

RUTGERS UNIVERSITY - NEWARK
DIVISION OF STUDENT AFFAIRS

FACULTY & STAFF GUIDE:

Assisting Students in Need



RUTGERS-NEWARK
Student Affairs

THIS FLIPBOOK SERVES AS A RESOURCE FOR FACULTY
AND STAFF TO REFER TO AS WE NAVIGATE HOW TO
BEST ASSIST RUTGERS UNIVERSITY-NEWARK STUDENTS

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INTRODUCTION

Within the academic setting, various manifestations of student behavior can cause great concern to faculty and staff. The purpose of this guide is to provide faculty and staff with basic tools to respond to these concerns.

- **Part I** includes information on recognizing distressing, disruptive, and potentially dangerous behavior.
- **Part II** includes strategies for responding to various types of student concerns.
- **Part III** includes information on how to report and refer concerns to appropriate resources.

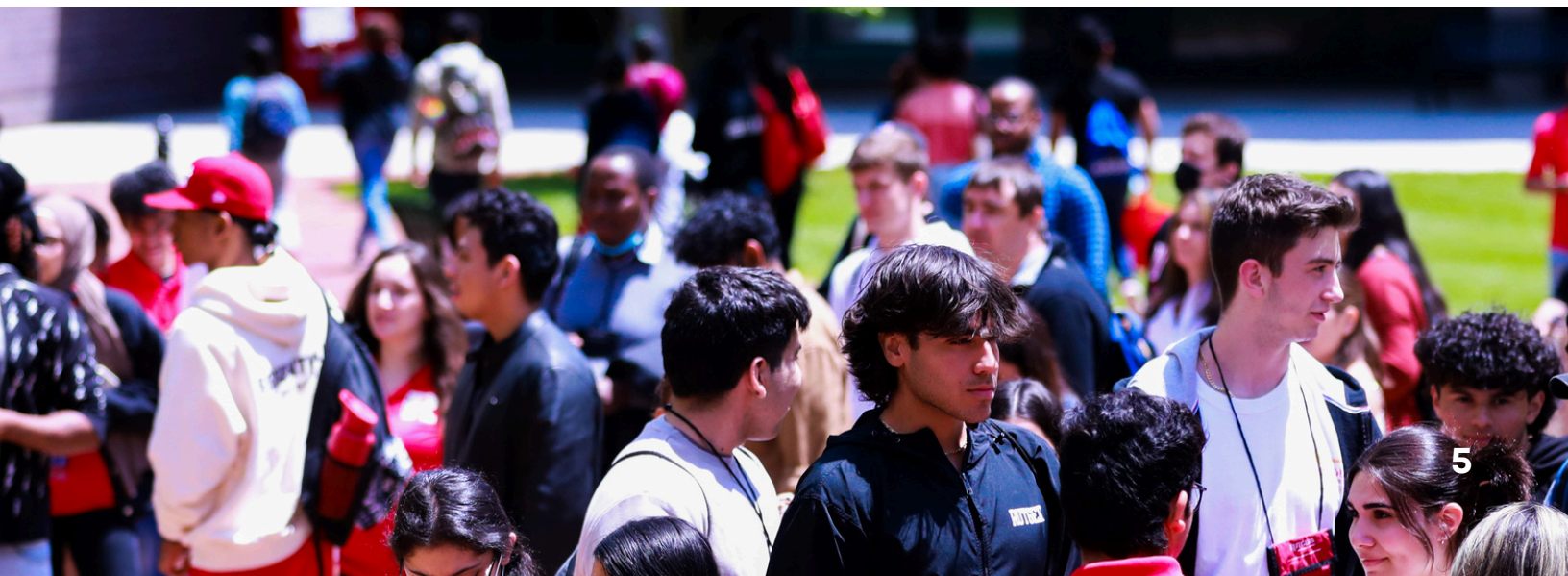
The information included in this guide is designed to assist you in formulating a plan of action based on the student's behavior and to identify campus resources to help. **It is important to note that the University does not expect you to assume the role of counselor, therapist or police officer.** For those responsibilities, Rutgers University has trained professionals who are ready to assist you with students who are of concern. Do not hesitate to contact the resources listed in this guide to enlist their expertise and support.

In situations when a student is severely impaired or potentially dangerous, **Rutgers University Police Department (RUPD)** must be alerted. RUPD is also available to assist individual departments in formulating their own safety plans in accordance with their physical layout, as well as the nature of student contact and their role within the University.

Faculty and staff can play an invaluable role in helping students who are in distress. Your expression of interest, concern and compassion is an important factor toward students seeking the assistance they need. The Office for Community Standards & Student Development, Counseling Center, RUPD, CARE Team, and other administrators stand ready to assist you. We hope this guide will help you to identify a potentially difficult situation and provide you with specific strategies and resources when you encounter student behaviors that are of concern. We encourage faculty and staff to document incidents using the online reporting form [insert link](#).

It is important to recognize that dealing with disruptive or distressed students can be psychologically and emotionally difficult. Consequently, it can be very helpful to discuss these issues with a colleague or supervisor or seek professional stress debriefing assistance. For more information about employee support resources, visit [Rutgers University Human Resources](#).

“
We are grateful for all the ways you invest in students and we hope this guidebook provides information you find helpful as you continue your work.
”



MANDATORY REPORTING TO TITLE IX

The University recognizes that individuals, including students, may be most comfortable disclosing sexual violence and other prohibited conduct to a University member they know well, such as a faculty member, coach, or resident advisor. These “non-confidential” employees will protect and respect an individual’s privacy to the greatest extent possible and share information only on a need-to-know basis; however, they cannot serve as a confidential resource.



All Rutgers employees (other than those designated as confidential resources such as advocates, counselors, clergy and healthcare providers as listed in [Appendix A to Policy 60.1.33](#)) **are required to report information about such discrimination and harassment to the University.**

Mandatory Reporters are required to report to the Office of Title IX any information you learn about a student regarding the following conduct: sex-based discrimination, sexual harassment, sexual misconduct, relationship violence and stalking.

You must include all relevant details necessary to determine what occurred and to resolve the situation.

This includes the name(s) of the alleged perpetrator(s), the affected individual(s), other individuals involved in the incident, as well as relevant facts, including the date, time and location. You should notify the Office of Title IX immediately after receiving the information.

These reporting requirements aim to ensure that all potential complainants are provided with appropriate resources and supportive measures, even if they do not wish to pursue a formal complaint.

[FILE A MANDATORY REPORT](#)



You should call Rutgers University Police Department (RUPD) by dialing **(973) 353-5111** if an incident is nearing the level of crisis.

A crisis exists whenever a person's behavior poses imminent danger of:

