

Helping Someone in Distress

Remember that no one expects you to be a professional counsellor.

At the same time, everyone in a caring community does have a role to play.



RECOGNIZE unusual behaviour

Do you see any behaviour that may be out of character or unusual for someone? Early intervention plays a key role in supporting mental health challenges.

RESPOND with concern and empathy

Non-judgmental and supportive language includes:

- “I have noticed...”
- “I am concerned...”
- “How can I help you to...”

REFER person to available resources

Non-judgmental and supportive language includes:

- “What do you need in order to...”
- “uOttawa’s Health and Wellness website has lots of resources. Let’s look at this together...”

REFLECT to see how you are feeling

- Go for a walk
- Reach out to someone you trust to talk about how you are feeling
- If you think you may need confidential assistance to talk about the situation or your feelings, there are resources available to you.

Show Compassion and Consideration.
Care for yourself. Care for others.
Care for your community.

HIGH RISK

Behaviour that is destructive, harmful, aggressive, violent or threatening to self or others.

RESPONSE: **THIS IS AN EMERGENCY**

Call Protection Services 24/7 (613-562-5411) or off-campus emergency services 24/7 (911)

MODERATE RISK

Changes in personal appearance and hygiene, disoriented, dishevelled or disorganized, low mood, avoidance of people, substance use concerns, disorganized thinking, expressions of hopelessness, or references to suicide.

RESPONSE: Recognize. Respond with compassion. Refer to available resources.

LOW RISK

These situations are a concern but generally low risk. Difficulty with studies, family or relationship problems, chronic health conditions, difficulty concentrating, issues with sleep, increased interpersonal conflict.

RESPONSE: Recognize. Respond with concern and empathy. Refer to available resources.

RESOURCES

During Business Hours:

- For mental and physical health consultations, contact the **Student Health and Wellness Centre**
- For health and wellness inquiries, email healthpromo@uottawa.ca or visit the Wellness Lounge (UCU203)
- For more complex cases, refer to Student Support Team (studentsupport@uottawa.ca)

24/7:

- Students: Good2Talk: **1-866-925-5454**
- Employees: Employee and Family Assistance Program (EFAP): **1-844-880-9142**