

# TIPS FOR HELPING A STRESSED STUDENT

## Common Warning Signs

Academic Problems	Interpersonal Problems	Behavioral Problems
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Excessive procrastination</li> <li>Uncharacteristically poor academic preparation or performance</li> <li>Repeated requests for extensions or special considerations</li> <li>Disruptive classroom behavior</li> <li>Excessive career or course choice indecision</li> <li>A pattern of absence or tardiness</li> <li>Avoiding or dominating discussions</li> <li>Verbal or written references to suicide or homicide</li> <li>Frequently falling asleep in class</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Asking advisor/instructor for help with personal problems</li> <li>Dependency on an advisor/instructor</li> <li>Hanging around the office</li> <li>Avoidance of an advisor/instructor</li> <li>Disruptive behavior during class</li> <li>Inability to get along with others</li> <li>Withdrawal from friends</li> <li>Complaints from other students</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Change in personal hygiene</li> <li>Dramatic weight gain or loss</li> <li>Irritability</li> <li>Alcohol/drug use</li> <li>Odd or unusual speech</li> <li>Disjointed thoughts</li> <li>Tearfulness</li> <li>Intense emotion</li> <li>Inappropriate responses</li> <li>Difficulty concentrating</li> <li>Engaging in self-injury</li> <li>Sudden mood or behavior changes</li> </ul>

## Suggestions for Intervening

- Talk to the student privately to help minimize embarrassment and defensiveness.
- Listen carefully to the student and respond to both what they are saying while also validating what they are feeling.
- Discuss your observations and perceptions of the situation frankly and honestly with the student.
- Acknowledge inappropriate or strange behavior without being judgmental.
- Try to respect the student's value system even if you don't agree with it.
- Clarify the limits on your ability to help. Instead, offer to connect the student with experts trained to assist struggling students.
- Avoid making promises of complete confidentiality (it is difficult to get others involved in helping if you can't tell them what is going on). Instead, you might promise to only share the information that others "need to know" to do their jobs.

### Contacts for helpful administrators/staff on campus:

**Sara Hopkins, Dir. of Coun. Services**  
248-1653

**Jessica Dykes, Dean of Students**  
248-1245

**Michelle Gaertner, Assoc. Dean of Student Success/Coordinator of Disability Services**  
248-1463

**Ronda Lillienthal, Assoc. Dean of Resident**  
248-1398

## How to Make a Referral

Referrals	Emergency Resources
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Encourage the student to fill out a counseling center inquiry to request a counseling appointment.                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Go to TNU4U</li> <li>Under the services tab you will find a link to the Counseling Center</li> <li>On the right hand side of the page there is a link called "Request a Counseling appointment".</li> </ul> </li> <li>Offer to let the student fill out the form from your office if they need extra support/encouragement.</li> <li>It might be helpful to let the student know services are free and completely confidential.</li> <li>If the student would like to be seen that day, the counseling center has walk in hours at 10am and 3pm each day. The student can walk over and see a counselor immediately.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If the student is an imminent risk to themselves or others call security at 615-642-3523 and/or 911.</li> </ul>

**Trevecca Counseling Center**  
**Located at the Smith House**  
**615-248-1653**  
**shopkins@trevecca.edu**