WHEN TO CALL 911



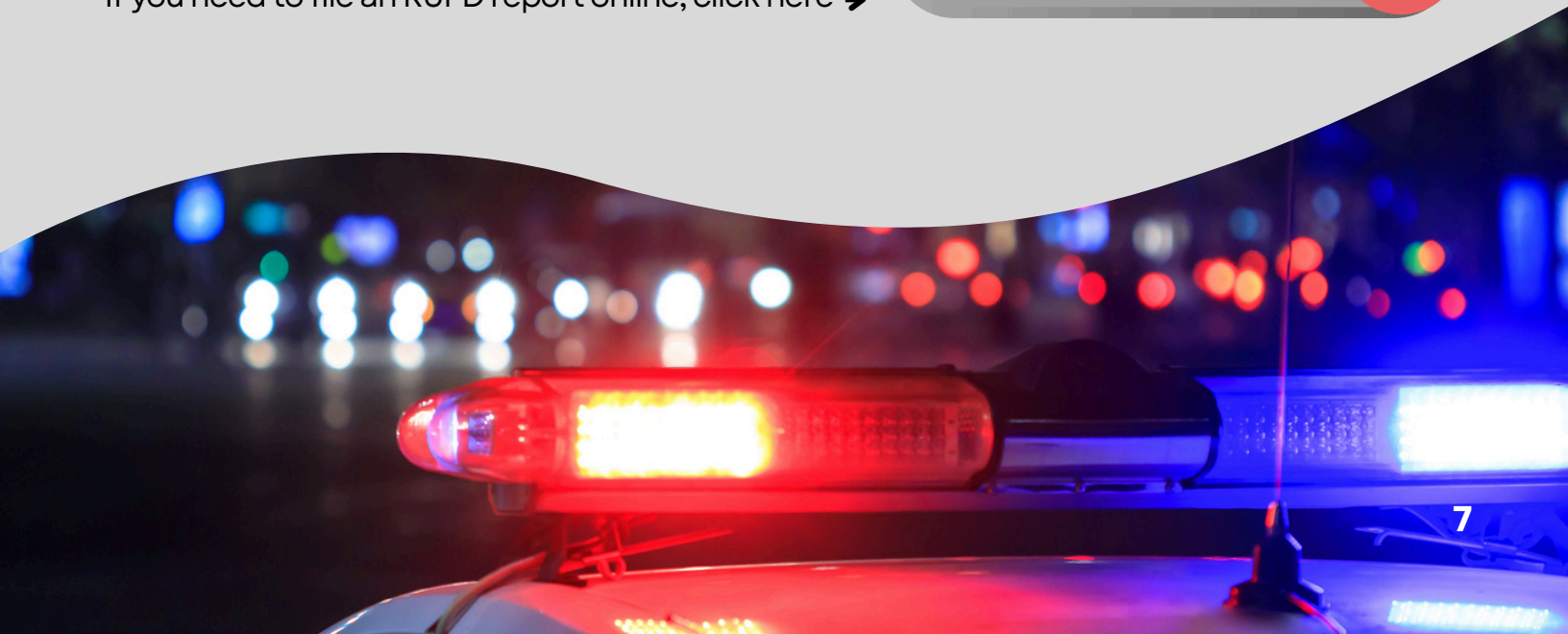
- **CAUSING OR THREATENING HARM TO SELF OR OTHERS,**
- **IMPEDING LAWFUL ACTIVITIES OF OTHER MEMBERS OF THE CAMPUS COMMUNITY,**
- **INTERFERING WITH THE HEALTH, SAFETY, OR WELLBEING OF OTHER MEMBERS OF THE RUTGERS-NEWARK COMMUNITY AND/OR,**
- **EXPERIENCING A HEALTH EMERGENCY.**

If you are ever unsure of whether or not a crisis exists, err on the side of caution and call RUPD non-emergency at (973) 353-5111 for assistance. A dispatcher will either coordinate a police response or give you information and/or referrals to assist the student in need.

Dialing 911 will also work in case of emergencies.

If you need to file an RUPD report online, click here ➔

[FILE AN RUPD REPORT](#)





Student Privacy:

Family Educational Rights & Privacy Act (**FERPA**)

The **Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)** is a Federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. Generally, post-secondary institutions must have written permission from the student in order to release any information from a student's education record. However, FERPA allows schools to disclose those records, without consent, to the following parties or under the following conditions:

- ▶ SCHOOL OFFICIALS WITH LEGITIMATE EDUCATIONAL INTEREST
- ▶ OTHER SCHOOLS TO WHICH A STUDENT IS TRANSFERRING
- ▶ APPROPRIATE PARTIES IN CONNECTION WITH FINANCIAL AID TO A STUDENT
- ▶ ORGANIZATIONS CONDUCTING CERTAIN STUDIES FOR OR ON BEHALF OF THE SCHOOL
- ▶ SPECIFIED OFFICIALS FOR AUDIT OR EVALUATION PURPOSES
- ▶ ACCREDITING ORGANIZATIONS
- ▶ TO COMPLY WITH A JUDICIAL ORDER OR LAWFULLY ISSUED SUBPOENA
- ▶ APPROPRIATE OFFICIALS IN CASES OF HEALTH AND SAFETY EMERGENCIES
- ▶ STATE AND LOCAL AUTHORITIES, WITHIN A JUVENILE JUSTICE SYSTEM, PURSUANT TO SPECIFIC STATE LAW.

Open lines of communication with appropriate campus colleagues about pertinent student information have become increasingly important for the safety of students and the campus community.

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, or FERPA, governs communication of information contained in a student's university record.

PERMISSIBLE COMMUNICATIONS INCLUDE:

- Observations of a student's conduct or statements made by the student. These are not an educational record and are not protected.
- The disclosure of personal identifiable information from an educational record to appropriate individuals in connection with a health and safety emergency. Information may be released to parents, police or others if it is necessary to protect the health and safety of the student (or other individuals).

Information can be shared with university personnel when there is a specific need to know and should be limited to the essentials of university business.

FERPA, which protects the confidentiality of student records, allows a faculty or staff member to disclose your observations about a student's behavior, and permits you to disclose any information about a student with other Rutgers University employees for a legitimate educational purpose.



This would include disclosures made in connection with maintaining the safety of the University, providing a service or benefit to the student, or any task related to the effective functioning of the University.

FERPA also permits disclosures in connection with any health or safety emergency if the disclosure is necessary to protect the health or safety of the student or others.

For more information, visit the [**FERPA Student Privacy Page**](#).

STRATEGIES:

DEALING WITH DIFFICULT SITUATIONS

Office and front-line staff often have face-to-face contact with students.

They may be the **initial responders** to students who are in crisis, angry, verbally abusive or potentially dangerous. These general suggestions can be utilized with the behavior pattern dos and don'ts identified in Part III of this document.

The following guidelines provide general principles for effective verbal intervention.

1. Remain Calm:

Remember that the verbally escalating person is beginning to lose control. If the person senses that you are also losing control, the situation may get worse. Try to keep your emotions under control, even when challenged, insulted or threatened. This may be easier said than done, especially when a student is making threats, or using abusive language, but it is important in de-escalating the situation.

2. Be Empathetic:

Try not to judge or discount the feelings of others. Whether or not you think the feelings are justified, those feelings are real to the other person. You may want to acknowledge them by saying things like, *"I understand that this is very frustrating for you."* or *"I'm sorry that you're feeling distressed about..."*

3. Watch Your Body Language

As a person becomes increasingly agitated, they will pay less attention to your words and more attention to your body language. Be aware of your use of space, posture and gestures. Avoid gestures that might seem threatening. Make sure your nonverbal behavior is consistent with your verbal message. Typically, it is **NOT** recommended to touch someone, even if it seems like it might be comforting.

4. Respect Personal Space

Maintain a safe distance (2 to 3 feet) from an agitated person. Invading personal space tends to increase the individual's anxiety and may lead to increased agitation.

5. Keep it Simple

Be clear and direct in your message. Avoid jargon and complicated choices. A person who is beginning to lose rational control may not be processing information as they usually do. Complex messages may increase anxiety and make self-control more difficult.

6. Set and Enforce Reasonable Limits

If the person becomes belligerent, defensive or disruptive be sure to state limits and directives clearly and concisely. When setting limits, offer choices and consequences to the individual. For example, ***“If you calm down, I can continue to assist you. If not, you will need to leave.”***

Consider saying ***“It’s not my role to make that kind of decision here at the University. Let me locate someone who can help you.”*** or ***“It’s hard for me to understand what you are saying when you are shouting. Please lower your voice so that I can better help you.”***

7. Request Assistance When Necessary

If you perceive any threat, call RUPD at (973) 353-5111. In such situations your safety and those of others in your area are of utmost importance. The use of telephone code words or alarm buttons may be a good strategy and should be discussed and developed within your department.

If the student is **angry or demanding** but you do not sense an immediate threat, they can be referred to your supervisor, your department chair, or the Office of the Dean of Students.

8. Document the Incident

If you come in contact with a student who is experiencing a crisis, please submit a report.

