

What You Should Know About Responding to Student Emergencies

Emergency situations are rare; however, immediate and decisive action is necessary when they do occur. Generally, a psychological emergency involves one or more of the following conditions:

- A suicide attempt, gesture, threat, or stated intention
- A homicidal attempt, gesture, threat, or stated intention
- Behavior posing a threat to self
- Behavior posing a threat to others
- Loss of contact with reality
- Inability to care for self

In the event of an emergency, it is helpful to follow these basic guidelines:

- Stay calm, as this will help you respond more effectively, and also help to reduce the student's anxiety or agitation
- If possible, provide a quiet, private place for the student to rest while further steps are taken
- Talk to the student in a clear, straight-forward manner
- If the student appears to be dangerous to self or others, do not leave the student unattended
- Make arrangements for appropriate intervention or aid

The primary campus resources for responding to mental health emergencies are Counseling and Psychological Services and the Campus Police. The following options are available to you:

- Phone consultation with a CAPS staff member is available at (831) 459-2628 during weekday work hours of 8:00 am to 5:00 pm.
- You can walk the student over to CAPS for crisis consultation during the health center receiving hours of 8:00 to 5:00 pm weekdays.
- If the student is unusually aggressive or otherwise unmanageable, the UCSC police are available to offer assistance at 911
- Be prepared to provide as much information as possible about the student and the situation to the campus resource you contact
- After-hours Crisis Services are available by phone for psychological crisis assessment, consultation, and safety planning during evenings, weekends, and holidays. Individuals seeking this service should call (831) 459-2628 and choose the after-hours crisis service menu option.

(Adapted from UCD)