Step 1: Recognizing Signs of Distress

Stress and distress are common feelings for many students. Each student is going to have their own unique way of dealing with stressful experiences and their emotions. There are many different reasons why a student may approach you for support, or appear in need of support. Being able to recognize a student in distress is the first step.

Signs of stress or distress may include physical, emotional or behavioural, academic concerns and/or obvious expressions of safety concerns.

**Safety Concerns**
Examples include statements about suicide or death, suspicions or paranoia, threats towards/from others.

**Emotions & Behaviours**
Examples include evident anxiety; unusually withdrawn or animated; feelings of helplessness; crying; appear emotionless or calm; memory loss; unable to concentrate; seem hypervigilant or panic.

**Physical Distress**
Examples include exhaustion; falling asleep in class; visible change in appearance; or visible injuries.

**Academic Concerns**
Examples include concerning content on assignments; extreme perfectionism; extreme disorganization; repeated absences; missed assignments or exams.
### Requires Immediate Support

**Student Concern**
If a student has a plan or thoughts of:
- suicide
- life-threatening behaviours
- causing damage or harm to self, others, or the institution

**What To Do**
**Seek immediate assistance** and:
1. Stay with the student, unless you are worried about your safety
2. Get help:
   - Nipissing University Campus Security at x5555 or 24-hours at 705-498-7244
   - Call 911
   - Call Counselling Services x4507 (office hours only)

### Requires Further Assessment

**Student Concern**
If the student has thoughts of:
- worthlessness, hopelessness, people “better off” without them, people being “against them”

Any indication of:
- self-injury, disordered eating, sexual violence, disorganized speech, lack of flow in conversation, delusions

If you are concerned about the student’s feelings of:
- frustration, anxiety, stress

**What To Do**
Follow the **Recognize, Respond, Refer, Reflect** guidelines in this folder, and:
1. Offer to call Student Development & Services to connect with a professional x4507, room B210
2. Offer the student resources for support found on the inside of the folder
3. If you are worried about the safety of the student or yourself, contact Nipissing University Campus Security at x5555 or 24-hours at 705-498-7244, or call 911

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**Step 2: Respond**

A supportive response and approach can make all the difference, but that does not mean that it will come easy. This also does not mean that you need to be an expert. It is important to remember that it is okay to not have all the answers. Being aware of these simple steps can help you to provide a supportive response.

**Starting the Conversation**
- Meet in safe & private location
- Be open to listening
- Express your concern for the student
- Ensure the student is open to talking further

**Provide a Supportive Referral**
- Share that support is available
- Create an individual plan of next steps for student by providing support(s) listed in this folder, whom referral(s) being made to/support person for student
- Summarize the plan including when you will follow up with the student

**Listen & Respect Confidentiality**
- Take a non-judgmental approach
- Validate feelings of stress
- Communicate any limits to confidentiality
- Limits may include concerns about student’s safety and/or professional responsibilities

**Follow Up Plan**
- Follow up based on your plan with the student
Step 3: Refer

Nipissing University Resources (705) 474-3450

**Academic Advising**
Academic Planning/
Course Selection
x4358 A207
advising@nipissingu.ca

**Campus Health Centre**
Medical Concerns
705-474-7600 x5261 B205

**Campus Security**
Safety or Emergency Support
x5555 B203
24-Hours 705-498-7244
security@nipissingu.ca

**International Initiatives**
International/Exchange
Student Programs
x4321 B210
myinternational@nipissingu.ca

**NipissingSafe App**
Interactive, Mobile Safety App
sds@nipissingu.ca

**Nipissing University**
**Student Union**
Food Security/Health Plan
x4801 F204/F205
info@nusu.com

**Office of Indigenous Initiatives**
Cultural Support
x4899 F215
biindgen@nipissingu.ca

**Residence Life**
Student Housing x4855
residence@nipissingu.ca

**Sexual Violence**
**Prevention & Education**
Referral & Support
x4075 B210
svsupport@nipissingu.ca

**Student Accessibility Services**
Academic Accommodations for Disabilities
x4362 B210
sas@nipissingu.ca

**Student Counselling**
Emotional or Mental Health Needs
x4507 B210
counselling@nipissingu.ca

**Student Financial Services**
Financial Support
x4419 G215
finance@nipissingu.ca

**Student Intervention Services**
Complex Concerns or Multiple Support Needs
x4605 B210
sis@nipissingu.ca

**Student Learning & Transitions**
Academic & Transition Support
x4459 B210
slt@nipissingu.ca

**Student Success**
Support for Student Success
www.nipissingu.ca/nusuccess
nusuccess@nipissingu.ca

**Helplines**

**Amelia Rising (Sexual Violence Report Centre)**
24-Hour Crisis Line
705-476-3355
ameliarising.ca

**Assaulted Women’s Helpline**
24-Hour Helpline
1-866-863-0511

**Crisis Intervention Program**
North Bay Regional Hospital
24-Hour Support
1-800-352-1141

**Good2Talk**
24-Hour Student Helpline
1-866-925-5454

**Help for Male Survivors of Sexual Abuse**
24-Hour Helpline
1-866-887-0015

**Talk4Healing**
24-Hour Indigenous Women’s Helpline
1-855-554-HEAL

**Youth Line**
LBGTT2Sq+ Peer Support Limited Hours
1-800-268-9688
Student Retention Alert

What Is It?
Student Retention Alert is a referral-based early alert program that provides timely support to students who may be facing challenges.

How Do I Use It?
1. Log into WebAdvisor
2. Select “Student Retention Alert” from the Faculty/Employee main menu
3. Select Submit Student Concern
4. Type the first and last name of the student or their Nipissing University student identification number (you may also choose to submit anonymously if this information is unknown)

Contact Us
nusuccess@nipissingu.ca or sis@nipissingu.ca

Step 4: Reflect

What Type of Support Did I Provide?
Did the student require immediate assistance, a referral or follow-up? Was there a safety concern?

Did I Consider My Own Limits?
It is okay to not know the answer to a question and to set personal boundaries. Encourage students to call on other resources provided in this folder when possible.

How Am I Feeling?
It is common to feel upset or anxious after dealing with a student’s distress. Get help for yourself. If you need to debrief, have a question or want to report a concern with a professional, please contact Student Intervention Specialist at x4605. Further support is available through your Employee Assistance Program (EAP), contact Human Resources for details.

Visit nipissingu.ca/training for mental health training opportunities