

# RECOGNIZE | RESPOND | REFER

**Student Advocacy's Student Red Folder** is a guide to help students recognize, respond to, and refer students of concern to the appropriate campus resource. This folder has tools, techniques, and resources so that you can best support your friends and peers in their time of need, as well as take care of your own well-being.



**Recognize:** This guide includes some common indicators that someone might be in distress. Keep in mind that everyone shows different signs, so it's important to pay attention to any changes in behavior or attitude in your friends and peers.

**Respond:** Knowing what to say when someone is experiencing a physical or mental health challenge can be really hard and each situation is unique. This guide has some tips listed to help you figure out the best thing to say and do to help someone out.

**Refer:** It's definitely not anyone's job to know and do everything! This guide highlights some of the biggest "helper" offices on campus, so that you can send your friends to the professionals who can best support them.

## RECOGNIZE

It's important to know that every person shows distress differently, so be on the lookout of anything that is out of the norm for each individual. However, there are some common indicators that someone may be experiencing distress and could use help and support.

### Academic

- Sudden decline in quality of work and grades
- Frequently missed classes and assignments

### Physical

- Marked changes in physical appearance (e.g. poor grooming/hygiene or sudden weight loss/gain)
- Noticeable behavioral changes indicating loss of contact with reality
- Rapid speech or manic behavior
- Depressed or lethargic mood or functioning
- Observable signs of injury (e.g. bruising or cuts)
- Using drugs or alcohol to deal with life stressors
- Getting drunk or high at an abnormal rate

### Psychological

- Self-disclosure of personal distress (e.g. family problems, financial difficulties, assault, discrimination, legal difficulties)
- Unusual/disproportionate emotional response to events
- Excessive tearfulness, panic reactions
- Verbal abuse (e.g. taunting, badgering, intimidation)
- Self-disclosure of unwanted sexual experience\*

\*If you are a student employee, follow up with your supervisor regarding specifics reporting obligations you may have for your position.

# RESPOND

Knowing how to start a conversation about your concerns and figuring out the right thing to say can be hard. Here are some tips and tricks you can use to navigate the conversation with someone you're concerned about.

## Navigating the Conversation

### Start With Empathy

- Remove the phrase "at least" from your vocabulary.
- Rarely, if ever, can words make things better - what makes things better is **connection**.

### Use I-Statements.

- "I've noticed that you haven't been hanging out with us as much. Is everything okay?"
- "I feel like you've been a little on edge lately. I'm here to talk, if that's something that you'd like to do."

### Check On Basic Needs.

- Do they feel safe in the residence/on campus?
- Do they have any physical injuries that they are concerned about?

### Use Active Listening Techniques.

- Pay attention - show through your verbal acknowledgements and body language that you are listening and care about them.
- Ask questions about how they are feeling - keep the focus on their feelings about what happened, instead of asking about the specifics of what happened.
- Give them options - ask them what they would like to do every step of the way, for big things and small things.
- Reflect back - once they have made a choice, reflect back to them that you support them and will help them move forward with that choice.

### Hold Space.

- Allow time for them to share what they are open to sharing.
- Don't probe them for more information. Don't push them in any particular direction - let them take the lead.

### Take Care of Yourself.

- Know Your Limits. You are not expected to know the perfect right thing to say every time or to be able to "fix" things for them.
- It's Okay to be Wrong. We're all going to make mistakes. If you approach a friend and it turns out they're just fine, that's okay! Better to check in and be wrong, than not check in and have a friend hurting.

## The Mental Health First Aid Action Plan

Use these tips to determine the most appropriate response for someone you think might need help. If you would like to complete the full Mental Health First Aid training, visit: <https://www.butler.edu/well-being/mental-health-first-aid/>

### **A: Assess & Approach them in a way that helps them feel safe and supported.**

- If you decide not to talk with the person yourself, refer them to the Assessment and Care Team (ACT) by calling the Dean of Students Office or via a CARE report.

### **L: Listen nonjudgmentally.**

- Use active listening skills. Give the person your full attention.

### **G: Give validation, affirmation, reassurance and information.**

- Respect the person's privacy without making false promises of confidentiality.
- Be up-front about who you have to report to and what will happen when you do.

### **E: Encourage appropriate professional help.**

- Recommend services and provide direct referrals to on campus resources. Help them contact those resources.
- Seek consultation. You are not alone. There are resources available on campus that can help support you, too!

### **E: Encourage appropriate self help and other support strategies.**

- Talk with the person about self-help strategies that have worked for them in the past or brainstorm new ways to help themselves cope with a challenging situation.



# REFER

There are so many resources available on campus to help and support students if they are experiencing emotional distress. If you're not sure who to contact, please reach out to Student Advocacy. The role of that office is to serve as a hub of resources and student support.

## **Student Advocacy\*\***

Atherton Union 311B  
317-940-2047  
<https://www.butler.edu/student-life/student-advocacy/>

## **Emergency Support**

*Butler University Police Department*  
317-940-9999 (Emergency Number)  
317-940-9363 (Non-Emergency Number)  
<https://www.butler.edu/public-safety/>

## **Academic Support**

*Student Success Center*  
Jordan Hall 109  
317-940-9308  
<https://www.butler.edu/academic-services/student-success-center/>

*Office of International Student Services*  
Jordan Hall 133D  
317-940-9888  
<https://www.butler.edu/academic-services/international/>

## **Mental Health**

*Counseling and Consultation Services\*\**  
Health & Recreation Center 120  
317-940-9777  
<https://www.butler.edu/well-being/counseling-services/>

## **Physical Health**

*Student Health Services\*\**  
Health and Recreation Complex (HRC) 110  
317-940-9385  
<https://www.butler.edu/well-being/health-services/>

## **Submitting a Student of Concern Report**

You can submit a Student of Concern Report via the online form: <https://www.butler.edu/student-life/assessment-team/>

This form is sent directly to the Dean of Students and convener of the ACT. If your concern requires an emergency response, please contact BUPD at 317-940-9396. After receiving the report, staff will reach out to the student. This will be done in a private and sensitive manner. Based on the student's need, they will likely meet with a professional and can expect to be heard, affirmed, and connected to resources.

## **Student Life**

*The Compass Center\*\**  
The Blue House  
317-940-8253  
<https://www.butler.edu/student-life/faith-vocation/>

*Assessment & Care Team (ACT)*  
Atherton Union 311  
317-940-9740  
<https://www.butler.edu/student-life/assessment-team/>

*Student Disability Services*  
Jordan Hall 136  
317-940-9308  
<https://www.butler.edu/diversity-equity-inclusion/student-disability-services>

*Efroymson Diversity Center*  
Atherton Union 004  
317-940-6570  
<https://www.butler.edu/student-life/efroymson-diversity-center/>

## **National Hotlines**

*National Suicide Prevention Hotline*  
988  
<https://988lifeline.org/>

*Crisis Text Line*  
Text HOME to 741741  
<https://www.crisistextline.org/>

*The Trevor Project*  
888.488.7386  
<https://www.thetrevorproject.org/>

*National Sexual Assault Hotline*  
800-656-HOPE (4673)  
<https://www.rainn.org/>