



Recognize Engage Assess Connect Help

Faculty and Staff Guide to Student Mental Health Services

905.721.3392

studentlifeline@ontariotechu.ca
ontariotechu.ca/reach



Recognize warning signs



As an Ontario Tech University faculty or staff member, you're in a key position to notice warning signs that may indicate that a student is in need of assistance. While students are resilient, there may be times when stressors become overwhelming and affect their academic performance. You may observe students:

- Missing class, assignments and exams.
- Showing significant decline in quality of academic performance or class participation.
- Expressing thoughts of despair or harm to self or others (e.g. submitted work or email).
- Displaying extreme disorganization or inappropriate content in written assignments.



Visible signs

The student demonstrates...

- Risky behaviour
- Panic or anxious behaviour
- Aggressive or paranoid behaviour
- Tearfulness or difficulties making eye contact
- A change in appearance or personal hygiene
- Burn marks, cuts or scars



Verbal signs

The student discloses...

- Thoughts of suicide or harm to others
- Worries about coping with life stressors
- Disorganized speech
- Feelings of sadness, hopelessness or helplessness
- Traumatic experiences (e.g. sexual assault or bullying)



Emotional signs

The faculty or staff member...

- Has an instinct that something is wrong
- Senses isolation or withdrawal

Privacy Act (FIPPA)

Staff and faculty are required to comply with Ontario's Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FIPPA) which, among other things, requires that the university protects the personal information of its students from improper disclosure.

Disclosure within Ontario Tech

Within Ontario Tech, employees may disclose personal information about students to another employee of the university who needs the information in the performance of their duties and where the disclosure is necessary and proper in the discharge of the institution's functions. This means you may disclose a student's personal information to staff in Student Mental Health Services for the purposes of assessing or assisting a student.

Disclosure outside of Ontario Tech

Outside of the university, privacy legislation is not a reason not to share information if a person is in danger (i.e. it is reasonable to believe that a student may harm him/herself or another person). It also allows for disclosure in compassionate circumstances to facilitate contact with a close family member or friend. Any such decision to disclose a student's personal information without consent is extremely difficult and requires reasoned judgement, and if circumstances permit, the AVP of Student Life or General Counsel should be consulted.

Engage the student



A Acknowledge the warning signs that students are displaying. You may consider reaching out to the student if you have a good rapport and feel comfortable meeting with them in your office. Students may also inform you of their challenges directly.

"I noticed that two of your assignments haven't been completed. I'm concerned about you."

"It sounds like you're worried about school."

B Believe in the importance of empathy. Show compassion and display a non-judgemental attitude. Show interest and listen actively by recognizing their feelings. This lets students know that someone cares.

"I'd like to support you."

C Create a space where you and the student can explore options that may help them. You may be able to offer a resolution through your role (e.g. providing an extension as appropriate) and/or you may need to refer students to services on campus.

"I am able to consider these options: _____"

"There are services available on campus that can help you."

Assess risk level



Assess the student's risk level to determine the type of assistance required.

HIGH

Student is in imminent risk of harm to self or others

Immediate suicide plan or attempt
Unresponsive due to substance use
Display of threatening behaviour and escalation in disruptive or aggressive behaviour that is unresponsive to intervention

MEDIUM

Student is in distress

Panic attack
Thoughts of suicide
Experiences of abuse, trauma or sexual violence
Escalation in disruptive behaviour

LOW

Student is in need of mental health support

Worries about academic and test performance
Hopelessness and sadness
Conflict in any relationship
Sexuality related concerns
Stress and sleep problems
Culture shock
Procrastination and lack of motivation

Connect To Help

HIGH

Immediate response is required

On Campus

Call Security
905.721.3211 or ext. 2400

Off Campus 24/7

Call 911

MEDIUM

Response is available within 24 hours

Student Mental Health Services:

Student LifeLine
905.721.3392
8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

For medical support:

Campus Health Centre
905.721.3037
9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

LOW

Response is based on availability

Student Mental Health Services:

Consult with Student LifeLine
905.721.3392

Make a referral to Student Mental Health Services

"With your consent, I can make a referral on your behalf to Student Mental Health Services."

For more information about student mental health resources, workshops, and groups: visit ontariotechu.ca/mentalhealth

List of 24/7 community distress resources

Distress Centre Durham	905.430.2522 and 1.800.452.0688
DMHS Crisis Access Linkage Line	905.666.0483 and 1.800.742.1890
Durham Rape Crisis Centre	905.668.9200
Good2Talk	1.866.925.5454
Ontario Shores Crisis Line	1.800.263.2679
Toronto Distress Centre	416.408.4357

List of campus resources

Academic Advising	Visit your faculty website
Campus Health Centre	ontariotechu.ca/campushealthcentre
Office of Campus Safety	ontariotechu.ca/campussafety
Registrar's Office	ontariotechu.ca/registrar
Student Award and Financial Aid	ontariotechu.ca/safa
School of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies	ontariotechu.ca/graduatestudies
Student Accessibility Services	ontariotechu.ca/accessibility
Student Life	ontariotechu.ca/studentlife
(Support for academic skills, careers, harassment/discrimination, sexual violence, Indigenous and international)	

Campus Connected



Staff and faculty can attend a Campus Connected orientation session for more information on how to engage with students.

Campus Connected is a movement that connects the people on our campus. Members of this movement affirm their ability to engage with others with an attitude of caring and kindness, as well as listen with empathy and without judgment. Visit ontariotechu.ca/campusconnected to register for a "Faculty and Staff" session.