

HELPING SKILLS & SUICIDE INTERVENTION TRAINING

UCalgary offers a number of free, evidence based suicide intervention training programs open to all UCalgary students, faculty, and staff.

We encourage all campus members to receive training to learn life-saving skills and contribute to a caring, supportive campus community.

Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training

Learn to recognize and and review risk of suicide, and how to intervene.

ucalgary.ca/wellness-services/staying-healthy/learning/workshops-training/assist

Question, Persuade, Refer

Learn to recognize and support someone who may have thoughts of suicide.

ucalgary.ca/wellness-services/staying-healthy/learning/workshops-training/question-persuade-refer

Community Helpers

Learn the skills needed to help others experiencing a problem or in distress.

ucalgary.ca/wellness-services/staying-healthy/learning/workshops-training/community-helpers

Safer Substance Use: Harm Reduction

Learn about the harm reduction approach to substance use.

ucalgary.ca/wellness-services/staying-healthy/learning/workshops-training/harm-reduction-101

The Inquiring Mind (students only)

Learn about mental health, stigma reduction and resilience.

ucalgary.ca/wellness-services/staying-healthy/learning/workshops-training/inquiring-mind

LivingWorks Start

LivingWorks Start is a powerful online training program that teaches life-saving skills to recognize and prevent suicide.

ucalgary.ca/wellness-services/staying-healthy/learning/workshops-training/livingworks

The Working Mind (staff and faculty)

Staff and faculty can learn about mental health, stigma reduction and resilience.

ucalgary.ca/hr/wellness/wellbeing-worklife/workshops-programs/working-mind

Staff and faculty groups can also request sessions for training programs by emailing communityhub@ucalgary.ca.

Learn more:

ucalgary.ca/wellness-services/staying-healthy/training

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

CANADIAN MENTAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION

cmha.ca/documents/preventing-suicide

CENTRE FOR SUICIDE PREVENTION POST-SECONDARY RESOURCES

suicideinfo.ca/post-secondary

MENTAL HEALTH COMMISSION OF CANADA

mentalhealthcommission.ca/English/what-we-do/suicide-prevention

HELPER SUPPORT

As a helper, it is also extremely important that you get the support you need. For example, this could be debriefing with a supervisor or helping professional, practicing self-care, or accessing resources.

Visit UCalgary Staff Wellness to get the proper support you need.

STAFF WELLNESS

UCalgary WellBeing & WorkLife

ucalgary.ca/hr/wellness/wellbeing-worklife

UCalgary Mental Health Consultant

ucalgary.ca/risk/staff-wellness/wellbeing-worklife/mental-health/mental-health-consultant

LifeWorks Employee & Family Assistance Program

ucalgary.ca/hr/wellness/wellbeing-worklife/employee-and-family-assistance-plan

1-866-424-0699



Student Wellness Services

Suicide Intervention QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE

If you are noticing signs of distress and are concerned that a student may be thinking of suicide, use the following guide to check in with care and concern.



1

BE DIRECT AND CARING

Ask about suicide in a direct, non-judgmental, and caring manner. Demonstrate that you are a safe person that they can talk about suicide openly with.

Start the conversation by generally checking in about how the student is doing before mentioning suicide or distress.

Example: "I noticed you haven't been attending classes lately, is everything okay?" "Have you been considering suicide?" "I'm concerned about you, are you thinking of killing yourself?"	Avoid: "You're not thinking about suicide, are you?" (leading question) "Are you thinking about hurting yourself?" (indirect language that leaves room for misinterpretation. If used, follow with a direct question as well) "You wouldn't do anything stupid would you?" (judgmental tone)
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2

EXPLORE PROBLEMS & ACTIVELY LISTEN

Invite a supportive conversation through asking open ended questions to explore the problems.

Take into consideration that suicide is not the problem but rather the perceived solution to other problems and circumstances they are experiencing.

Example: "I am so glad you told me. It sounds like things have been really tough. How long have you been feeling this way?"	"What has been contributing to these feelings?" "Tell me more about about what has been going on."
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3

VALIDATE & EMPATHIZE

Validation and empathy can be very helpful strategies to help the person feel heard and understood without agreeing that suicide is the right option.

Example: "I can understand why you are feeling defeated - it sounds like things are extremely hard right now."	"You have been dealing with so much. I can understand why you are feeling overwhelmed."
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4

USE COLLABORATIVE PROBLEM SOLVING

Use a collaborative approach to identify next steps to help keep the person safe. Explore support and resources the person may be connected with, any protective factors present, and inquire about what types of supports they feel could be most helpful.

Protective factors may include:

- social support
- coping strategies
- resources

If the person is reluctant, you may have to be more direct with the plan for next steps.

