



**MCNEESE**  
STATE UNIVERSITY  
Counseling and Health Services

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# Referral & Response Tips:

# POKES MATTER

A Guide for Faculty & Staff: Helping a Student in Distress

## Trust your instincts and Consult

Don't ignore inappropriate or unusual behavior—respond to it. If you are concerned about a student, consult with your supervisor, the VP of Student Affairs, the Dean of Students, or other appropriate campus resources.

## De-escalate and support

Avoid statements that could be perceived as threatening, embarrassing or intimidating. Connect the student to available campus resources.

## Listen carefully and non-judgmentally

Students in distress may have a hard time articulating their needs. Talk to the student privately, in a direct and matter of fact manner, indicating your concern. Ask directly about thoughts of self-harm or if they feel that their functioning is impaired.

## Self-Care

Assisting a distressed student can be demanding. It is important that you take care of yourself and seek out adequate support. Care of both you and the student is important.

### Non-Crisis

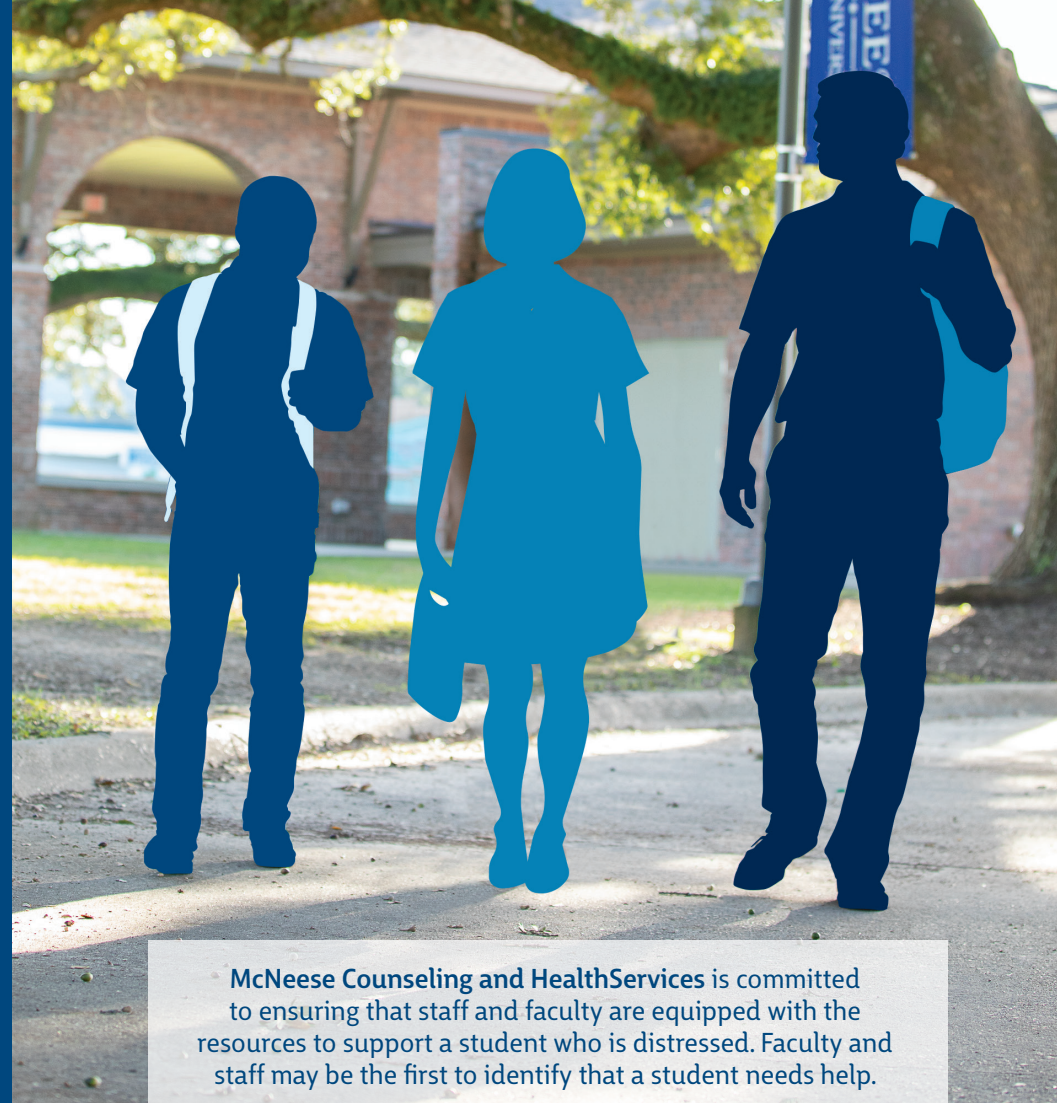
*"I am concerned about you (list concern). Do you know about the services available to you through the Counseling Center (or other campus resource)? I can provide you with the contact information or walk you over."*

### RESPONSES:

### Crisis

*"I am concerned about you and your safety. I may not be the best person to help you, but the University Police are trained in handling these types of things."*

**[Call University Police and stay with the student if possible.]**



McNeese Counseling and Health Services is committed to ensuring that staff and faculty are equipped with the resources to support a student who is distressed. Faculty and staff may be the first to identify that a student needs help.

Especially during stressful times of the year, you may notice some students acting in a way that causes you concern. You can act as a great resource for noticing these students and referring them to get the help that they need.

# Know the signs.

## Signs that a student may be experiencing stress

Noticeable changes from previous behavior, such as:

- Marked change in academic performance
- Decline in hygiene
- Increased absences
- Isolation or avoidance of others
- Repeated requests for special consideration (e.g. grade changes, deadline extensions, etc.) or making excessive appointments to see you.
- Notable depressed or anxious mood
- Presence or indicators of substance abuse

## Signs that a person may be in crisis and in need of immediate attention:

- Actions or words that appear aggressive, violent, and/or hostile
- Suicidal statements or attempts “Everyone is better off without me” “I wish I wasn’t here”
- Homicidal statements or attempts; verbal, written or behavioral
- Speech that appears rapid, disorganized and/or incoherent



## Is the student a danger to self or others?

→ **YES**, the student needs immediate attention.

- Call **University Police** at 475-5711 or 911

→ **I'M NOT SURE**. Potential risk is unknown.

- Consult with your supervisor
- Can consult with **Counseling Center** staff at **x5136**
- Can consult with **Dean of Students** re: Code of Conduct issues at **x5609**
- Call **University Police** to request a wellness check **337-475-5711**

→ **NO**, but the student is having academic or personal concerns:

Counseling Center .....	337-475-5136
Dean of Students (Code of Conduct) .....	337-475-5609
Office of Disability Services .....	337-475-5916
Student Health Services .....	337-475-5748
University Police .....	337-475-5711
Housing .....	337-475-5606
Office of International Program .....	337-475-5243

## additional resources

**National Suicide Prevention Lifeline**  
**1-800-273-TALK** (8255)  
suicidepreventionlifeline.org  
Crisis Text Line - 741741

**Veterans Crisis Line**  
**1-800-273-8255**, Press 1

**Oasis a Safe Haven**  
for survivors of domestic  
and sexual violence  
**1-866-436-8327**

