Listening and Recognizing When to Make a Referral
Counseling Services

FERPA and HIPPA
- Internal communication of relevant information is ok
- Specifies acceptability for ‘health and safety emergencies’
- (HIPPA relates to medical information and doesn’t apply)

What You Can Do to Help
- Stay Calm!
- Be Prepared
- Be Informed

The Wise-Choice Process
1. What’s your present situation? (Describe the problem objectively and completely.)
2. How would you like it to be? (What is your ideal outcome?)
3. Do you have a choice here? (Yes!)
4. What are possible choices? (List lots of them.)
5. What’s the likely outcome of each possible choice? (If you can’t predict the likely outcome of an option, stop and gather more information.)
6. Which choice(s) will you commit to? (Pick from your list of choices in Step 4.)

Resources
- Faculty Guide: Abby Bigg, CAFE, bigga@mst.edu, 573-341-7648
- Red Folder: https://counseling.mst.edu/media/studentsupport/counseling/documents/carecoordinatio
do/Red%20Folder.pdf
- Counseling Services: https://counseling.mst.edu/, 573-341-421
- Ass’t Dean of Students: Barb Prewett, http://dos.mst.edu/, 573-341-4209
- Student Emergency Fund: Krista Morris-Lehman, morrislehman@mst.edu, 513-341-4211
- RESPOND: counsel@mst.edu for more information
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Main Things to Remember
- You play an important role AND you are not a professional counselor.
- Listening, giving HOPE, providing support, guiding problem solving, and connecting students to resources is VERY helpful.
- Consult and refer when concerned that you may be dealing with issues beyond your abilities/responsibilities.
- Maintaining some emotional distance is better than becoming over involved in the other person’s problems.
- Establishing and maintaining appropriate boundaries is also important.

Active-Listening Skills
- Good nonverbal behaviors
- Asking open-ended questions
- Asking closed questions
- Paraphrasing
- Reflecting feelings
- Summarizing and integrating messages
- Sharing information
- Correcting misinformation
- Not giving “advice” – Remember: what would be an ideal solution for you in the same situation may not be a good solution for this particular person
- Using active listening skills to help the person come to his/her own best solution or decision
- Helping the person see things from a fresh or different perspective
- Brainstorming alternatives – “What are other options? What have others done in similar situations? What if…?”
- Making appropriate referrals to other people who can help

Questions to Ask Yourself
- Does the behavior that the student exhibits seem out of the ordinary?
- Is the “behavior” getting worse/better or more/less frequent?
- Do you feel you can handle this problem or is it beyond your skills?
- Does the behavior place anyone, including the person, in a life-threatening situation?

Recognizing the Signs for Referral
- Persistent & continued depression
- Not doing well in class
- Excessive moodiness or worry
- Feeling lonely
- Preoccupation with personal health
- Homesickness
- Sleeping and eating habits that change dramatically
- Relationship or roommate problems
- Talking openly about suicide
- Poor emotional control
- Universal mistrust or paranoia about others

How to Make a Referral
- Be informed about Counseling Services and campus resources, be able to describe our initial process with students who access them, and know how to connect students to us
- Consider consulting with Counseling Services staff, a colleague, or department chair
- Develop a plan of action, which usually involves talking to the student. Be prepared!
- If you are referring to Counseling or Care Coordination give specifics about contact information and location.
  - 204 Norwood Hall, 341.4211, 8:00 a.m. until 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday
  - If the person is interested and willing, s/he can set up an initial appointment.
    - You can offer the use of your phone
    - You can offer to walk them over for their first appointment
    - After hours, we can be reached through the S&T PD (341.4300)

Reminders:
- Counseling is VOLUNTARY and FREE.
- Seeking assistance from a professional counselor is not an indication of mental illness or weakness.
- All counseling is CONFIDENTIAL (you, parents, or others in the university or community will NOT have knowledge of whether the student attends or what is said in the counseling). Unless a student is a danger to self or others or gives written permission, no information will be shared.

March 7, 2018