Example: "I can understand why you are feeling defeated - it sounds like things are extremely hard right now." "You have been dealing with so much. I can understand why you are feeling overwhelmed." "How have you been coping?"	"I understand you are unsure about talking to anyone else about this, but I am really concerned about you and we need to connect with further support. Let's talk about some options for this, I want to come up with a plan for this together." "Are you aware of some of the resources on and off campus available to you?"
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CONNECT AND REFER TO FURTHER SUPPORT

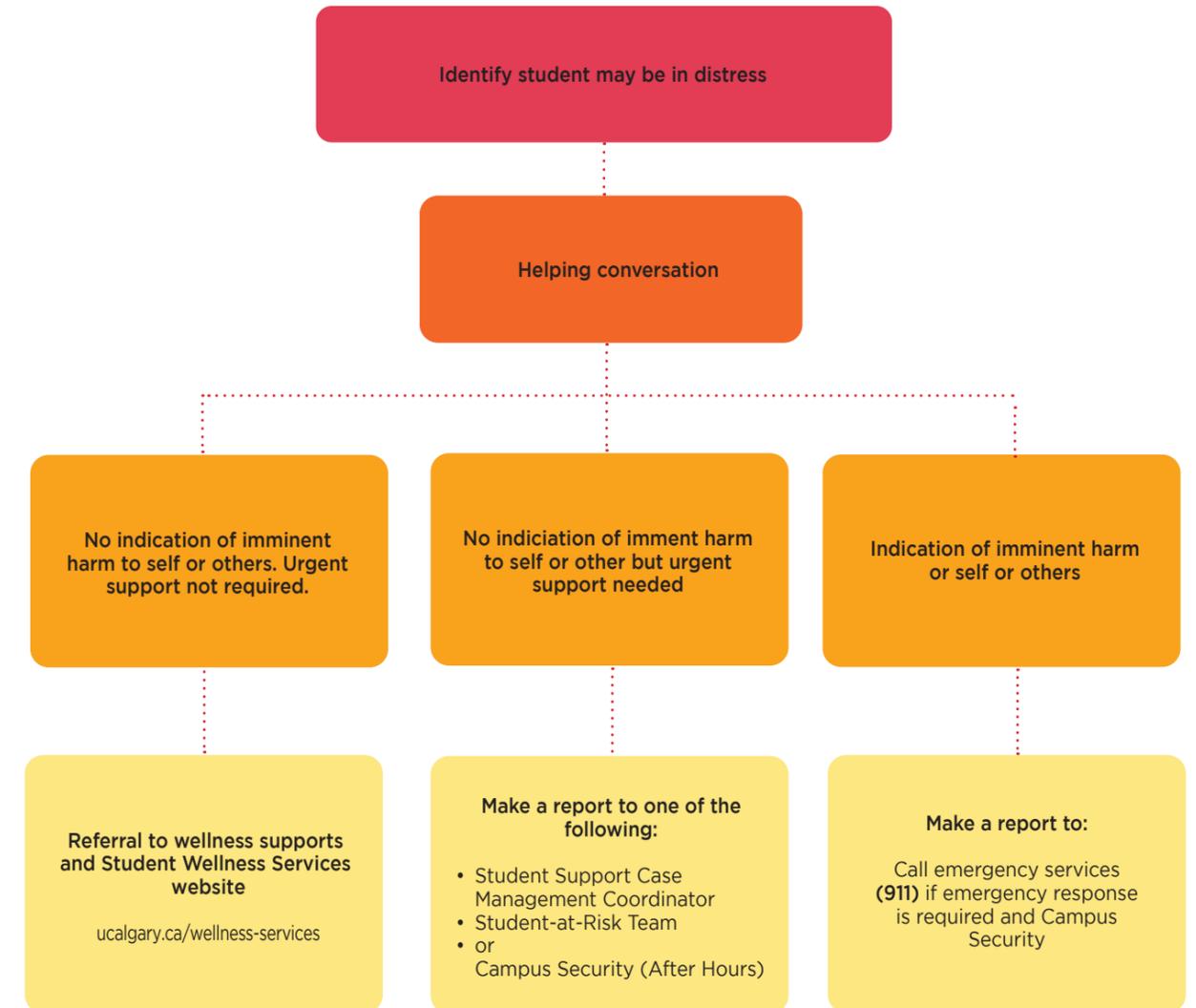
Consult supervisors and additional resources for further support. Provide support in making arrangements to connect the person to helping resources. You can determine the resource by assessing the risk level.

The flow chart on the following page identifies actions to take depending on the level of risk.

When in doubt about level of risk, consult resources.

IMMEDIATELY REPORT THE FOLLOWING SITUATIONS	CAMPUS SECURITY 403.220.5333
• Violent or destructive behaviour	EMERGENCY SERVICES 911
• Concern for safety related to suicidal thoughts of behaviours	STUDENT WELLNESS SERVICES 403-210-9355
• Concerning drug or alcohol poisoning	
• Aggressive or threatening behaviour with high risk of harm	

ACTIONS TO TAKE DEPENDANT ON RISK LEVEL



POSSIBLE INDICATORS OF DISTRESS

- Significant changes in mood, behaviour, or appearance
- Appears agitated, sad, worried, or anxious
- Expresses hopelessness or references suicide or self-harm
- Mental health appears to be significantly deteriorating
- Current or past experience of violence or trauma

IMMEDIATELY REPORT THE FOLLOWING SITUATIONS

- Violent or destructive behaviour
- Concern for safety related to suicidal thoughts or behaviors
- Concerning drug or alcohol poisoning
- Aggressive or threatening behaviour with high risk of harm

CAMPUS SECURITY	403-220-5333
STUDENT AT RISK TEAM	403-220-4923
CALGARY EMERGENCY SERVICES	911
STUDENT WELLNESS SERVICES	403-210-9355