

# Student Crisis Guide

A guide for faculty and staff to assist students in distress

## Response Protocol

Follow this chart to determine what to do when faced with a distressed or disruptive student.

Is the student a danger to self or others, or does the student need immediate assistance for any reason?

**YES**

The student's conduct is clearly and imminently reckless, disorderly, dangerous, or threatening, and is suggestive of harm to self or others in the community.

Call Now:

**Campus Police**  
**949-451-5234**

After speaking with police, report the concern to the campus Behavioral Intervention Team by contacting the

**Health & Wellness Center**  
**949-451-5221**

**I'M NOT SURE**

The student shows signs of distress, but I am not sure how serious it is. My interaction has left me feeling unease and/or concern about the student.

During business hours, call:

**Health & Wellness Center**  
**949-451-5221**

After hours & holidays, call:

**Campus Police**  
**949-451-5234**

**NO**

I am not concerned for the student's immediate safety, but he/she is having significant academic and/or personal issues and could use some support or additional resources.

Refer the student to:

**Counseling Services**  
**949-451-5410**

and/or

mental health counseling at the  
**Health & Wellness Center**  
**949-451-5221**

# Campus Contacts

If You Feel Unsafe, Call 911 From a Campus Phone



<b>IVC CAMPUS POLICE</b>	949-451-5234	<a href="http://www.ivc.edu/resources/police">www.ivc.edu/resources/police</a>
In an Emergency—From Campus Phones	x5234	
In an Emergency—From Mobile Phones	949-451-5234 or 911	
Emergency Medical Situations	949-451-5234 or 911	
General Information	949-451-5200	
Escort Services	949-451-5234	

<b>VICE PRESIDENT FOR STUDENT SERVICES</b>	949-451-5214	
Dean of Counseling Services	949-451-5410	
Counseling Center	949-451-5251	<a href="http://www.ivc.edu/student/counseling">www.ivc.edu/student/counseling</a>
Health & Wellness Center	949-451-5221	<a href="http://www.ivc.edu/student/wellness">www.ivc.edu/student/wellness</a>
Disabled Student Programs and Services	949-451-5630	<a href="http://www.ivc.edu/student/dsps">www.ivc.edu/student/dsps</a>



## What is the Behavioral Intervention Team (BIT)?

IVC's Behavioral Intervention Team (BIT) coordinates existing resources with a focus on prevention and early intervention in campus situations involving students experiencing distress or engaging in harmful or disruptive behaviors. The team develops intervention and support strategies offering case coordination by regularly reviewing and assessing situations in order to recommend actions in accordance with existing College policies.

**Call: 949-451-5410**  
**949-451-5234 (after hours)**

# Assisting Students in Distress

## See Something.

IVC faculty and staff are in a unique position to demonstrate compassion for our students who might be in distress.

Both younger and older students might feel alone, isolated, and even hopeless when faced with academic or life challenges. These feelings can easily disrupt academic performance and may lead to dysfunctional coping and other serious consequences.

You may be the first person to SEE SOMETHING distressing in a student, since you have frequent and prolonged contact with them. Irvine Valley College, in collaboration with the California Mental Health Services Authority (CalMHSA), requests that you act with compassion in your dealings with such students.

## Say Something.

Students exhibiting troubling behaviors in your presence are likely having difficulties in various settings, including the classroom; with roommates; with family; and even in social settings.

Trust your instincts and SAY SOMETHING if a student leaves you feeling worried, alarmed, or threatened!

## Do Something.

Sometimes students cannot or will not turn to family or friends. DO SOMETHING! Your expression of concern may be a critical factor in saving a student's academic career—or even their life.

The purpose of this folder is to help you recognize symptoms of student distress and identify appropriate referrals to campus resources.

## The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) permits communication about a student of concern in connection with a health and safety emergency. Observations of a student's conduct or statements made by a student are not FERPA-protected. Such information should be shared with appropriate consideration for student privacy.

## Academic Indicators

- ✓ Sudden decline in quality of work and grades
- ✓ Repeated absences
- ✓ Bizarre content in writings or presentations
- ✓ Multiple requests for extensions
- ✓ You find yourself doing more personal rather than academic counseling during office hours
- ✓ Overly demanding of faculty/staff attention

## Physical Indicators

- ✓ Marked changes in physical appearance including deterioration in grooming, hygiene, or weight loss/gain
- ✓ Excessive fatigue/sleep disturbance
- ✓ Intoxication, hung over, or smelling of alcohol
- ✓ Disoriented or “out of it”
- ✓ Garbled, tangential, or slurred speech

## Safety Risk Indicators

- ✓ Unprovoked anger or hostility
- ✓ Implying or making a direct threat to harm self or others
- ✓ Academic assignments dominated by themes of extreme hopelessness, rage, worthlessness, isolation, despair, acting out, suicidal ideation/violent behavior—a “cry for help”

## Psychological Indicators

- ✓ Self-disclosure of personal distress—family problems, financial difficulties, contemplating suicide, grief
- ✓ Excessive tearfulness, panic reactions, irritability or unusual apathy
- ✓ Verbal abuse (e.g., taunting, badgering, intimidation)
- ✓ Expressions of concern about the student by his/her peers

# How to Refer

Use these tips to help you refer a student in need of assistance.

## Preparing to reach out to the student

- Meet with the Behavioral Intervention Team (BIT) to explore the issues involved and plan intervention.
- Know the available campus resources and the referral process.
- Seek suggestions from experienced colleagues and the department chair.
- Allow sufficient time to thoroughly address the issues of concern.
- Review your physical environment and make provisions for your safety and that of others. If necessary, notify colleagues in close proximity of your intended intervention.
- Remain calm and know whom to call for help in case of need.
- When a student expresses a direct threat to self or others, or acts in a bizarre, highly irrational and disruptive way, contact Campus Police.
- If you decide not to have direct contact with the student, report the incident to the proper resources.

## Connecting with the student

- Listen supportively. Repeat the student's statement to clarify and to demonstrate an understanding of the student's perspective.
- Do not challenge, shock or become argumentative with the student.
- Do not try to minimize the student's distress.
- If the situation is safe, meet and talk in private to minimize embarrassment and defensiveness.
- Clearly express your concerns, focusing on the behavior in non-disparaging terms.
- Ask if the student wants to hurt himself. Asking does not plant ideas in the student's mind.
- Offer supportive alternatives, resources and referrals.
- Respect the student's privacy without making false promises of confidentiality.
- Explore the student's support system(s).
- Emphasize the importance of professional help for the student.
- Document all incidents and attempts to resolve the situation. Be factual and objective.

## Making the referral

- Recommend services and provide the student with realistic expectations. Note that some campus resources can offer confidential support, while others are required to respond or report.
- Reassure the student that students often seek help over the course of their college career to effectively achieve their goals.
- Direct the student to a preferred assistance source.
- Be frank with the student about your limits (time, expertise, student's reluctance to talk).
- Frame any decision to seek and accept help as an intelligent and wise choice.
- Make sure the student understands what actions are necessary.
- Encourage and assist the student to make and keep an appointment.
- If necessary, find someone to stay with the student while calls to the appropriate resources are made, and offer to escort the student.
- Set a follow-up appointment with the student.