SUBMIT A REPORT 

TIPS FOR RESPONDING



- **Talk** with the student when both of you have the time and are not rushed or preoccupied. Privacy will help minimize embarrassment and defensiveness. Express your concern in behavioral, nonjudgmental terms. For example, ***“I’ve noticed you’ve been absent from class lately and I’m concerned.”***
- **Listen** to the student in a sensitive, understanding way.
- **Communicate** understanding by repeating back key points the student shared. Try to include both content and feelings. For example, “It sounds like you’re not accustomed to such a big campus and you’re feeling left out.”
- **Assure** the student that help is available and that connecting with campus student support is a positive and appropriate step. Help the student identify options for action and explore the possible consequences.
- **Be clear** with the student about the limits on your ability to help them. Be straightforward about boundaries and expectations. Do not promise confidentiality.
- **Consult** resources such as academic advisors, department chair, and the Office of the Dean of Students to develop strategies to help the student.
- **Refer** if the problem is more serious than you feel comfortable handling or you have helped as much as you can. Faculty and staff who are concerned about a student may submit a report using the following link (tinyurl.com/RUNReportingForm), or calling the Office of the Dean of Students at 973-353-5063 during business hours.

PREVENTING CLASSROOM DISRUPTION

Faculty members recognize the special responsibilities placed upon them to encourage learning, demonstrate respect for students and observe the regulations of the University to promote the advancement of knowledge.

Students are expected to demonstrate appropriate behavior toward other members of the college community. Disruptive students, whether in the classroom or online, hinder the academic process and negatively impact student learning. Disruptive student conduct is prohibited by Rutgers University's Code of Student Conduct.

WHAT CONSTITUTES A DISRUPTION?

Disruption, as applied to the academic setting, means behaviors that interfere with the right of other students to learn or of the instructors to teach.

Examples include, but are not limited to:

- Persistently speaking without being recognized
- Personal insults
- Interrupting other speakers
- Distracting the class from the subject of discussion
- Refusal to comply with faculty direction
- In extreme cases, physical threats, harassing behavior (**contact RUPD**)

PREVENTION

The best time to deal with disruption is before it begins. Faculty can take steps to reduce the likelihood of disruptive behaviors in the classroom by explicitly stating expectations for conduct in the syllabus. This may include:

- **Participation in class activities**
- **Guidelines for communication**
 - Expectations about the use of electronic devices (cell phones, tablets, laptops, etc.)
 - Attendance/tardiness policy
 - Late assignment policy
- **Explain consequences of inappropriate behavior**
 - Review these expectations with students during first class meeting
 - Model respectful communication with your students
- **Facilitate respectful exchange of ideas among your students**
- **Respond to problems consistently and in a timely manner**



RECOGNIZE:

DISTRESSED BEHAVIOR

Due to regular interactions with students in the classroom, faculty are often first to recognize a student in distress. Be alert for patterns of the symptoms listed below, and also understand that not everyone who is in distress experiences every symptom. Some people exhibit few symptoms, some many, and the severity of those symptoms varies among individuals.

You may become aware of students in distress in a variety of ways. Students may directly communicate their issues and distress to you in private or in front of others. You may also sense there is something amiss with a student on the basis of the behavior they exhibit or if there are changes in their demeanor.

EXAMPLES OF DISTRESSED BEHAVIOR:

Distressed students may express heightened apprehension and fear verbally or behaviorally. These concerns will likely interfere with their learning and ability to appropriately participate in class activities. You may notice agitation, physical shaking of hands, or a trembling voice with students who are anxious.

Distressed students may appear tense, anxious, and mistrustful. These students may tend to interpret minor oversights as significant personal rejection or may overreact to insignificant occurrences. They may be overly concerned with fairness and being treated equally.

Distressed student behavior may be indicated by a change over time from actively engaged and involved to a noticeable loss of interest in classroom or other activities. Normally outgoing students may seem to retreat from interaction and involvement. Attendance issues may become a problem for students in distress.

Depending on your relationship with the student they may verbally communicate their distress with you.

Distressed students may share events or incidents of discrimination, harassment, sexual or physical violence. This may be expressed through various forms of communication.

Distressed students may appear to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol in your class or at your office or an event.

Distressed students can also be students who are physically ill or who are experiencing a medical emergency event.



When you are immediately involved with a student experiencing non-emergency distress, involve yourself only as far as you feel comfortable and competent.

- Tell the student that you're concerned and want to help.
- Comment directly on what you have observed. ***"I'm concerned because you've missed several classes and today you seemed distracted. I also noticed you fell asleep in class the other day. How have you been feeling lately?"***
- Listen carefully to the student's feelings and concerns, without judging, and take them seriously. ***"It seems that the hardship you have experienced with your family is now compounded by the problems with your friend."***
- Respect cultural differences. Ask about students' culture and what it means to them, and listen for their cultural perspective. Think about how your style of communication might be interpreted by students from other cultures.
- Suggest counseling or provide other helpful resources (see "Resources" section).
- Follow-up to show that you care and make sure students received the resources they needed.
- Request to speak with the student in private to minimize embarrassment and defensiveness.
- If the student appears to be in imminent danger of hurting self or others, inform RUPD immediately.
- Express compassion without intimate friendship.
- Communicate your concern, if appropriate.
- Be specific and clear regarding the standards of behavior you expect if the student's behaviors are interfering with classroom activities.
- Listen for indications the student may be suicidal such as statements like ***"life doesn't seem worth living"*** or ***"I just feel I can't go on anymore."*** If this is unclear, please consult the CARE Team or Counseling Center.
- Share your intention of referring them for assistance.
- In cases where behavior or other signs of drug or alcohol abuse is evident, contact RUPD.
- In cases of medical emergencies always contact RUPD by calling 973-353-511, or dialing 911 for emergencies.
- **[SUBMIT A REPORT](#)**

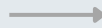
DON'T

- Ask students to "pick themselves up by their bootstraps" or ignore the problem.
- Ignore inappropriate or strange behavior.
- Get frustrated when your suggestions are resisted. It may be helpful for you to consult with a member of the CARE Team or Counseling Center.
- Promise to keep threats to self or others secret. NEVER agree to keep suicidal or violent thoughts in confidence; it is important that the student meet with a counseling professional to get the support needed to be safe.
- Take responsibility for their emotional state by saying "I'll take care of it for you."
- Discount their distress by saying "it's not really that bad" or "you've really got nothing to worry about."
- Assure the student that you are a friend.
- Be overly warm, nurturing, or humorous.
- Challenge or agree with any mistaken or illogical beliefs.
- Say anything else that might discount the personal significance or intensity of the student's feelings.
- Agree to maintain student's confidentiality.
- Try to fly solo. There is a complete list of resources in the "Refer" section.

DISTRESSED STUDENT: DECISION TREE

If appropriate, speak with the student privately about what you are observing and your concerns. Inform the student of assistance available through Counseling Center and CARE Team. If appropriate, help them call for an appointment or walk them over if possible.

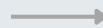
If there is potential for harm



Contact RUPD

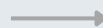
Seek consultation from the CARE Team, Counseling Center, or Office of Community Standards & Student Development, if needed.

