

SUPPORTING STUDENTS IN DISTRESS

Adapted from Dr. Marshall B. Rosenberg, Nonviolent Communication, 2015

Introductions

- Introduce yourself, your job title and your role
- Use the student's name to personalize the experience and build rapport/trust
- Thank the student for reaching out to you and let them know you are there to support them

Respect

- Don't provoke: Be mindful of your tone, volume, facial expressions and mannerisms
- Allow the student to speak and process without interrupting
- Be sensitive to the student's energy level and mood when communicating out of respect

Listen

- Listen through any strong emotions to assess both feelings and needs
- Practice active listening: eye contact, nodding and inviting body posture
- Remain neutral if asked your opinion and avoid any form of judgement
- Don't promise secrecy or offer confidentiality

Affirm

- Bridge the "gap" between you and the student by validating their thoughts and feelings
- Let them know whatever they are feeling is ok and normal
- Thank the student for trusting you and encourage them for taking the positive step of seeking help

Partner

- Ask questions to include the student in the conversation about a comfortable path forward. Check in with them often by saying: "how does this sound to you?"
- Paraphrase back what you hear to the student to clearly identify needs and feelings

Consult

- Offer the student multiple resources to choose from. Ensure they feel empowered and confident in taking control of their life and what happens next
- Reach out to campus partners for additional support or information. Ask the student if they need help making an appointment

Empathy

Students need to feel heard and understood

Authenticity

Students need to feel they can trust you

Collaboration

Students need to feel included and supported

Freedom

Students need to feel empowered and confident

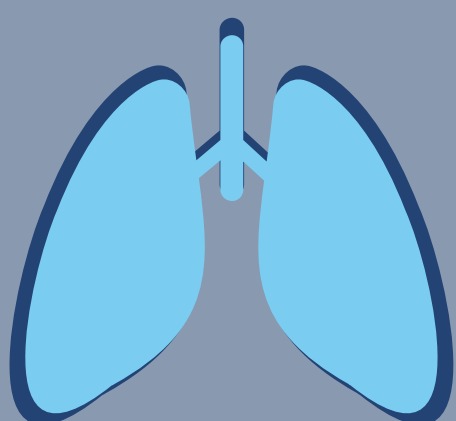


MANAGING DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOR

Techniques and best practices

Empathy

Practice empathy by expressing care and concern. Listen and affirm thoughts and feelings. See "Supporting Students in Distress" for more info.

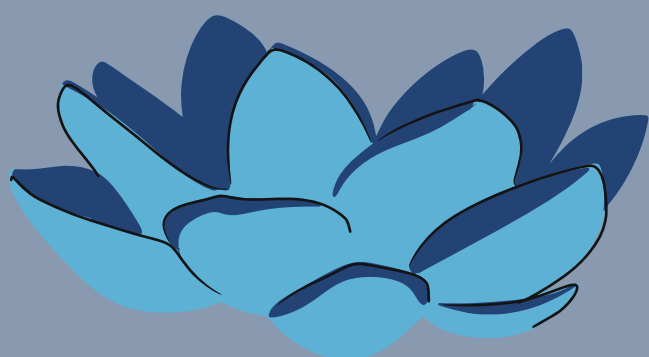


Pause and breathe

Allow the student to vent and disregard any insults. Remind yourself it's not about you, it's the situation. Do not provoke and be mindful of your facial expressions, tone and mannerisms
Breathe

Safety/Set limits

Safety is a high priority. If you feel unsafe, explain that you'd like to help but violent, intimidating, or threatening behavior will be reported. Take precaution and contact help if you feel hostility.



Calm/Clarity

Remain calm. Use silence to allow the student to process feelings or settle down. Avoid talking fast or using complex explanations that may be confusing. Be clear and concise.



REDIRECT

If the student is not listening or talking in circles, say their name gently to redirect them back to the conversation. You may need to repeat what you say often. Be patient in your communication.



CHOICES AND OPTIMISIM

Identify needs and provide choices. At the very least, ask if they'd like a pen/paper, a place to sit, or some water. Thank them often. Let them know you admire their resilience and self-awareness in seeking help.

When Should I Report?



IDENTIFY

If a student is displaying unusual, disturbing, or concerning behavior that does not rise to the level of a crisis or immediate 9-1-1 call.

REPORT

Report what happened by submitting an incident report (IR). It's ok to submit a report about something that happened to someone else. If you'd like to talk to someone directly, contact BIT using info at the bottom.



SEEK SUPPORT

The person who submitted the report will be contacted by a member of the Behavioral Intervention Team (BIT) to discuss options and offer support.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT

Scan this QR code to submit an incident report. Contact us for support by emailing Behavioral_Intervention_Team@whatcom.edu



Student Crisis Resources

If a student is experiencing a behavioral or mental health crisis, please discuss the student resources below and ensure they have the following contact information.

- **Crisis Chat- www.imhurting.org**
- **Crisis Text- text START to 741741**
- **Whatcom County Mobile Crisis Outreach Team
1.800.584.3578**
- **24 hour Crisis Line - 988**
- **Emergency - 911**



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The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding the non-discrimination policies: KayCee Johnson Executive Director for Human Resources, by phone: 360.383.3404 or email: kjohnson@whatcom.edu, 237 W. Kellogg Road, Bellingham, WA 98226.

For Title IX compliance: Kelsey Piepel, Title IX Coordinator, by phone: 360.383.3403 or email: kpiepel@whatcom.edu, 237 W. Kellogg Road, Bellingham, WA 98226.

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