

Creating a Culture of Care



HOW TO SUPPORT DISTRESSED INDIVIDUALS

The Ohio State University is committed to creating a culture of care. As Buckeyes, everyone can do their part to support one another across our campus community. This guide provides a toolkit of resources and information to support individuals who may be experiencing distress.

If you are concerned for your safety, for the safety of others, or for the immediate safety of someone who may be suicidal, CALL 911 immediately.

Counseling is confidential and available for all Ohio State University students, faculty and staff.

STUDENTS

Students can contact Student Life Counseling and Consultation Service (CCS)
614-292-5766 | ccs.osu.edu

FACULTY AND STAFF

Faculty and staff can contact the Employee Assistance Program (EAP)
1-800-678-6265 | osuhealthplan.com/eap

Whether you're faculty, staff or a student, there are a few simple steps you can follow to support someone in distress.

1. Invite

- Find a private and quiet place to talk.
- Put away all distractions like your phone or computer.
- Make eye contact; speak slowly and calmly.

IF PERSON IS WILLING TO TALK

Start by saying something like this:

"I'm worried about you because..."

"I've noticed _____ and it just doesn't seem like you."

Try inviting like this:

"Could we talk for a moment?"

"Would it be okay to chat in private for a second?"

IF PERSON IS UNWILLING TO TALK

Then, try saying something like this:

"I want you to know that I care. You can talk to me if you ever need to, and I'd be happy to help find resources."

"Is there someone else you might feel more comfortable talking to instead?"

2. Listen

- Listen to understand without interrupting, maintain eye contact, be engaged and encouraging.
- Do not immediately offer solutions. Avoid giving advice or making assumptions.

Start by saying something like this:

"Take your time, I know talking about this might be difficult."

"I'm here to listen."

- Validate how they are feeling.
- Ask open ended questions to encourage the conversation.

Then, try saying something like this:

"What you are saying is important and I want to be sure I am hearing you right. It seems like _____. Do I have this right?"

"Can you share more about _____?"



3. Ask

- Use short sentences and remain engaged.
- Don't promise confidentiality.
- Do not make it about yourself.
- Be gently persistent.

Start by saying something like this:

"I know it can be hard to talk about what you're experiencing – thank you for trusting me."

"While I may not be able to understand what it's like to be in your situation, or exactly how you feel, I do care about you, and I want to help."

IF YES

Do not leave them alone.

Call Campus Police (614-292-2121) or CALL 911.

Avoid saying:

"I know how you feel."

"That's foolish – don't talk like that."

"Other people have it worse than you."

Then, try asking directly about suicide.

"It sounds like you have a lot going on. I know that people who feel this way sometimes have thoughts of suicide. Have you had any thoughts of death?"

"Have you thought about ending your life or how you might end your life?"

IF NO

Provide information about resources and encourage them to seek assistance.

Share that they can call / text 988 for the Suicide and Crisis Lifeline if they ever need.

4. Support and Follow Up

- If you say you will follow up, be sure to do so.
- Continue to offer resources and options for support.
- Continue to take all suicide threats seriously.

Start by saying something like this:

"We support and care about you, and the priority is getting you the help you need."

"The university has a lot of resources available to support you. Let's look through those together."

- Provide flexibility, care and compassion.
- Respect privacy. Allow the individual to work with the appropriate resource on determining what is shared.

Then, try saying something like this:

"I plan to check back in with you to see how you are doing. What would be the best way to do that?"



Important Phone Numbers

Emergency: 911

University Police: 614-292-2121

Suicide and Crisis Lifeline: Call / text 988

Crisis Text Line: Text 4HOPE to 741741

Helpful Resources:

Student Life Counseling and Consultation Service

614-292-5766 | ccs.osu.edu

Student Life Student Health Services

614-292-4321 | shs.osu.edu

Employee Assistance Program

1-800-678-6265 | osuhealthplan.com/eap

Employee Labor Relations

(To report workplace violence, or assist and consult with issues related to the workplace)

614-247-6947 | hr.osu.edu/services/elr

Ohio State Suicide Prevention Program

614-688-5829 | suicideprevention.osu.edu | suicideprevention@osu.edu

Student Life Student Wellness Center

614-292-4527 | swc.osu.edu | wellness@osu.edu

Ohio State App

Search "Ohio State" in the app store

Student Life Student Advocacy Center

614-292-1111 | advocacy.osu.edu | advocacy@osu.edu

Student Life Student Conduct

614-292-0748 | studentconduct.osu.edu | studentconduct@osu.edu

Psychological Services Center

614-292-2345 | psychology.osu.edu/psc | psc@psy.ohio-state.edu

Ohio State Medical Center / Harding Hospital

614-293-9600 | wexnermedical.osu.edu

SMART Lab (Stress Management & Resiliency Training)

u.osu.edu/smartlab

Office of Institutional Equity

(To report sexual misconduct, relationship, dating or domestic violence, or harassment)

614-247-5838 | equity.osu.edu | equity@osu.edu