If the appropriate offices are not available, and/or if behavior or verbal expression of distress is severe, or there is the potential of harm



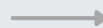
Contact RUPD

If alcohol or drugs are evident



Contact RUPD

If the student discloses events or behavior involving sex-based harassment or discrimination



Refer student to Office of Violence Prevention & Victim Assistance and the Counseling Center

If the student discloses events or behavior involving harassment or discrimination,



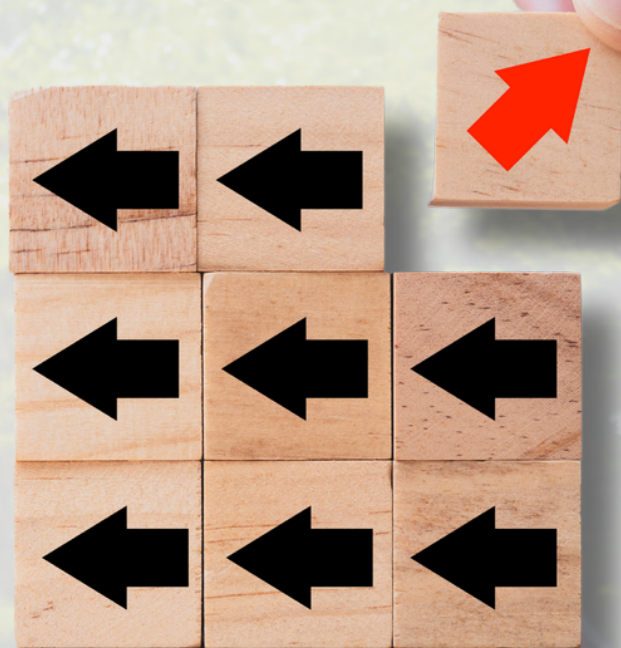
Contact the Office of Title IX

[File a report](#) or provide your observations to RUPD for their incident report

Obtain personal assistance as necessary for crisis debriefing from RU-N's CARE Team

DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOR

Disruptive behavior is student behavior that interferes with or interrupts the educational process of other students or the normal operations of the college. A disruptive student typically resists interventions or corrective action.



Examples of Disruptive Behavior:

A student who verbally abuses or intimidates another

A student who is overly demanding of faculty or staff

A student who interrupts the educational process in the class by making hostile remarks out of turn or aggressively taking over the lecture

A student who notably disrupts the environment outside the classroom

When you are immediately involved with a student experiencing non-emergency distress, involve yourself only as far as you feel comfortable and competent.

**HOW FACULTY &
STAFF CAN HELP**

DO



- Set limits: ***“Excuse me; I need to attend to other things.” “I am happy to set another time to speak with you.”***
- Remain calm and professional. Be sensitive to both verbal and nonverbal cues exhibited by a student who seems to be verbally aggressive or difficult.
- Intervene as soon as you hear or see the undesirable behavior.
- Be consistent with your intervention as best as you can.
- If necessary, give the class a break and ask the student to meet outside of the class to speak privately. If not in a classroom situation, get the assistance of a colleague to provide more support to you.
- You can briefly and directly convey to the student that verbally aggressive or problematic behavior is unacceptable and that the matter must be addressed. However, you may want to manage the moment and seek consultation and support later on how to best address the behaviors. Let the student know that you (based upon your decision of what is best):
 - need them to leave the class/situation to ensure others can be served; and/or
 - will set a meeting at a later date to address the behaviors of concern.
 - Then consult with: your supervisor or department chair; CARE Team and/or Office of Community Standards & Student Development.
- If you feel too fearful to intervene, this may be indication to call RUPD. If you are uncomfortable but not fearful, delay responding and consult with the CARE Team or Office of Community Standards & Student Development about options for managing the behavior after the incident.
- After meeting with the student, document the content of the meeting in writing. It is sometimes helpful and/or necessary to provide the student with a written copy of the requirements and the consequences discussed.
- If, in your best judgment, the student’s behavior creates a safety risk, contact RUPD immediately. Use a phone out of sight/hearing of individual if possible or request someone else call. Report details of the incident.

DON'T



- Wait until you have become too involved or the student has created numerous class disruptions to seek assistance.
- Assure confidentiality.
- Let them use you as their only source of support.
- Get trapped into giving advice, “Why don’t you ...etc.?”
- Get defensive.
- Engage in a power struggle with the student.
- Respond with anger.
- Allow the disruptive behaviors to continue.

DISRUPTIVE STUDENT: DECISION TREE

Seek consultation from the CARE Team, Counseling Center or Office for Community Standards & Student Development, if needed.

Speak with the student privately about what you are observing and your concerns. You can meet with the student and a supervisor or department chair instead of meeting alone. Establish or reinforce behavioral expectations or limits as necessary.

If the student is excessively demanding, threatening or refuses to comply with faculty or staff direction



Contact RUPD

File a report or provide your observations to RUPD for their incident report

Obtain personal assistance as necessary for crisis debriefing from RU-N's CARE Team

DANGEROUS BEHAVIOR

A crisis event exists whenever a person's behavior poses imminent danger of:

- Causing harm to self or others,
- Impeding the lawful activities of other members of the campus community or causing significant property damage, or
- Interfering with the health, safety or well-being of other members of the Rutgers University community.

The described behavior from a student usually causes us to feel alarmed, upset or worried. Violence in most situations is rare and typically occurs when a student's level of frustration has been so intense or of such an enduring nature as to erode all of the student's emotional controls. Violent and aggressive behavior rarely comes out of the blue. Students usually become verbally abusive in frustrating situations they perceive as being beyond their control. Acts of aggression and violence are often a means of being heard or retaliating against what feels like a hopeless situation.

EXAMPLES OF POTENTIALLY DANGEROUS BEHAVIOR:

Certain behaviors may signal imminent danger to self or others. **For example:** physical or verbal threats, harassment, expressing personal insults, refusal to comply with directions of University officials or faculty members and continued escalation of threats might signal imminent danger.

Dramatic changes in behavior over time may indicate the potential for dangerous behavior or harm to self. Actively engaged and involved students may begin to demonstrate a loss of interest in classroom or other activities. Normally outgoing students may seem to retreat from interaction and involvement. Depending on your relationship with these students, they may communicate their sense of despondency or outline a specific plan to do harm to themselves.

You may also experience students whose behavior may be bizarre, eccentric or erratic. They may display disorganized speech and behavior, an inappropriate or complete lack of emotion, bizarre behavior that may include expressing hallucinations, strange beliefs that involve a serious misinterpretation of reality, social withdrawal or an inability to connect with or track normal communication.

While these behaviors by themselves may not indicate a potential for violence or danger, they may indicate the need for treatment or hospitalization. It should be noted that students who are experiencing these behaviors may be unpredictable and should be approached with caution or additional support.

HOW FACULTY & STAFF CAN HELP

When you are immediately observing dangerous student behavior, involve yourself only as far as you feel comfortable and competent. Faculty and staff may find the following procedures helpful when dealing with potentially dangerous behavior:



