Student Crisis Prevention Handbook
Faculty/Staff Version

This handbook is for faculty/staff and is provided to address concerns about aiding students in distress. Please use this as a guide to facilitate the decision making process when you are concerned about a student in distress or crisis.

Suicide Risk Factors and Warning Signs

Some common risk factors and warning signs for suicide include previous suicide attempts, talking about or writing about death, increased alcohol or drug abuse, acting recklessly, social withdrawal, giving away belongings, neglecting appearance or hygiene, insomnia, dramatic changes in mood, and expressions of hopelessness, no sense of purpose or meaning in life, and feeling like a burden on others. In addition to these risk factors and warning signs, it is also important to consider any major losses that the student has experienced recently. These may include loss of a relationship, job, housing, status, academic standing, or loss of a loved one. The risk is heightened if the student has lost a loved one to suicide. If you are concerned about a student, don't hesitate to get involved and ask about suicidal thoughts.

If you are concerned that a student may be at imminent risk of death by suicide, consider the following: Is the student experiencing suicidal thoughts? Has the student expressed intent to die? Does he or she trust him/herself to stay safe? Research shows that asking about suicidal thoughts will not increase thoughts of suicide. Actually, the opposite is true. Asking someone directly about his or her suicidal intentions lowers anxiety and acts as a deterrent to suicidal behavior by encouraging open communication. Talking about suicide is difficult, but remember, you are not alone. Refer to the flowchart on page 5 to determine the steps to helping a student in crisis.

How can I learn more about how to intervene with a student in a suicidal crisis?

Free training is available to all faculty, staff, and students. QPR, which stands for Question, Persuade, and Refer, is a training program that builds skills for recognizing suicide warning signs and responding effectively to them. QPR training is free of charge and easy to learn in a face-to-face course that takes only one to two hours. To sign up, go to the Human Resources training calendar at https://nautical.uwf.edu/comm_desk/calendar.cfm to search for upcoming QPR trainings. Trainers are also available to provide on-site training for your department, student organization, or class.

What is the Campus Care Team?

The Campus Care Team is a cross-disciplinary group of experienced and knowledgeable professionals who review critical cases of student behavior, consult with appropriate experts, and provide recommendations and advice to University administration. “Critical cases” are defined as those situations that involve actions or behaviors of concern and/or that present a fairly well-defined potential for student crisis.

What are the responsibilities of the Campus Care Team?

- Create and maintain a mechanism for members of the University community to report concerns about the behavior of other members of the community.
- Monitor and respond to cases where multiple concerns about the same individual have been received from different parts of the University or when there is a single urgent or highly critical concern about an individual.
- Evaluate situations that rise to the level of "critical case" and coordinate an appropriate response for those and refer non-critical issues to the appropriate individuals or departments.
- Connect University community members with services and assistance as appropriate.
- Maintain an ongoing dialogue about the nature of "critical cases" and potential threat assessment issues for the University.
What are the procedures of the Campus Care Team?

- This team works within existing campus policies and procedures.
- Team members make themselves available to the campus community as a contact for sharing concerns and to provide information and resources on an ongoing basis.

When should the Campus Care Team be contacted?

If a student has expressed suicidal thoughts or if you are concerned for the safety or well-being of a student, file a “Student of Concern Report” through the Campus Care Team. The Campus Care Team can then follow up with the student and make appropriate referrals. A Student of Concern Report is not disciplinary or punitive; rather, it provides an opportunity for the University to reach out to the student. Don’t hesitate to contact the Dean of Students Office, even if you don’t have complete information. As an alternative to a Student of Concern Report, you may send an e-mail to the Dean of Students Office to express concerns. Student of Concern Reports can also be made with a phone call (474-2384) or on-line at https://publicdocs.maxient.com/incidentreport.php?UnivofWestFlorida

What is the role of campus police?

The University Police Department can initiate a Wellness Check if they are notified that a student may be suicidal. A Wellness Check is an opportunity for officers to assess the student’s level of safety. All officers are trained in suicide risk assessment and can initiate involuntary hospitalization if necessary to protect the student.

What is the procedure for involuntary hospitalization on campus?

Counseling and Psychological Services initiates most involuntary hospitalization actions on campus. When involuntary hospitalization is initiated through Counseling and Psychological Services, a trained counselor completes the necessary paperwork and notifies University police to transport the student to the Emergency Room of West Florida Hospital for an evaluation. The transporting officer accompanies the student during the admission. The hospital provides a discharge summary to Counseling and Psychological Services if the hospitalization was initiated there. The hospital may also notify the Dean of Students Office when the student is released. If the University Police Department initiates the hospitalization, a police officer makes contact with the student. The Dean of Students Office follows up with the student immediately after discharge from the hospital. The Dean of Students notifies the Campus Care Team in all cases and other officials, if necessary.

What services are offered through UWF Counseling and Psychological Services?

