

Quick Guide – Supporting Students in Distress

What to Look For

Academic Signs	Behavioral Signs	Physical Signs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bad or worsening grades • Frequent lateness or absenteeism • Change in level of participation • Falling asleep in class • Problems concentrating 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-disclosure of distress • Abrupt mood changes • Comments on feeling worthless or hopeless • Lack of social interaction • Restlessness or agitation • Giving possessions away 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changes in appearance • Significant weight changes • Lack of energy • Lack of hygiene • Absence of facial expression • Often intoxicated or high • Disrupted sleep

Responding to Distress

1. **Stay Calm.** Try not to take it personally — the student's reactions are about them and not you.
2. **Mention Observable Behaviors.** When you notice something, say something.
3. **Be Supportive.** Let the individual know you are concerned and want to help them get the resources they need.
4. **Listen Without Judgment.** Avoid offering advice or solutions or diagnoses.
5. **Remember the Positives.** Let them know what they are doing well and what strengths they have.
6. **If you see or hear something concerning, be direct** and ask “Have you had thoughts of hurting or killing yourself or someone else?” If they mention self-harm, suicide, or hurting someone, take it seriously! Even if they’re joking, it still could be a cry for help.
7. **Provide a Referral.** Ask if they'd like to talk with a professional who can help. Is there an underlying issue that needs to be addressed, such as housing or food insecurity?
8. **Consult with a Supervisor** or Roo Wellness Counseling Services if needed.
9. **Make a Report** with the CARE Team for a staff member to follow-up with the student to offer support and resources.
10. **Take Care of Yourself.** Recognize your limits and set boundaries; don’t hesitate to reach out for help for yourself, too!

Making a Referral

- You may be unsure what to say, but you can start the conversation with “I've noticed you haven't been yourself lately, is everything alright?”
- Allow them to discuss their feelings, which is often what a person needs most.
- Acknowledge their situation: “It sounds like you have a lot going on right now, have you thought about speaking with a counselor to help you sort through everything?”
- If you see or hear something concerning, be direct and ask “Have you had thoughts of hurting or killing yourself or someone else?” If they mention self-harm, suicide, or hurting someone, take it seriously! Even joking, it could be a cry for help.
- Offer to walk with the student. Roo Wellness Counseling Services offers crisis walk-in hours Monday through Friday at 10-11AM and again at 2-3PM. Otherwise, they can call 816-235-1635 to make an appointment.
- Please see other campus and community resources listed below.
- Make a report with the CARE Team for a staff member to follow-up with the student to offer support and resources.

Managing a Crisis

- **Ensure the safety** of yourself and anyone else present.
- **Stay calm** and non-confrontational to defuse and de-escalate the situation.
- **Address the disruption** in the moment and in private, if possible. Clarify expectations by explaining what behaviors are inappropriate; notify the student that if the behavior persists, they will be asked to leave and further action may be taken, including disciplinary action.
- **For immediate safety concerns call UMKC Police (816-235-1515) or 911.** You can also text UMKC Police using the RAVE Guardian App (see QR code below).
- **Report the incident to your supervisor.**
- **Make a report** with the CARE Team for a staff member to follow-up with the student to offer support and resources.

Campus and Community Resources

Confidential Resources	RISE (Resources, Intervention, Support, Education)	Roo Wellness Counseling Services	Roo Wellness Health Services
	816-235-1652 info.umkc.edu/rise/ Haag Hall, room 108	816-235-1635 umkc.edu/wellness/services/counseling/ 5110 Oak Street, Suite 201 (Brookside 51 Building) Crisis walk-in hours: M-F, 10-11AM & 2-3PM	816-235-6133 umkc.edu/wellness/services/health-and-wellness/ 5110 Oak Street, Suite 237 (Brookside 51 Building)

UMKC Support Services	Resources and Support	24-Hour Crisis Hotlines
	Ask-Listen-Refer suicide prevention training asklistenrefer.org/umkc Academic Support and Mentoring umkc.edu/asm/ 816-235-1174 Dr. Raj Bala Agrawal Care Center and Pantry umkc.edu/get-involved/services/care-center.html 816-235-1457 EAP (Employee Assistance Program) umsystem.edu/totalrewards/benefits/eap 816-235-1621 Equity & Title IX info.umkc.edu/title9/ 816-235-1771 LGBTQIA Programs & Services umkc.edu/get-involved/programs/lgbtqia/ 816-235-1639 MindBody Connection umkc.edu/wellness/resources/mental-health/mindbody-connection.html Multicultural Student Affairs umkc.edu/msa/ 816-235-1109 Student Accessibility Services umkc.edu/wellness/services/accessibility/ 816-235-6363 Student Veterans Services umkc.edu/veterans/ 816-235-5599 UMKC CARE Team umkc.edu/student-affairs/student-conduct-and-civility/care-team.html Women's Center info.umkc.edu/womenc/ 816-235-1638 WellConnect (School of Medicine) wellconnect.personaladvantage.com/ 866-640-4777	Resources and Support Mental Health Is Health: mentalhealththishealth.us/ CommCare First Step for Help: firststepforhelp.com/ MO Department of Mental Health: dmh.mo.gov/behavioral-health Johnson County, KS Department of Mental Health: jocogov.org/departments/mental-health National Alliance on Mental Illness: nami.org/Home Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration: samhsa.gov/find-help University Health Behavioral Health: universityhealthkc.org/services/behavioral-health/

Contacts	UMKC CARE Team Reporting Form	Download the UMKC Police RAVE Guardian APP
		