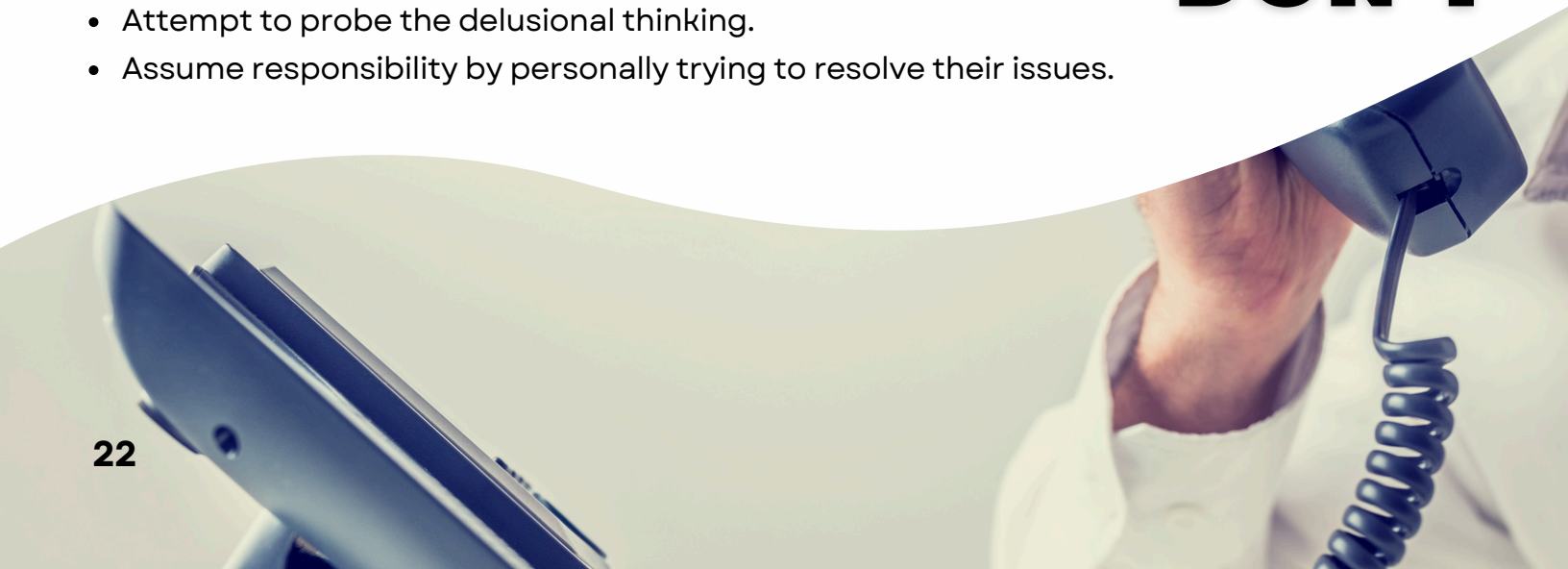
DO

- Contact RUPD in situations where you believe violence is imminent.
- Immediately report students who share suicidal thoughts to your supervisor, CARE Team and Counseling Center. **Contact RUPD** if you believe the student shouldn't be left alone.
- Recognize that psychotic states can involve extreme emotion or lack of emotion and intense fear to the point of paranoia.
- Respond to the student with concern and kindness, and with firm reasoning. ***"I can see you're very upset. Please tell me how I can assist you."***
- Articulate your specific concerns and state that you can see they need help.
- Be aware that the student may show no emotions or intense emotions.
- Ask another staff or student to call for help if needed.

- Assume the student will be able to care for themselves.
- Agitate the student by arguing with their unrealistic beliefs.
- Assume the student comprehends what you are saying or doing.
- Release the student to the care of a classmate or friend without seeking professional consultation.
- Attempt to probe the delusional thinking.
- Assume responsibility by personally trying to resolve their issues.



DON'T



POTENTIALLY DANGEROUS STUDENT: DECISION TREE

If the student is expressing or acting out behaviors that demonstrate the potential for imminent harm to self or others seek immediate assistance.



Contact RUPD

If the student is expressing or exhibiting behaviors that **do not** demonstrate the potential for imminent violence

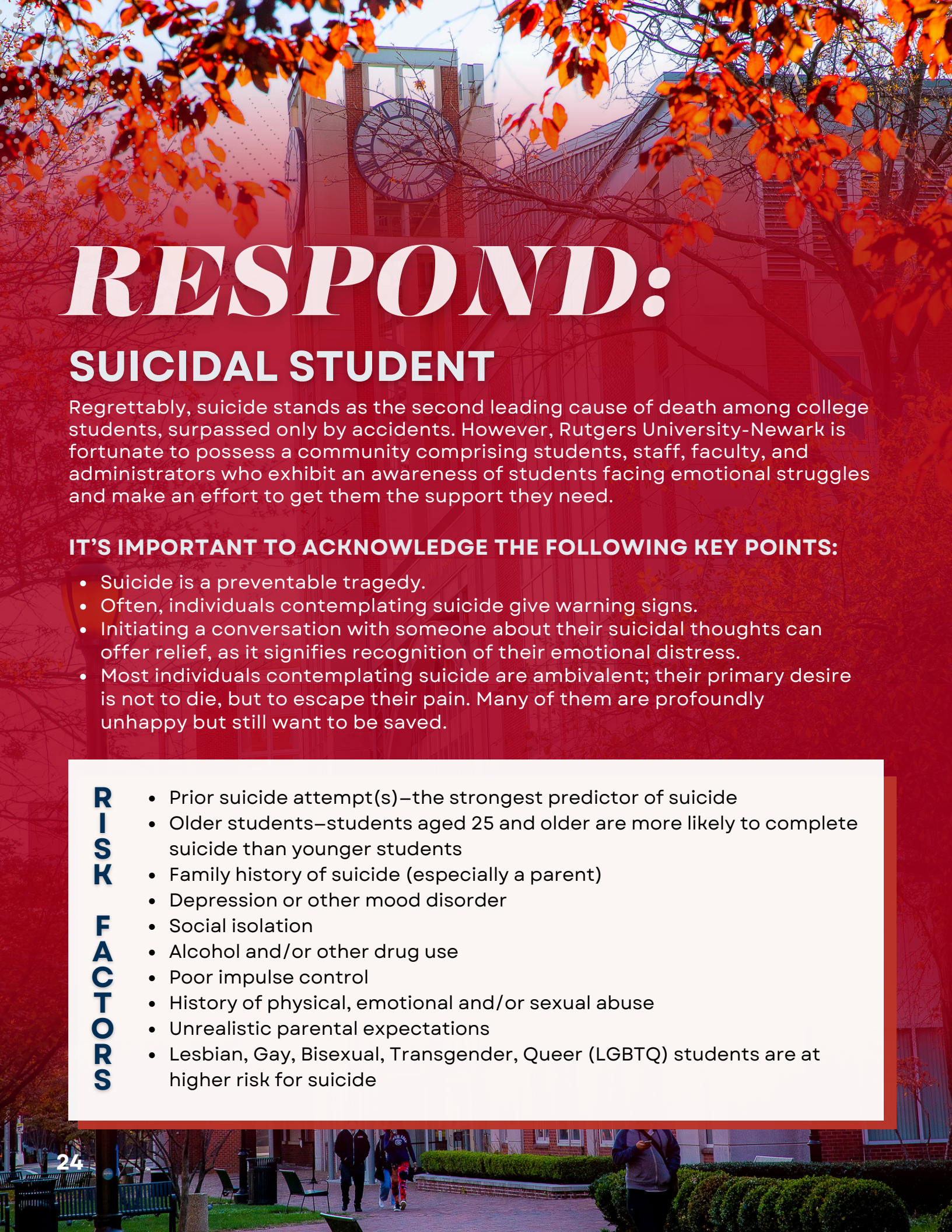


Seek consultation or refer the student to get assistance with CARE Team & Counseling Center.

This may include walking the student to Counseling Services, if possible. Counseling Services is located in Blumenthal Hall.

File a report **or** provide your observations to RUPD for their incident report

Obtain personal assistance as necessary for crisis debriefing from RU-N's CARE Team



RESPOND:

SUICIDAL STUDENT

Regrettably, suicide stands as the second leading cause of death among college students, surpassed only by accidents. However, Rutgers University-Newark is fortunate to possess a community comprising students, staff, faculty, and administrators who exhibit an awareness of students facing emotional struggles and make an effort to get them the support they need.

IT'S IMPORTANT TO ACKNOWLEDGE THE FOLLOWING KEY POINTS:

- Suicide is a preventable tragedy.
- Often, individuals contemplating suicide give warning signs.
- Initiating a conversation with someone about their suicidal thoughts can offer relief, as it signifies recognition of their emotional distress.
- Most individuals contemplating suicide are ambivalent; their primary desire is not to die, but to escape their pain. Many of them are profoundly unhappy but still want to be saved.

R I S K F A C T O R S

- Prior suicide attempt(s)—the strongest predictor of suicide
- Older students—students aged 25 and older are more likely to complete suicide than younger students
- Family history of suicide (especially a parent)
- Depression or other mood disorder
- Social isolation
- Alcohol and/or other drug use
- Poor impulse control
- History of physical, emotional and/or sexual abuse
- Unrealistic parental expectations
- Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer (LGBTQ) students are at higher risk for suicide

PRECIPITATING FACTORS

- Stressful events, situations or conditions may increase one's likelihood of attempting suicide
- Hopelessness due to untreated depression—belief that things can't change or get better
- Being fired from a job or expelled from school
- Recent unwanted move (e.g., moving to a new school) • Loss of any major relationship (e.g., romantic partner, best friend, etc.)
- Death of parent, spouse, child or best friend, especially if by suicide Diagnosis of a serious or terminal illness
- Sudden unexpected loss of freedom or fear of punishment (e.g., jail time or sanction from school)
- Anticipated loss of financial security

WARNING SIGNS:

Changes in a person's behaviors may indicate risk for suicide.

