

# Step 1: Recognizing Signs of Distress

Stress and distress are common feelings for many students. Each student is going to have their own unique way of dealing with stressful experiences and their emotions. There are many different reasons why a student may approach you for support, or appear in need of support. Being able to recognize a student in distress is the first step.

Signs of stress or distress may include physical, emotional or behavioural, academic concerns and/or obvious expressions of safety concerns.

**Safety Concerns**  
  
Examples include statements about suicide or death, suspicions or paranoia, threats towards/ from others

**Physical Distress**  
  
Examples include exhaustion; falling asleep in class; visible change in appearance; or visible injuries

**Emotions & Behaviours**  
  
Examples include evident anxiety; unusually withdrawn or animated; feelings of helplessness; crying; appear emotionless or calm; memory loss; unable to concentrate; seem hypervigilant or panic

**Academic Concerns**  
  
Examples include concerning content on assignments; extreme perfectionism; extreme disorganization; repeated absences; missed assignments or exams

# Step 2: Respond

A supportive response and approach can make all the difference, but that does not mean that it will come easy. This also does not mean that you need to be an expert. It is important to remember that it is okay to not have all the answers. Being aware of these simple steps can help you to provide a supportive response.

**Starting the Conversation**

- Meet in a safe & private location
- Be open to listening
- Express your concern for the student
- Ensure the student is open to talking further

**Listen & Respect Confidentiality**

- Take a non-judgmental approach
- Validate feelings of stress
- Communicate any limits to confidentiality
- Limits may include concerns about student’s safety and/or professional responsibilities

**Provide a Supportive Referral**

- Share that support is available
- Create an individual plan of next steps for student by providing support(s) listed in this folder, whom referral(s) being made to/support person for for student
- Summarize the plan including when you will follow up with the student

**Follow Up Plan**

- Follow up based on your plan with the student

# Step 3: Refer

## Nipissing University Resources - 705-474-3450

<b>Student Retention Alert</b> Support for Student Success <a href="http://www.nipissingu.ca/nusuccess">www.nipissingu.ca/nusuccess</a> e: nusuccess@nipissingu.ca	<b>Campus Security</b> Safety or Emergency Support x5555 B203 24-Hours 705-498-7244	<b>Student Counselling</b> Emotional or Mental Health Needs x4507 B210 e: counselling@nipisingu.ca
<b>Student Intervention Specialist</b> Complex Concerns or Multiple Support Needs x4605 B210 e: sis@nipissingu.ca	<b>Sexual Violence Education &amp; Support</b> Referral & Support x4075 B210 e: svsupport@nipissingu.ca	<b>Office of Indigenous Initiatives</b> Cultural Support x4252 F215 e: biindgen@nipissingu.ca
<b>Campus Health Centre</b> Medical Concerns 705-474-7600 x5261 B205	<b>Residence Life</b> Student Housing x4855 e: residence@nipissingu.ca	<b>Nipissing University Student Union</b> Food Security/Health Plan x4801 F204/F205 e: info@nusu.com
<b>International Initiatives</b> International/Exchange Student Programs x4321 B210 e: myinternational@nipissingu.ca	<b>Student Accessibility Services</b> Academic Accommodations for Disabilities x4362 B210 e: sas@nipissingu.ca	<b>Academic Advising</b> Academic Planning/Course Selection x4358 A207 e: advising@nipissingu.ca
	<b>Student Learning &amp; Transitions</b> Academic & Transition Support x4459 B210 e: slt@nipissingu.ca	

## Helplines

<b>Crisis Intervention Program</b> North Bay Regional Hospital 24-Hour Support 1-800-352-1141	<b>Help for Male Survivors of Sexual Abuse</b> 24-Hour Helpline 1-866-887-0015	<b>Talk4Healing</b> 24-Hour Indigenous Women’s Helpline 1-855-554-HEAL
<b>Youth Line</b> LGBT2S+ Peer Support Limited Hours 1-800-268-9688	<b>Good2Talk</b> 24-Hour Student Helpline 1-866-925-5454	<b>Assaulted Women’s</b> Helpline 24-Hour Helpline 1-866-863-0511

## Student Retention Alert

<b>What Is It?</b> Student Retention Alert is a centralized & active referral based early alert program accessible through WebAdvisor that provides timely support to students who may be facing challenges that are negatively impacting their success	<b>How Do I Use It?</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Log into WebAdvisor</li><li>2. Select “Student Retention Alert” from the Faculty/Employee main menu</li><li>3. Select Submit Student Concern</li><li>4. Type the first and last name of the student or their Nipissing University student identification number (you may also choose to submit anonymously if this information is unknown)</li></ol>
<b>Have a Question? Need Help?</b> Visit <a href="http://www.nipissingu.ca/nusuccess">www.nipissingu.ca/nusuccess</a> for more information. If you have a question or are experiencing technical difficulties, let us know at <a href="mailto:nusuccess@nipissingu.ca">nusuccess@nipissingu.ca</a>	



## Step 4: Reflect

### What Type of Support Did I Provide?

Did the student require immediate assistance, a referral or follow-up? Was there a safety concern?

### Did I Consider My Own Limits?

It is okay to not know the answer to a question and to set personal boundaries. Encourage students to call on other resources provided in this folder when possible

### How Am I Feeling?

It is common to feel upset or anxious after dealing with a student's distress. Get help for yourself. If you need to debrief, have a question or want to report a concern with a professional please contact Student Intervention Specialist x4605. Further support is available through your Employee Assistance Program (EAP), contact Human Resources for details



# Supporting Students

## Recognize, Respond, Refer, Reflect

### Requiring Immediate Support

#### Student Concern

**If a student has a plan or thoughts :**  
Of suicide; to harm self or others that is life-threatening; to cause damage or harm to others, or the institution

#### What To Do

**Seek immediate assistance, and:**

1. Stay with the student, unless you are worried about your safety
2. Get Help: - Nipissing University Campus Security at x5555 or 24-hours at 705-498-7244
  - Call 911
  - Call Counselling Services x4507 (office hours only)

### Requiring Further Assessment

#### Student Concern

**If the student has thoughts of:** Worthlessness; hopelessness; people "better off" without them; people being "against them"

**Any Indication of:** Self-Injury; disordered eating; sexual violence; disorganized speech; lack of flow in conversation; delusions

**If you are concerned about the student's feelings of:** Frustration; anxiety; stress

#### What To Do

**Follow the Recognize, Respond, Refer, Reflect guidelines in this folder, and:**

1. Offer to call Student Development & Services to connect with a professional x4507 room B210
2. Offer the student resources for support found on the back of the folder
3. If you are worried about the student's safety contact Nipissing University Campus Security x5555 or 24-hours 705-498-7244, or call 911