

RESPONDING TO STUDENTS IN DISTRESS

Provided by the BIT/Care Team

NOTE: Your safety is important. Take any steps you need to protect your well-being.

NOTE: Follow your instinct – it is always okay to err on the side of caution and call 911 if you feel it is an emergency.

Tips for Responding to an Emergency

- Remain calm.
- Speak in a clear, straightforward manner.
- Be honest and direct. Share what action steps you are taking.
- Do not leave the person alone.
- If possible, provide a private place to wait with the individual.
- Be prepared to provide information to emergency responders.
- Campus Safety is available 24/7, even when the Academy is closed.
- Operate discreetly.

| SIGNS: | INTERVENTIONS DURING DAY | INTERVENTIONS AFTER HOURS |
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| <p>EMERGENCY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Suicide Attempts: Taken pills or harmed themselves physically in any way, expressed a lethal plan. ● Extreme Self-Injury ● Life-Threatening Disordered Eating ● Aggressive Violent Behavior: Repeated attacks on others or attack with a weapon, extreme aggression, making threats that are concrete, consistent, and plausible. | <p>Follow all the steps outlined below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. If unconscious or in medical distress - Call 911. B. If not in medical distress – bring the student to School Counselors in the Student Affairs office. C. Complete a Student of Concern Referral when time allows. Share all related information. | <p>Follow all the steps outlined below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. If unconscious or in medical distress - Call 911 B. Call Security (630.907.5042). Security will notify the Event Administrator* and Admin on Call C. Complete a Student of Concern Referral when time allows. Share all related information. <p><small>*Event Administrator: Senior staff member who is in attendance at any major event.</small></p> |

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| <p>IMMEDIATE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Suicidal Ideation: Expressing thoughts or making statements (verbal, social media, text, and writing) of hurting self. e.g., “I wish I wasn’t here anymore,” “I want to die,” saying goodbye to friends/loved ones, feeling like a burden, or giving personal possessions away. ● Statements about Harming Others: Expressing thoughts or statements of wanting to harm others, plan or intent to hurt others. E.g., “I will kill you.” “I want to hurt them/him/her.” ● Aggressive Behavior: Threats to hurt others, breaking/throwing things, or damaging property. ● Severe Panic Attack: Unable to calm down within 45-60 minutes. Difficulty breathing, chest pain. ● Paranoia: Thinking others are after them, plotting against them, following them, etc. ● Visual/Auditory Hallucinations: Hearing voices and seeing things that others cannot hear or see. ● Erratic Behavior: Odd behavior, making nonsensical statements, impulsive/risky behavior that puts themselves or others in danger. | <p>Follow all the steps outlined below:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. DO NOT LEAVE the student. 2. If possible, remove the student from the situation. 3. Bring to School Counselors in the Student Affairs office. 4. Complete a Student of Concern Referral. Share all related information when time allows. | <p>Follow all the steps outlined below:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. DO NOT LEAVE the student. 2. If possible, remove the student from the situation. 3. Notify the Event Administrator of the concern. 4. Complete a Student of Concern Referral. Share all related information when time allows. |

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| <p>NON-EMERGENCY (severe)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Severely Depressed: Unable to take care of themselves (e.g., getting out of bed, showering, eating), feeling worthless/hopeless. ● Severe Anxiety: Obsessive thoughts, overly preoccupied, disrupting daily functioning (e.g., relationships/school/activities). ● Isolation: Not interacting with others, not leaving their room, not speaking to others. ● Disordered Eating: Reports of passing out, physical and/or medical changes as a result of restricting food and/or self-induced vomiting, extreme exercise, and preoccupation with body image. | <p>Follow all the steps outlined below:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Assist the student in contacting School Counselors, or walk over to Student Affairs and ask to be seen immediately. 2. Complete a Student of Concern Referral. Share all related information. 3. If you have a good rapport with the student, continue to check in with the student to see if they are engaging in care/improving. | <p>Follow all the steps outlined below:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Assist the student in contacting School Counselors (counseling@imsa.edu) 2. Complete a Student of Concern Referral. Share all related information. 3. If you have a good rapport with the student, continue to check in with the student to see if they are engaging in care/improving. <p>If appropriate, refer the student to one of the following offices:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● College and Academic Counseling (CAC) (cac@imsa.edu) ● Health office (nurse@imsa.edu) ● Residence Life, (email individual RC or Residence Life supervisor) ● Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) (dei@imsa.edu) ● Principal's Office (prinoffc@imsa.edu) |

| SIGNS: | INTERVENTIONS: |
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| <p>NON-EMERGENCY (mild)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Mild Depression: Difficulty concentrating, lack of motivation, low mood, fatigue, and sadness. ● Mild Anxiety: Intrusive thoughts, highly preoccupied, unable to stop thinking about the same thing. ● Trouble Adjusting: Struggling with transitions and changes in relationships or environments. ● Academic Concerns: Difficulty concentrating, procrastination, poor time management, poor organizational skills, and decline in grades. ● And other non-imminent risk concerns. | <p>Refer the student to one of the following offices:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Counseling (counseling@imsa.edu) ● College and Academic Counseling (CAC) (cac@imsa.edu) ● Health office (nurse@imsa.edu) ● Residence Life, (email individual RC or Residence Life supervisor) ● Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) (dei@imsa.edu) ● Principal’s Office (prinoffc@imsa.edu) |

Tips for How to Express Your Concern

Don't share your personal diagnoses or recommendations for action steps that would be better provided by a mental health professional. The following phrases may be helpful:

- "I've seen some changes in you over the past couple of weeks and I'm worried that you don't seem like yourself."
- "Many students utilize the counseling services. Can we call or walk over together to make an appointment for you?"
- "I know that there are free and confidential services here on campus that can help deal with whatever personal problems you are struggling with. Would you be interested in talking with someone in counseling services who works with these kinds of concerns all the time?"
- "I care about you and want to make sure someone is connecting with you about IMSA's resources. I'm going to fill out a Student of Concern referral/contact counseling so we can make sure you are offered support."

EXAMPLE EMAIL TO A STUDENT:

Dear student,

Thank you for sharing with me. I'm so sorry that you are dealing with these challenges. It helps me to know what you are going through so I can best support you. One of our School Counselors may also contact you as I have completed a Student of Concern referral to ensure you get all the support possible.

There are some excellent resources available on campus and in the local area. I am going to outline them here, and I hope you will utilize them. Please let me know if you have any questions or need assistance connecting to these resources.

- If you are experiencing an emergency, please call 911 and contact your Resident Counselor on Duty or Campus Safety at 630.907.5002.
- [Counseling](#) (free and confidential): M-F 8:00 AM – 4:30 PM, email counseling@imsa.edu or walk in to schedule an appointment, located in the Student Affairs office.
- A list of additional community resources, including local hospitals and hotlines can be found [here](#).
- A list of campus reporting forms can be found [here](#).

Again, I am so appreciative that you confided in me, and happy to support you. I do believe these resources can make a big difference for you.