

Assisting Students with Emotional and/or Behavioral Problems: Referral and Services



Guide and Referral

Bergen Community College

Personal Counseling

201-447-9257

Room HS-100

This guide provides general information, suggestions and is intended to assist faculty and staff members who encounter students who demonstrate emotional difficulties and/or those students who exhibit disturbing or disruptive behavior. Please contact The Center for Health and Personal Counseling (201-447-9257), Room HS-100 directly for consultation about specific students or situations.

Personal Counselors are available by appointment and can provide walk in crisis intervention.

Office Hours – Monday through Thursday: 9 AM – 7 PM; Friday, 9 AM – 5 PM

How do I refer a student for counseling services?

A student does not need to have an emergency, suffer distress, or be disruptive to benefit from counseling. Personal Counselors provide short term counseling or referrals, as appropriate. If you speak with a student directly, please provide him or her with the phone number and location of The Center for Health, Wellness and Personal Counseling. The students can either call or visit the office. After you speak with a Personal Counselor, he or she may contact the student directly. Please note that counselors can only encourage a student to make an appointment; they cannot compel a student to do so.

What are the signs of a crisis or emergency?

- Any reference to suicide, not wanting to live or hopelessness
- Any threat made to harm another
- Alcohol or drug intoxication
- Anger or agitation
- Paranoid thoughts or beliefs
- Hears voices or sees things that are not real
- Unintelligible speech or an inability to communicate coherently
- Impulsive or over-excited, over energized behavior with fast talking speech

How can I help a student in a crisis or emergency?

In general, a crisis or emergency represents a high level of risk or danger. As a result, such situations call for an immediate response. Take the following steps: If you are concerned about immediate safety issues, notify Public Safety for assistance (Dial 6). Contact The Center for Health, Wellness and Personal Counseling for consultation (201-447-9257). Maintain control of the situation by staying in communication with the student. **Be mindful of your own limits and role.** If you feel uncomfortable or unsafe, quickly get someone to help you. Do not leave the student alone.

What if the student is suicidal?

Call The Center for Health, Wellness and Personal Counseling (ext. 9257) immediately. After our posted hours, contact Public Safety (Dial 6). The officer will contact a Student Affairs Administrator. If you observe suicidal content in student's writing or artwork, please consult with a Personal Counselor (201-447-9257). Depending on the circumstances, the Counselor may contact the student directly or provide guidance on how to talk with the student.

How can I help a student in distress?

Ask to speak with the student privately. Empathize with his/her difficulties. Avoid making assumptions or interpretations of what you believe are the reasons for the student's difficulties and refrain from making quick judgments, offering advice or attempting to "fix" the student's situation. Express your concerns calmly and directly and allow the student respond to respond accordingly. Invite the student to meet with one of our Counselors and emphasize the private and confidential nature of the visit, and the potential benefits.