

# Quick Reference: Responding to Students in Crisis

## On-Campus and Community Resources

Campus Security: \_\_\_\_\_

Counselling Services: \_\_\_\_\_

Indigenous Services: \_\_\_\_\_

International Student Services: \_\_\_\_\_

Accessibility Services: \_\_\_\_\_

Student Services: \_\_\_\_\_

Pride Centre: \_\_\_\_\_

Health Services: \_\_\_\_\_

Financial Aid: \_\_\_\_\_

Sexualized Violence Support: \_\_\_\_\_

Equity and Human Rights: \_\_\_\_\_

Dean, Chair, or Supervisor: \_\_\_\_\_

### If You're Concerned for a Student's Immediate Safety

If it's an emergency situation, call **911** and then contact campus security (if the student is on campus). If the student is not on campus, call 911 and tell the operator the student's current location as soon as possible.

### Mental Health and Suicide Crisis Lines

If you or someone you know needs immediate help, call one of the numbers below:

**1-800-SUICIDE** or **1-800-784-2433**. If you are considering suicide or are concerned about someone who may be. <https://crisiscentre.bc.ca>

**Here2Talk: 1-877-857-3397**. A 24-hour phone and chat counselling support service for B.C. post-secondary students. <https://here2talk.ca>

**KUU-US Crisis Line: 1-800-588-8717**. A 24-hour crisis line for Indigenous people in B.C. <https://www.kuu-uscrisisline.com>



BCcampus. *Let's Talk About Suicide: Raising Awareness and Supporting Students.*



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# Recognize, Respond, Refer

## Where Do I Start?

As a faculty or staff member you may be the first person to see the signs that a student is in distress. If you are concerned about a student, don't let uncertainty stop you. You are a vital link to connect students with the best resources. Begin by recognizing signs that a student may be in distress or considering suicide.