DIRECT VERBAL WARNING SIGNS

- "I've decided to kill myself" or "I'm going to end it all."
- "I wish I were dead."
- "If _____, I'll kill myself"

INDIRECT VERBAL WARNING SIGNS

- "I'm tired of life, I just can't go on."
- "My family would be better off without me."
- "Who cares if I'm dead anyway?"

HOW FACULTY & STAFF CAN HELP

DO

- Ask about suicidal thoughts directly and use the word suicide. This does not increase the risk of a suicide occurring. In fact, students are often relieved to have someone to talk to.
- Take charge. If the student has a few of the risk factors, but denies being suicidal, it makes sense for them to meet with a counselor.
- Try to sound calm & understanding.
- Be confident, caring, and know the resources available, such as the suicide prevention hotline and Counseling Center.
- Walk the student to the Counseling Center or call RUPD (after hours) if you are seriously concerned for the student's safety.

DON'T

- Agree to be sworn to secrecy. NEVER agree to keep suicidal or violent thoughts in confidence; it is important that the student meet with a counseling professional to get the support they need.
- Appear shocked by anything the student tells you.
- Emphasize the embarrassment that suicide would be to the person's family.
- Engage in a philosophical or religious debate regarding the moral aspects of suicide.
- Become too personally involved with the student.



DEPRESSED STUDENT:

These students show a multitude of symptoms, which may include guilt, low self-esteem, and feelings of worthlessness and inadequacy. Physical symptoms include decreased or increased appetite, difficulty sleeping and low interest in daily activities. Depressed students often show low activity levels and have little energy.

HOW FACULTY & STAFF CAN HELP



DO

- Let the student know you're aware they are feeling down and you would like to help.
- Reach out and encourage the student to express how they are feeling. While reluctance is normal, attention from others helps the student feel more worthwhile and comfortable opening up.
- Tell the student of your concern for them.



DON'T

- Say, ***“Don’t worry,” “Crying won’t help,” or “Everything will be better tomorrow.”***
- Be afraid to ask whether the student is suicidal if you think they might be.

COUNSELING CENTER

Free & confidential mental health services:
Psychological, Psychiatric, & Alcohol/Drug support

973-353-5805

counseling@newark.rutgers.edu

[Counseling Website](#)

ANXIOUS STUDENT

Dealing with unexpected events and conflicts are primary causes of anxiety. Unknown and unfamiliar situations raise anxiety; high and unreasonable self-expectations also increase anxiety. These students often have trouble making decisions.

HOW FACULTY & STAFF CAN HELP

✓ DO

- Let them discuss their feelings. Often, this alone relieves pressure.
- Remain calm and reassure students when appropriate.
- Be clear and explicit.

✗ DON'T

- Take responsibility for the student's emotional state.
- Make things more complicated.
- Overwhelm them with information or ideas.





STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Students with documentation of a physical, medical, learning or psychiatric disability are eligible to access accommodations through the Office of Disability Services. Students may not realize they may be eligible for disability-related services offered on campus, and that accommodations are available.

- Physical disabilities present special classroom access needs associated with limitations in mobility, speaking, hearing, and/or vision.
- Medical disabilities may experience difficulties participating in their academic programs due to the condition itself or the ongoing treatment protocol.
- Learning disabilities have impairments that may interfere with information processing, memory, retrieval, and output. These disabilities may have a detrimental impact on reading, writing, math, attention, concentration, and/or overall organization.
- Attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder (AD/HD) may experience inattentive, hyperactive, and/or impulsive behaviors due to a dysfunction of the central nervous system. These behaviors may compromise an individual's social, vocational and academic performance.
- Psychiatric disabilities have an ongoing psychological condition that may interfere with their ability to participate in a routine educational program.

HOW FACULTY AND STAFF CAN HELP

There are times when a faculty or staff member recognizes that a student may be struggling because of a disability but may not know how to address these concerns and make a referral to the Office of Disability Services (ODS).

Below are some suggestions to help connect a student to useful resources and supports.

DO



- Acknowledge the difficulties the student is having.
- Provide a safe and supportive space to have this conversation (ideally a private space when you have time to give the student your full attention)
- Respect privacy: some students may not want to go into details about their disability. You can still provide support and referrals without knowing all of the details.
- If a student expresses concern about reaching out for support, explore potential barriers (financial, fear of disclosure) and what you can do to reduce those barriers or correct misconceptions they have about asking for help or connecting with services
- Refer to the **Office of Disability Services** and be open to a follow-up consultation.

DON'T



- Don't underestimate or question the stated disability.
- Don't assume the student understands the academic limitations imposed by the disability.
- Don't assume the student qualifies for accommodations without verification from the Office of Disability Services.
- Don't adjust the academic standards of the course without prior consultation with Office of Disability Services.

OFFICE OF DISABILITY SERVICES:

The Office of Disability Services is responsible for working with you to address barriers to access. We meet with you to discuss your needs, review documentation, and determine appropriate accommodations and supports.

[\(973\) 353-5375](tel:(973)353-5375)

ODS@newark.rutgers.edu

[ODS Website](#)

ACADEMICALLY UNDERACHIEVING STUDENT

While it is easy to conclude that the academically underachieving student is simply unmotivated, the real situation is often more complicated.

Students may be preoccupied with situational and family problems, or have emotional problems that are distracting and disabling.

They may have learning disabilities, Attention Deficit Disorder or substance abuse problems. Previous failures for any reason can produce a hopeless outlook and a defensive attitude of “*I don’t care.*”



HOW FACULTY & STAFF CAN HELP: DOs & DON'Ts



Inquire compassionately as to what the problems are.



Provide enough time for the student to open up. Their initial defensiveness might be off-putting to an instructor who values involvement and dedication in students.



Empathically address the difficulty of dealing with a failure mentality.



Take the student's problem personally or be insulted that they do not find the class engaging.



Assume too quickly the problem is mere laziness.



Help the student assess the source of underachievement, e.g., distractions, preoccupations, emotional problems, depression, difficulties with underlying academic and study skills.



Encourage student to seek guidance from their academic advisor or learning resources:



Punish the student for lack of involvement.



Dismiss the student and problem as unworkable.

A variety of substances are available that provide escape from pressing demands.

The most abused substance is alcohol. Alcohol and other drug related accidents remain the single-greatest cause of preventable death among college students.

SUBSTANCE ABUSING STUDENT



HOW FACULTY & STAFF CAN HELP:

Share your honest concern and encourage the student to seek help.



Be alert for signs of alcohol and drug abuse: preoccupation with drugs, periods of memory loss, deteriorating performance in class.

Ignore the problem



Chastise or lecture

In any manner encourage the behavior

ALCOHOL & OTHER DRUG ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (ADAP)

ADAP is committed to providing support for students who are struggling with substance use or are in recovery from substance-use disorders.

In addition to counseling service we also have a Recovery Support Program that includes early recovery groups, sober social activities and Recovery Housing

run4recovery@rutgers.edu

(973) 353-5805

[ADAP Website](#)



SEXUALLY ASSAULTED STUDENT

The University recognizes that individuals, including students, may be most comfortable disclosing sexual violence and other prohibited conduct to a University member they know well, such as a staff or faculty member. Employees should protect and respect an individual's privacy to the greatest extent possible and share information only on a need-to-know basis; however, you cannot serve as a confidential resource.

Any University employee (other than the confidential resources identified in Appendices A and B of Policy 60.1.33) who receives a report about conduct prohibited by this Policy involving a student is required to inform the appropriate Title IX Coordinator about the incident. Information about Covered Sexual Harassment that a student includes in a classroom assignment is considered a report and must be shared with the Title IX Coordinator.