A range of confidential counseling services are available for UWF students, free of charge. All currently enrolled students qualify for an initial assessment to determine appropriateness for services. If a student is in a suicidal crisis, he or she can be seen immediately by a counselor during business hours or evaluated after hours and on the weekends by calling (850) 474-2420 and following the prompts to speak with the counselor on call. In addition to crisis intervention, Counseling and Psychological Services offers the following services for students:

- Individual counseling
- Group counseling
- Couples counseling
- Biofeedback
- Psychiatric Services
- Consultation
- Outreach

For more information, go to http://www.uwf.edu/counseling-services/
What should be done when a student dies by suicide?

The university has a coordinated response for initial notification and communication with the bereaved. If you receive notification that a student has died by suicide, please forward it to the Dean of Students for verification. Please refrain from making any statements to students or through social media until official university notification. After notification, you may acknowledge that a death has occurred without giving information about cause of death. Extensive information about means of death may increase suicide risk. Condolences will be sent to the family from the President’s Office. Appropriate expressions of condolences face-to-face or on social media are up to individual discretion. If you notice that students are being impacted by the loss, refer them to Counseling and Psychological Services for support. Remember that a suicide death can lead to a contagion effect and can affect others who are at high risk so don’t hesitate to emphasize the availability of counseling services and postvention debriefing, if necessary.

What should you do if you witness a suicide attempt or death?
Call 911 immediately. Do not try to intervene if the person has a weapon.

What are postvention debriefing services?
If there is a suicide attempt or death by suicide on campus, staff, faculty, or students can place a request for postvention debriefing through Counseling and Psychological Services. During postvention debriefing, a counselor meets with any students affected by the attempt/death. The counselor provides education regarding normal reactions and coping skills for self-care. Students are given the opportunity to express concerns and feelings of grief and loss. Be aware that the decision to provide postvention debriefing to a large group, such as a class, should be carefully evaluated on a case-by-case basis. Consultation with Counseling and Psychological Services about what is appropriate in a specific set of circumstances is highly recommended.

When would parents, guardians, or other caregivers be contacted?

Members of the Dean of Students Office and the Campus Care Team operate under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), a federal law that protects the privacy of student educational records. However, the law and the Parental Notification Policy of the University permit parental/guardian notification when it is deemed “necessary to protect against a significant threat to the health or safety of a student,” regardless of the age of the student. “Such notification would be made from the Dean of Students Office when deemed appropriate, with documentation of the notification included in the student educational record.” The UWF Office of General Counsel provides legal guidance on issues of student safety and privacy.
# Crisis Intervention Resource List

## Local Resources
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Resource</th>
<th>Phone Number</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UWM Counseling and Psychological Services</td>
<td>850-474-2420</td>
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<tr>
<td>Campus Care Team</td>
<td>850-474-2384</td>
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<tr>
<td>UWM Campus Police</td>
<td>850-474-2415</td>
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<tr>
<td>Baptist Hospital Emergency Room</td>
<td>850-434-4011</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sacred Heart Hospital Emergency Room</td>
<td>850-416-7000</td>
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<tr>
<td>West Florida Hospital Emergency Room</td>
<td>850-494-4000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lakeview Rape Crisis Hotline</td>
<td>850-433-RAPE(7273)</td>
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<tr>
<td>SCG (Survivors of Suicide) Support Group</td>
<td>850-433-3348 or 850-712-5841 or 850-723-6702</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-1-1 Information and Referral Service</td>
<td>211</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Astrea Resources for Living (24/7) for EAP counseling</td>
<td>1-800-272-7252</td>
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</tbody>
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## National Resources
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Resource</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>National Suicide Prevention Lifeline</td>
<td>1-800-273-TALK(273-8255)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Trevor Lifeline (crisis line for LGBTQ youth)</td>
<td>1-866-4-UTREVCR(87386)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hopeline Network</td>
<td>1-800-SUICIDE(784-2433)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Veterans Crisis Line</td>
<td>1-800-273-8255, Press 1</td>
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## Website Resources
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Resource</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>American Association of Suicidology (AAS)</td>
<td><a href="http://www.suicidology.org/">http://www.suicidology.org/</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Foundation for Suicide Prevention (AFSP)</td>
<td><a href="http://www.afsp.org/">http://www.afsp.org/</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Suicide Prevention Resource Center (SPRC)</td>
<td><a href="http://www.sprc.org/">http://www.sprc.org/</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Half of Us</td>
<td><a href="http://www.halfofus.com/">http://www.halfofus.com/</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI)</td>
<td><a href="http://www.nami.org/">http://www.nami.org/</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Jed Foundation</td>
<td><a href="http://www.jedfoundation.org/">http://www.jedfoundation.org/</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>The Trevor Project</td>
<td><a href="http://www.thetrevorproject.org/">http://www.thetrevorproject.org/</a></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
YOU'RE WORRIED THAT A STUDENT POSES A SERIOUS THREAT TO SELF OR OTHERS. NOW WHAT?