## Signs that Someone May Be Considering Suicide

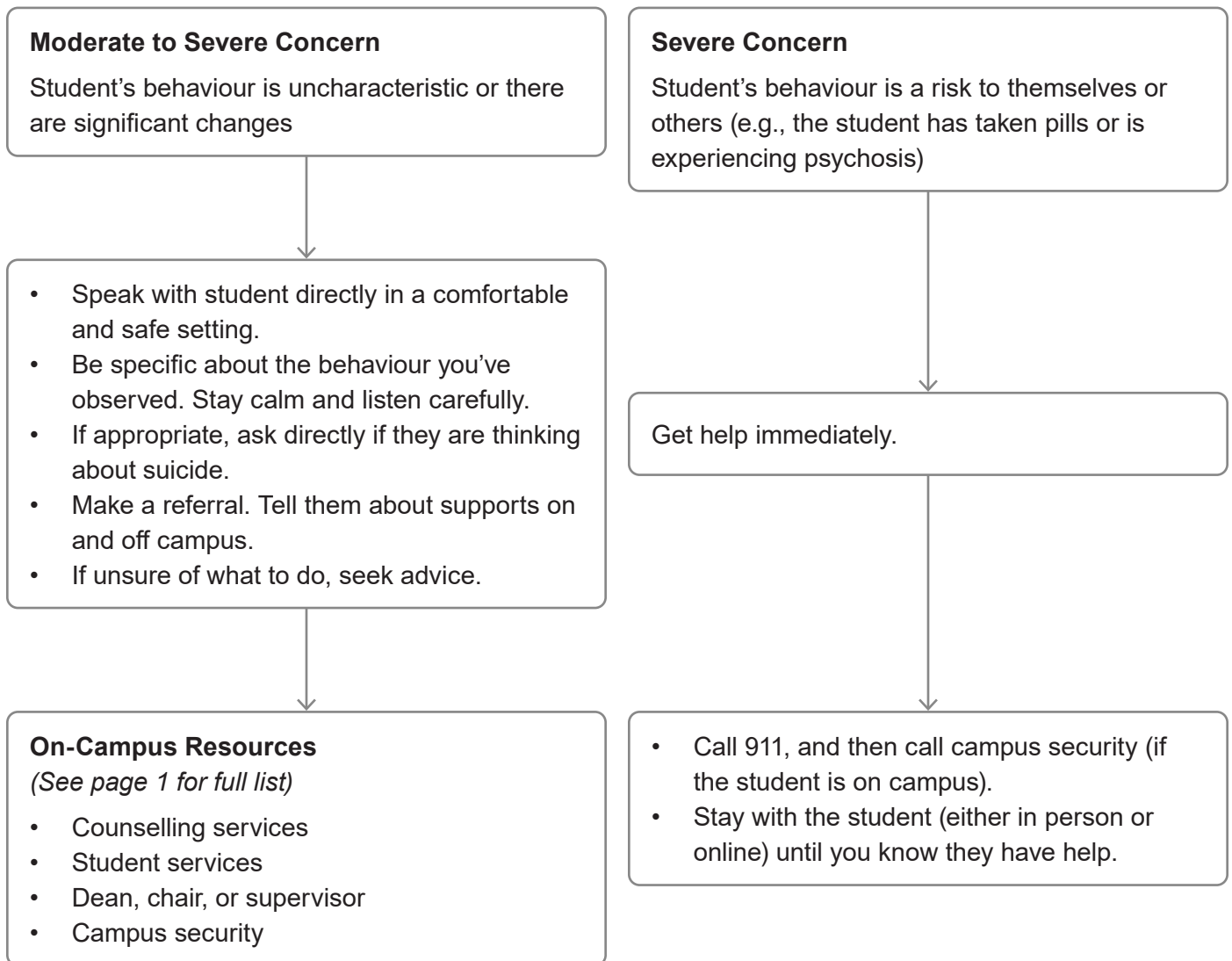
- Significant changes in behaviour and performance (e.g., uncharacteristically poor academic performance, temperament changes, anger, sadness)
- Changes in physical appearance.
- Isolation or social withdrawal (e.g., previously involved student stops attending classes).
- Signs of excessive substance use.
- Expressed feelings of hopelessness or despair or behaviours that indicate a likelihood of harm to self (e.g., suicidal thoughts, verbal, written, or creative work that includes plans to harm self. (**“The world would be better off without me.”** **“I think I should end it all.”** **“Nothing will ever change. I give up.”**))
- Talking about suicide or having a plan for suicide.

*When talking with a student, take the time to carefully observe, reflect, and identify whether you think there is reason for concern, and respond calmly. The most important information you can convey to a student is that you care and they matter.*

## Tips for Supporting Students

1. Speak with the student directly and in a comfortable, safe setting. Maintain clear professional boundaries.
2. Be specific about the behaviour you have observed, and don't be afraid to express concern. Use objective, non-judgmental language. (**“I noticed...”** **“I might be way off base, but when you said...”**)
3. Stay calm and listen carefully. Acknowledge how the student is feeling and let them know you want to help. **Take their concerns seriously.**
4. If appropriate, ask directly if they are thinking of suicide. (**“Are you feeling so bad that you're considering suicide?”**) If they say they are thinking of suicide, consider the risk. (**“How often are you thinking about this?”** **“Do you have a plan?”**)
5. Make a referral. Let them know about supports on and off campus and that seeking help is a sign of strength and courage. (**“We need extra help. I want to connect you with someone who can help keep you safe.”** **“Would you like to call Counselling Services together and book an appointment?”**)
6. If something still doesn't feel right, consult with your supervisor/chair/dean, student centre, campus security, or campus resources. **It's better to ask than not.**
7. Know your boundaries and take care of yourself. Don't feel it's your responsibility to solve the student's problem on your own. **Ask for help.**

# Connecting Students to Resources



## Support for Faculty and Staff

As a faculty or staff member, helping a student in crisis can affect your personal well-being. Once the student is supported, ensure that you are also supported. Talk to a colleague, friend, supervisor, or Elder to debrief (while maintaining the confidentiality of the student). If you feel overwhelmed and need professional support, contact a counsellor.