Similarly, University supervisors and managers are required to inform the Title IX Coordinator for Employees (Director of the Office of Employment Equity) of any reported conduct prohibited by this Policy involving other employees. This means that these individuals are required to report to the Title IX Coordinator all relevant details, including the names of the individual who made the report, the alleged victim (if different), the alleged Respondent, any witnesses, and other known relevant facts.

HOW FACULTY & STAFF CAN HELP

If a student discloses an incident of sexual violence or relationship violence:

- Tell the student they are not required to talk to the Title IX office or the police.
- Share information about counseling and medical resources.
- Avoid giving advice. Once you report to the Title IX office, allow the student to make their own decision on how to proceed.
- Ask for help. You do not have to handle this alone. The Title IX office and Violence Prevention and Victim Assistance (VPVA) can be a service for faculty/staff and offer secondary survivor support should a disclosure bring up any emotions for them that they'd like to talk about confidentially.



- Give them your full attention and listen without judgement.
- Identify any immediate safety concerns for the student/community; call 911 if needed.
- Acknowledge the difficulty it takes to disclose – “Thank you for telling me” is a great way to start.
- Explain that the student can also report this to law enforcement.
- Offer to connect them to Violence Prevention and Victim Assistance (VPVA)

VIOLENCE PREVENTION & VICTIM ASSISTANCE

VPVA offers confidential services for any student who has experienced domestic & sexual violence or wants to support a loved one who has.

Advocacy, resources, and clinical supports available from licensed therapists providing trauma-informed care.

973-353-1918

run.vpva@rutgers.edu

[VPVA Website](#)

DON'T



- Ask for details, specifically the name of the alleged perpetrator nor the location. You are not a fully confidential resource and are mandated to report the information to the Office of Title IX.
- Ask a lot of prying questions, as you may inadvertently send the message that you don't believe the student or that you are questioning how they handled the situation.
- Blame them for what happened and let them know it was not their fault, regardless of the circumstances under which the assault occurred.
- Be skeptical or show that you don't believe them. The vast majority of students do NOT make up stories about being assaulted.
- Try to be this person's only support. Recovery takes a long time and often involves the need for professional services.

HOUSING &/OR FOOD INSECURE STUDENT

Studies indicate that students across a broad spectrum of higher education institutions worry about finding their next meal, and the pandemic has only worsened the problem of food insecurity.

Essex County, the home to many of our students, has the highest food insecurity rate in New Jersey. Nationwide, there has been a rapid growth in food insecurity as a result of COVID-19. Many Rutgers University–Newark students are in high-risk groups for food insecurity, including first-generation students, students of color, and working students.

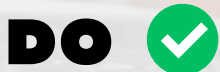
Students experiencing hunger and housing challenges are likely to desire invisibility or anonymity. It can be helpful for staff and faculty to know and recognize subtle signs.

It is also of value to create a safe space where these issues are acknowledged as normal and a nonjudgmental attitude is maintained throughout the educational environment. Remember that stereotypes of students with insufficient access to basic needs may not match reality and circumstances for each student will be unique.

PANTRY+ RESOURCES



- Offers free & healthy groceries for all Rutgers students, including milk, eggs, produce, cereal, and more
- For hours, visit go.rutgers.edu/pantry or call 973.353.0256
- Order your free groceries online at go.rutgers.edu/orderpantryrun
- Access emergency food packs at one of these locations: go.rutgers.edu/emergencyfood



HOW FACULTY & STAFF CAN HELP

- Lead with empathy and humility. Focus on listening to the student's concerns and validating the student's experiences.
- Recognize verbal cues: ***"I'm so hungry but can't eat", "I've literally spent all my money on rent," "I've spent every dime I have on housing."***
- Recognize non verbal cue: Look out for excessively tired students, students having difficulties paying attention, changes in mood and focus
- Create common ground with definitions. Many students who are technically food insecure do not see themselves that way.
- Food insecurity can be skipping a meal, eating less at one meal to stretch it into two, reducing the amount of food to a point that it is no longer fulfilling, and avoiding social situations where others may be buying or sharing food.
- Provide information about the available resources while empowering the student to make choices about next steps. Ensure students know these resources are available to them, but that you are not requiring them to use them or report back to you.
- If your relationship allows, see where they are at with basic needs in addition to food, like housing, healthcare, etc.
- Gently remind students there are generally enough resources available to meet the demonstrated need. For example, many students will refuse to utilize the student food pantry because they believe someone else deserves the assistance form. In truth, the student food pantry has more than enough food. This is an important step in reminding students they are deserving of the resources.
- Ask students for their help in sharing this information with their friends and peers. Although some students may not be food insecure, their friends and classmates might be. Spreading knowledge of resources through a peer-to-peer network may be most effective for reaching less-engaged students.

DON'T

- Assign blame or suggesting fault, e.g., "you need to manage money better," or "you need a budget." Even if it is true, it does not fix the immediate need and makes the student feel unworthy of help.
 - Remember that even if a student has a job, they are very likely taking out loans and going into debt. Many students reduce the amount of food they buy to avoid going deeper in debt.

REPORT:

CARE Reports are not for emergencies. If there is an immediate threat to a student (either through self-harm or interpersonal violence) or the community, please call RUPD at 973-353-5111.

A CARE Team report should be made when you notice behavior that causes worry or concern, even if the behavior seems low-level or unclear. Some examples include:

- A change in behavior such as sudden aggression, poor concentration, or disruptiveness.
- A pattern of illness or poor attendance.
- When a student appears withdrawn, agitated, sad, and/or anxious.
- Mention of self-harm or suicidal thoughts/intentions.

Rutgers University-Newark has implemented many support efforts in hopes of addressing barriers to success beyond the academic variables. These include, but are not limited to:

- Behavioral Assessment and Monitoring
- Referrals for Mental Health
- Support Services Coordination

Any member of the campus community may create a CARE Team report by using the following link [insert link](#). **For questions regarding this system, please contact the Office of the Dean of Students by calling 973-353-5063 during business hours.**

WHAT HAPPENS ONCE A REPORT IS SUBMITTED?

The CARE Team will reach out to the student multiple ways in multiple formats.

1. AN ELECTRONIC LETTER

- In this letter the CARE Team invites the student in to talk with a professional staff member who can provide support and connect the student to campus resources. Included in the letter is a list of resources with active links for the student to explore, such as Counseling Center, Financial Aid, Pantry+, Housing, Academic Advising, etc. A text is also sent with this letter encouraging the student to open and read the message.

2. AN EMAIL

- If we haven't heard from the student after they receive their letter, the CARE Team will follow up with an email to check in and request an update on how the student is doing. The student is informed that the CARE Team is available to provide support and discuss resources moving forward.

