

GREEN FOLDER

Faculty and staff are in a unique position to demonstrate care and compassion for students in distress. The purpose of this folder is to help you recognize potential symptoms of distress and identify appropriate campus resources to refer students to.

HOW TO IDENTIFY SYMPTOMS & MAKE A REFERRAL

These symptoms are listed to aid faculty and staff in making a referral to Student Wellness or other agencies or helping professionals when necessary.

IDENTIFYING & AIDING A PERSON IN EMOTIONAL DISTRESS

As you know, all of us at one time or another have times when we are not ourselves and are stressed. However, some signs and symptoms go beyond the “normal” amount of stress of everyday life. This page has been created in an effort to help us all identify when a student requires assistance.

MILD SYMPTOMS

- Lack of energy or fatigue that has lasted more than two weeks
- Change in concentration in class, unable to pay attention
- Change in eating habits, eating more or less
- Changed pattern of interaction with classmates or instructor
- Change in amount of participation in class or isolation
- Change in attendance pattern
- Change in grades from good to poor
- Change in physical appearance, lack of personal attention to self
- Physical complaints that are not the result of injury
- Sudden panic attacks or increase in anxiety symptoms

MODERATE SYMPTOMS

- Student asks for more time to hand in assignments repeatedly and is hesitant about giving a reason why more time is needed
- Inappropriate disruptive behavior in class
- Extreme emotional reactions
- Open hostility to you or classmates

SEVERE SYMPTOMS

- Extremely disruptive behaviors which may be aggressive to the point of violence
- Slurred speech, garbled or unintelligible talk
- Unconnected thoughts or an inability to make sense to others when talking
- Not able to recognize time, location, people
- Expresses suicidal thoughts or actions

Message to Faculty & Staff

When faced with academic and life challenges, students may feel alone, isolated, and even hopeless. These feelings can easily disrupt academic performance and may lead to dysfunctional coping and other serious consequences. As a result of your frequent and prolonged contact, you may be the first person to notice a student in distress. As members of the NDSCS community, it is important that we act with compassion.

Keep in mind that students exhibiting concerning behaviors may be having difficulties in other areas of their lives. Students sometimes feel that they can't share their struggles with family and friends but may be comfortable doing so with faculty or staff. By expressing concern, you may help save a student's academic career or even their life.

HOW TO ACT OR WHAT TO DO IN THESE SITUATIONS

1. Stay calm and speak in a calm voice
2. For mild or moderate symptoms, when offices are open, call Counseling Services at 701-671-2286 ext. 3-2286 or NDSCS Police at 701-671-2233 ext. 3-2233.
3. For severe symptoms call NDSCS Police 701-671-2233 or 911 for transportation and protection services; **OR**
4. Call Counseling Services or Student Wellness at 701-671-2286 for consultation

WILDCATS R.O.A.R

(REACH OUT & RESPOND)

WHAT CAN YOU DO FOR MILD OR MODERATE SYMPTOMS?

- Often just listening may help
- Listen in a non-judgmental manner--often this may be enough to help the student work through the problem and come up with a solution
- Express your concern regarding the student's well-being
- Avoid criticizing the student
- Explore what the student has done previously to solve similar situations and how it worked out
- Allow the student the opportunity to determine what they might do to solve the problem themselves in an appropriate manner
- Offer the number of Student Wellness 701-671-2286
- Submit a Mental Health Personal Counseling Referral Flag on Starfish

WHEN TO REFER

- When the problem is beyond your expertise
- When you are not comfortable
- When the student is reluctant to talk to you even though they acknowledge they have a problem
- When the student reminds you of someone you know who has a similar problem and hasn't been open to your suggestions
- The danger is immediate and there needs to be direct intervention because of danger to the student or someone else



For more indications that help is needed, please visit [NDSCS.edu/Counseling](https://www.ndscs.edu/Counseling)

Student Concerns & Comments

GENERAL CONCERN REPORT

The purpose of this form is to keep North Dakota State College of Science informed about student incidents and/or student well-being concerns. Upon completion of the form, please click 'submit.'

The NDSCS concern report form is not for emergencies. The NDSCS Concern Reports are checked regularly. However, if you need immediate assistance or if you feel yourself or someone else is in danger contact NDSCS Police at 701-671-2233.

Please visit [NDSCS.edu/Concern](https://www.ndscs.edu/Concern) to complete the form.

HOW TO MAKE A REFERRAL

Some people will indeed accept the suggestion of referral more readily than others. You must be sensitive to the type of student with whom you are dealing.

- Being honest with them is almost always the very best procedure. Tell them that you are concerned about them and want them to get the best help available.
- Depending on the situation, have the student explore their options of people to talk with. If they feel they have no one to talk with, suggest someone on campus: the counselor, the student health nurse, or the police or housing office.
- Assure students that just because they feel they may need help at this time that it does not mean they are seriously ill. Many of us have more than a healthy level of stress at various times during our lifetimes and we all deal with it in different ways at different times.
- If the student does agree to be referred allow them to make the call from your office or classroom right then. It is very easy to "Just let it go" if you have just told someone how you feel and they have listened. They also will be more inclined to go and keep the appointment if you say that you are interested in how the meeting went and will ask the next time you see them.
- If you still have questions about referral, just call Counseling Services and someone will be happy to speak with you about it.