENTATION

Always document your interactions with distressed students and consult with your department chair/supervisor after any incident.

ASSISTING STUDENTS

IN DISTRESS

CONFIDENTIAL RESOURCES

COUNSELING AND PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES (CAPS)

435-797-1012

USU HEALTH AND WELLNESS CENTER

435-797-1660

LOGAN REGIONAL HOSPITAL

435-716-1000

SEXUAL ASSAULT AND ANTI-VIOLENCE INFORMATION (SAAVI)

435-797-7273

NATIONAL SUICIDE PREVENTION LIFELINE









800-273-TALK (8255)

RESPONSE PROTOCOL

Follow the table to determine who to contact when faced with a distressed or disruptive student.

SITUATION

CONTACT

 <p>The student is clearly and imminently reckless, disorderly, dangerous, or threatening, including self-harm behavior.</p>	 <p>Call 911 or USU Police at 435-797-1939.</p>
 <p>Student discloses to me an incident of sexual misconduct (i.e., sexual harassment, sexual assault, relationship violence, sex based stalking).</p>	 <p>It is mandatory that all USU <u>reporting employees</u> report any disclosures of sexual misconduct to the Title IX Coordinator. Go to equity.usu.edu and click "File a Report."</p>
 <p>The student shows signs of distress, but I'm unsure how serious it is. My interaction has left me feeling uneasy or concerned about the student.</p>	 <p>File a report with the Behavioral Intervention/CARE Team at studentconduct.usu.edu/reporting or call 435-797-3137.</p>
 <p>I'm not concerned for the student's immediate safety, but he or she is having significant academic and/or personal issues and could use support or additional resources.</p>	 <p>Directly refer students to an appropriate campus resource or feel free to consult with the Student Affairs Case Manager at 435-797-3137.</p>

NON-CONFIDENTIAL RESOURCES

Information shared with non-confidential resources is only shared on a need-to-know basis.

USU BEHAVIORAL INTERVENTION/CARE TEAM

435-797-3137

USU POLICE

435-797-1939

LOGAN CITY POLICE NON-EMERGENCY

435-753-7555

AFFIRMATIVE ACTION/EQUAL OPPORTUNITY OFFICE (TITLE IX)

435-797-1266



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