3. A PHONE CALL

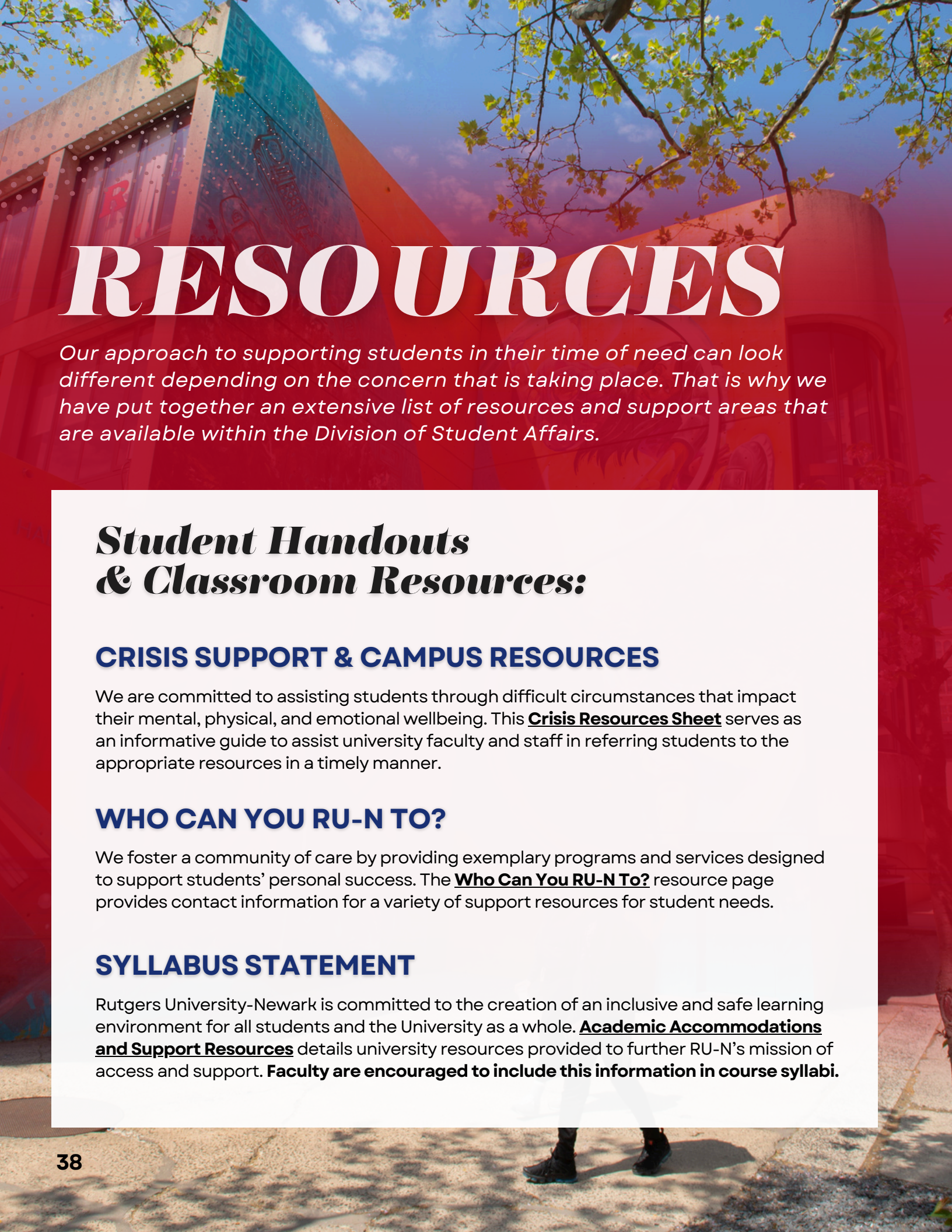
- If the CARE Team has been unable to connect with the student, they will follow up with a phone call to the student, leaving a voicemail, if available. The phone call is an effort to connect with the student, check on their wellbeing, and make a smoother transition to support with campus resources.

These three outreaches are all done on separate days. The elevation and type of concern provided will influence the order and type of outreach the student receives. If there is a health and safety concern the student will receive a phone call right away and the CARE Team will assess for additional steps. For emergencies please contact the Rutgers University Police Department at 973-353-5111 or dial 911.

The CARE Team will reach out to other campus resources as well, if needed and appropriate. These might include the student's academic school, based on the information and concern we have for the student.

The CARE Team will actively reach out to every single student reported. While the CARE Team is not always able to make contact immediately, all students receive information on helping resources, and know the CARE Team will be ready to help when they feel ready.

If you connect with the student or have any additional information or updates, please do not hesitate to keep the CARE Team informed. You can email careteam@newark.rutgers.edu or complete a report.



RESOURCES

Our approach to supporting students in their time of need can look different depending on the concern that is taking place. That is why we have put together an extensive list of resources and support areas that are available within the Division of Student Affairs.

Student Handouts & Classroom Resources:

CRISIS SUPPORT & CAMPUS RESOURCES

We are committed to assisting students through difficult circumstances that impact their mental, physical, and emotional wellbeing. This **Crisis Resources Sheet** serves as an informative guide to assist university faculty and staff in referring students to the appropriate resources in a timely manner.

WHO CAN YOU RU-N TO?

We foster a community of care by providing exemplary programs and services designed to support students' personal success. The **Who Can You RU-N To?** resource page provides contact information for a variety of support resources for student needs.

SYLLABUS STATEMENT

Rutgers University-Newark is committed to the creation of an inclusive and safe learning environment for all students and the University as a whole. **Academic Accommodations and Support Resources** details university resources provided to further RU-N's mission of access and support. **Faculty are encouraged to include this information in course syllabi.**

Additional Support Services

COMMUNITY STANDARDS & STUDENT DEVELOPMENT

The Office of Community Standards and Student Development is dedicated to cultivating a caring campus community that promotes advocacy, safety and student success.

- Investigating and adjudicating alleged incidents of student misconduct.
- Recruits and trains members of the University Hearing Board, Campus Advisers and Campus Appeals Committee
- Manages student disciplinary records
- Facilitates ethical leadership development opportunities

COUNSELING CENTER & MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES

The Counseling Center connects students with one-on-one counseling, support groups, psychiatric care, and online resources. All services are free and confidential.

Uwill is a confidential teletherapy service that provides:

- Access to teletherapy with a licensed therapist - Flexible scheduling during nights and weekends.
- 24/7/365 connection with a crisis counselor:
833.646.1526
- Urise - Wellness programming on stress reduction, nutrition, and self-care.

Counseling Center

counseling@newark.rutgers.edu
973-353-5805
Blumenthal Hall, 101

THE OFFICE OF THE DEAN OF STUDENTS

The Office of the Dean of Students strives to provide a safe, respectful, and supportive campus community. We are a resource and advocate for students, offering assistance when they do not know where to turn.

- Help with extended absences related to illness or life event
- Questions about campus policies or procedures
- Concerns about the well-being of a student
- Reporting a concerning incident
- Don't know where to go and need guidance

Dean of Students
deanofstudents@newark.rutgers.edu
(973) 353-5063
Paul Robeson Campus
Center

302



REFERENCE GUIDE

*As you are responding to students in need,
please review the reference guide attached
as it pertains to the nature of the behavior
that you have observed.*

PROBLEM

DISTRESSED

DISRUPTIVE

DANGEROUS

DESCRIPTION

Communication indicates loss of touch with reality;
Communication reflects suicidal thoughts or actions,
depression, anxiety, or difficulty dealing with grief

Communication indicates having been a victim of a stalking,
harassment, hazing, or other crime
Communication reflects sexual assault or relationship
violence

Has not attended class for an extended period of time
Is overwhelmed by a problem with the university
Is debilitated or overwhelmed by a family emergency

Substantially impairs, interferes with or obstructs orderly
processes and functions of the university
Deliberately interferes with instruction or office procedures

Does something significantly out of character
Acts peculiar and is cause for alarm
Displays unhealthy or dangerous patterns of behavior
Appears under the influence, coping with the effects of
substance use

Threatening the safety of self or others;
Acting in a frightening or threatening manner;
Not leaving the classroom or office after being asked to leave

REFER

CARE Team

**Title IX
Violence Prevention
& Victim Assistance
(VPVA)**

Dean of Students

**Community
Standards &
Student
Development
(CSSD)**

CARE Team

RUPD/911

The **Division of Student Affairs** at Rutgers University-Newark encourages students to fully discover their aspirations.



We intentionally connect students to the resources and experiences that prepare them to responsibly ***learn, lead, and serve*** in an interdependent, global community.



RUTGERS-NEWARK
Student Affairs

[HTTPS://STUDENTAFFAIRS.NEWARK.RUTGERS.EDU/
runsa@newark.rutgers.edu](https://studentaffairs.newark.rutgers.edu/runsa@newark.rutgers.edu) | (973) 353-2797
PAUL ROBESON CAMPUS CENTER - ROOM 352
350 DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. BLVD, NEWARK NJ 07102