Determine whether the situation poses an immediate threat of harm, possible threat of harm, or a serious ongoing concern.

IMMEDIATE THREAT OF HARM: An immediate threat of harm exists when a student has EXPRESSED a desire, plan, or intention to kill or seriously harm self or others. This threat is magnified when a student is intoxicated or under the influence of other substances. Other serious warning signs of an immediate threat of harm may include:
- verbal threats or physical attempts to kill or harm self or others;
- possession of access to a deadly weapon (e.g., firearms, knives, drug stockpiles, poisons) and an intention to use it against self or other; and/or
- an inability to commit to personal safety or to refrain from harming others.

IN THE EVENT OF AN IMMEDIATE THREAT OF HARM, CALL 911 RIGHT AWAY. If you are not with the student, ask for the police to do a “welfare check” and share your concerns about an immediate threat of harm. Campus police will do welfare checks for students on campus and local police will do welfare check for students off campus.

POSSIBLE THREAT OF HARM: A possible threat of harm exists when a student has SUGGESTED a desire, plan, or intention to kill or seriously harm self or others. Other serious warning signs for a possible threat of harm listed may include:
- previous suicide attempts
- alcohol or drug abuse
- problems with or significant changes in mood (e.g., depression, anxiety, or anger)
- expressions of hopelessness, helplessness, or no sense of meaning in life
- sleep problems
- social withdrawal
- preoccupation with death
- feeling like a burden on others

These warning signs may be apparent at any time but may be more likely to occur when a student has experienced a major loss, including the loss of a loved one, an important relationship, a job, housing, or academic standing, among other serious losses and stressors. If you are concerned about a possible threat of harm, ask the student, in private, “Are you thinking of killing yourself or others.” If the answer is yes or possibly yes, seek further assistance.

IN THE EVENT OF A POSSIBLE THREAT OF HARM, SEEK FURTHER ASSISTANCE FROM UWFO COUNSELING & PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES (474-2420), CAMPUS POLICE (474-2415), LOCAL POLICE (911), OR LOCAL EMERGENCY ROOM PERSONNEL. All clinical staff of UWFC Counseling and Psychological Services, campus police, local police, and emergency room personnel are trained to assess for safety. UWFO Counseling and Psychological Services provide emergency assessments for all students in need, free of charge, on a walk-in basis in building 930 during business hours (Monday through Friday, 8am to 5pm). Crisis counselors are available by phone at 474-2420 after hours and on weekends. Campus police and local police can perform a safety assessment on-site anywhere on or off campus. Emergency room personnel perform safety assessments in hospitals.

SERIOUS ONGOING CONCERNS: Serious ongoing concerns exist when a student displays any of the warning signs listed above but clearly denies any thoughts of harm to self or others and long-term concerns about the well-being of the student remain. Other warning signs of a serious ongoing concern may include:
- psychological distress or crisis
- mental health disorder or symptoms (such as depression, anxiety, or eating disorders)
- substance abuse or dependence
- trauma or victimization experiences

IN THE EVENT OF SERIOUS ONGOING CONCERNS, REFER STUDENT TO UWFC COUNSELING & PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES (474-2420) AND THE UWFC CAMPUS CARE TEAM (474-2384 or http://uwf.edu/careofstudents). UWFC Counseling and Psychological Services provides a range of individually tailored counseling services, without charge, for all UWFC students in need. The UWFC Campus Care Team reviews individual student concerns and responds on an individual basis for students in need of assistance.
IF YOU ARE CONCERNED ABOUT A STUDENT BUT UNSURE OF WHAT TO DO, CONTACT UWF COUNSELING AND PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES (474-2420) AND ASK TO CONSULT WITH A COUNSELOR.

**IMMEDIATE THREAT OF HARM**

Student expresses desire, plan, or intention to kill or seriously harm self or others.

- Call 911 and request a welfare check
  - OR
  - go to nearest emergency room

**POSSIBLE THREAT OF HARM**

Student suggests desire, plan, or intention to kill or seriously harm self or others.

- Ask student: “Are you thinking of killing yourself or harming others?”
- Thoughts of killing self or harming others present and student is in distress
  - Bring student to UWF Counseling and Psychological Services in Building 930 (after hours, call 474-2420)

**SERIOUS ONGOING CONCERN**

Student displays warning signs but denies thoughts of harm to self or others.

- Refer student to UWF Counseling and Psychological Services (call 474-2420) AND/OR
  - Contact UWF CAFÉ Team (call 474-2384 or online at http://uwf.edu/deanofstudents)
  - Thoughts of killing self or harming others absent but student is in distress
  - Refer student to UWF Counseling and Psychological Services (call 474-2420) AND/OR
    - Contact UWF CAFÉ Team (call 474-2384 or online at http://uwf.edu/deanofstudents)