

# Recognizing and Responding to Student Mental Health

## A.L.E.R.T.

**Acknowledge** by being specific and direct about the observation/behaviour that gives you cause for concern while recognizing the tactical difference between a student actively looking for help versus you identifying a need.

I've noticed you've been absent from class lately and I'm concerned.

**Listen** to the student. Give the student your patient, undivided attention. This may require finding time and space for private conversation.

**Engage** the student. Allow the student to share thoughts and feelings in a calm and compassionate environment. Avoid judgement or assumptions.

**Refer** the student to additional services. Let the student know that you are going to help connect them to appropriate support. Take time to get the student's full name and contact information. **If the student is in distress and requires immediate referral, contact the CARE Team (contact Security Services on evenings and weekends to reach on-call support).** Otherwise, connect the student to the appropriate office, preferably by making a direct connection through face-to-face, phone or email introduction.

**Talk** to Student Services staff members if you are concerned about a student. Share your observations, ask questions, and help create a plan for student success.

Would you like me to book an appointment for you now?

## Trust your instincts.

### Indicators of Distress

#### Academic

- Decline in quality of work
- Absences, missed assignments and/or lack of engagement
- Requests for extension
- Disconnect in writing, presentations and/or assignments
- Uncharacteristic disorganization and/or lack of preparedness
- Assignments focusing on hopelessness, violence or anger
- Team conflict or challenges

#### Psychological

- Disclosure of personal distress such as grief, family/relationship issues, life transitions, trauma, sexual assault/harassment, financial challenges etc.
- Panic/anxiety
- Tearfulness
- Irritability
- Apathy or hopelessness
- Unprovoked anger or violence
- Paranoia

#### Physical

- Changes in physical appearance (hygiene, weight, clothing style)
- Extreme fatigue
- Difficulty focusing
- Tears
- Disoriented behaviour
- Change in speech or mannerisms
- Violent behaviour
- Threats
- Absence from class or team meetings

## Referring Students in Distress

In serious medical emergencies or imminent danger, 911 should always be called first.

### During RRU Office Hours (Mon-Fri, 8:30-4:30pm):

1. If appropriate, refer the student directly to the applicable service listed below
2. If the student requires immediate non-medical support, contact the CARE Team at **250-391-2600 ext 8514**.
3. Email the CARE Team to share concerns – [care@royalroads.ca](mailto:care@royalroads.ca)

### After Hours (evenings and weekends), please contact:

1. Security Services - **250-391-2525**  
*Security will contact on-call student services staff to coordinate follow-up support and communication*
2. Email the CARE Team to share concerns – [care@royalroads.ca](mailto:care@royalroads.ca)

## Referral for General Student Support

RRU Department	Behaviour Observed	Contact Information
<b>Accessibility Services</b>	Permanent disabilities and temporary medical barriers to education	<a href="http://libcal.royalroads.ca/appointments/">http://libcal.royalroads.ca/appointments/</a> 250-391-2600 Ext. 4216 <a href="mailto:accessibilityservices@royalroads.ca">accessibilityservices@royalroads.ca</a>
<b>CARE Team</b>	Concerning student behaviour where you feel special care is required	<a href="mailto:care@royalroads.ca">care@royalroads.ca</a>
<b>Counselling &amp; Learning Strategy Support</b>	Depression, anxiety, grief, family/relationship issues, self-harm, suicide risk, trauma, crisis, learning & study skills	<a href="http://libcal.royalroads.ca/appointments/">http://libcal.royalroads.ca/appointments/</a> 250-391-2600 Ext. 4515 <a href="mailto:counselling@royalroads.ca">counselling@royalroads.ca</a>
<b>Financial Aid &amp; Awards</b>	Concerns about financial need	<a href="http://libcal.royalroads.ca/appointments/">http://libcal.royalroads.ca/appointments</a> 250-391-2600 Ext. 4222 <a href="mailto:rurfinancialaid@royalroads.ca">rurfinancialaid@royalroads.ca</a>
<b>Indigenous Student Services</b>	Indigenous and Métis students showing psychological, academic, physical and/or cultural signs of distress	250-391-2600 Ext. 4626 <a href="mailto:IndigenousStudentServices@RoyalRoads.ca">IndigenousStudentServices@RoyalRoads.ca</a>
<b>International Student Support Services</b>	International students showing academic, physical and/or cultural signs of distress, culture shock, homesickness, or concerns about visas and immigration	Student Engagement Team <a href="http://libcal.royalroads.ca/appointments/">http://libcal.royalroads.ca/appointments/</a> 250-391-2600 Ext. 4580 <a href="mailto:International.support@royalroads.ca">International.support@royalroads.ca</a>
<b>Student Conduct (Student Services)</b>	Misconduct, inappropriate behaviour, violence, bullying, harassment, disorderly conduct, disruption	Manager, Student Engagement 250-391-2600 Ext. 4760 <a href="mailto:studentservices@royalroads.ca">studentservices@royalroads.ca</a>
<b>Security Services</b>	Medical emergencies, aggressive or violent behaviour, general safety issues on-campus	Phone: 250-391-2525 <b>In serious medical emergencies 911 should be called first.</b>
<b>Team Coaching</b>	Team challenges or conflict that cannot be solved within the program	Team Coaches <a href="mailto:teamcoaching@royalroads.ca">teamcoaching@royalroads.ca</a> 250-391-2600 Ext. 4394