



**JAMES MADISON**  
UNIVERSITY®

# PURPLE FOLDER

Brought to you by:  
JMU Counseling Center



**RECOGNIZE**

Recognize signs of distress



**RESPOND**

Respond appropriately



**REFER**

Refer the student



## RECOGNIZE Indicators of Distressed Students

### Academic

- Decline in performance
- Missing class/assignments
- Resists reasonable limits and/or constructive feedback
- Classroom disruptions
- Seeking personal vs. professional advice
- Multiple requests for extensions/special considerations
- Does not respond to repeated requests to meet

### Physical

- Drastic changes in appearance
- Strange behavior indicating loss of contact with reality
- Visibly under the influence of drugs or alcohol
- Rapid speech/impulsive behavior
- Depressed/lethargic mood
- Observable signs of injury

### Psychological

- Self-disclosure of distress
- Unusual emotional response to events
- Excessive panic reactions
- Verbal abuse
- Expressions of concern about the student by peers
- Withdrawal from others and previously enjoyed activities
- Loss of an important relationship

### Safety Risk

- Verbal, written, or implied references to suicide, homicide, assault, or self-harm behaviors
- Unprovoked anger or hostility/physical violence
- Academic assignments contain disturbing content (possible exception for creative writing)
- Stalking or harassing
- Communicating threats/disturbing comments via communication outlets



# RESPOND To Distressed Students

Stay Safe

Call University Police (EXT. 86911) or 911 if there is immediate danger to you, the student, or anyone else.

Stay Calm

Take a few deep breaths to stay calm and use a calm voice when talking/asking questions.

Take Your Time

If it is NOT an immediately dangerous situation, think about what is the best next step.

Seek Consultation

Ask people around you for help! You can turn to consult with a colleague or call an office on campus.

Use Active Listening

Give your full attention to the situation and maintain eye contact. Restate what they say to show you are listening.

Ask Direct Questions

Don't be afraid to ask directly if the student intends to harm themselves or others.

Give Concrete Help

Help them get to the next step by getting in contact with the appropriate resource.



## REFER

### Students to the Appropriate Resource



JMU  
Office of  
Public  
Safety

Call the JMU Police first when...

- a student is injured or needs medical attention.
- a student is an immediate threat to self or others.
- a student appears to be under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol.
- a student is acting bizarre or showing signs of disturbed thinking.



JMU  
Counseling  
Center

Call the CC first when...

- the concern is solely about mental health issues.
- there are specific questions about CC services. Much of that information is accessible on our website.
- there is a release of information on file to consult about a specific CC client.



Dean of  
Students

Call the DOS first when...

- a student has extended absence from class for medical/mental health reasons.
- a student is considering withdrawing from the university.
- you want to report concerning student behavior to the Behavioral Assessment Team.

#### Emergency Resources

##### JMU Public Safety:

Emergency: 540-568-6911

Non-Emergency: 540-568-6912

##### Sentara Hospital:

540-689-1414

#### Urgent Resources

**Behavioral Assessment Team (BAT):** (540-568-6468) Assesses and intervenes when student behavior may pose a threat to themselves or the JMU community.

**Victim Advocacy Services:** (540-568-6251) Offers advocacy support to students who have experienced sexual violence, dating violence, stalking, or other crimes of interpersonal violence.

**OSARP:** (540-568-6218) Reviews documentation and responds to student behavior that violates the policies in the student handbook in accordance with the procedures and rights afforded to students.

**Title IX:** (540-568-5219) Responds to and addresses all reports of sexual misconduct.



**For an immediate threat:  
On-Campus: 540-568-6911  
Off-Campus: 911**

When in doubt, the Counseling Center is here to consult and provide referrals/recommendations. Call 540-568-6552.