

# Supporting Students

## Recognize, Respond, Refer, Reflect

### Step 1: Recognizing Signs of Distress

Stress and distress are common feelings for many students. Each student is going to have their own unique way of dealing with stressful experiences and their emotions. There are many different reasons why a student may approach you for support, or appear in need of support. Being able to recognize a student in distress is the first step.

Signs of stress or distress may include physical, emotional or behavioural, academic concerns and/or obvious expressions of safety concerns.

#### **Safety Concerns**

Examples include statements about suicide or death, suspicions or paranoia, threats towards/ from others.

#### **Emotions & Behaviours**

Examples include evident anxiety; unusually withdrawn or animated; feelings of helplessness; crying; appear emotionless or calm; memory loss; unable to concentrate; seem hypervigilant or panic.

#### **Physical Distress**

Examples include exhaustion; falling asleep in class; visible change in appearance; or visible injuries.

#### **Academic Concerns**

Examples include concerning content on assignments; extreme perfectionism; extreme disorganization; repeated absences; missed assignments or exams.

**NU**  
listens



	Requires Immediate Support	Requires Further Assessment
Student Concern	<p>If a student has a plan or thoughts of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• suicide</li> <li>• life-threatening behaviours</li> <li>• causing damage or harm to self, others, or the institution</li> </ul>	<p>If the student has thoughts of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• worthlessness, hopelessness, people “better off” without them, people being “against them”</li> </ul> <p>Any indication of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• self-injury, disordered eating, sexual violence, disorganized speech, lack of flow in conversation, delusions</li> </ul> <p>If you are concerned about the student’s feelings of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• frustration, anxiety, stress</li> </ul>
What To Do	<p><b>Seek immediate assistance</b> and:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Stay with the student, unless you are worried about your safety</li> <li>2. Get help: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nipissing University Campus Security at x5555 or 24-hours at 705-498-7244</li> <li>• Call 911</li> <li>• Call Counselling Services x4507 (office hours only)</li> </ul> </li> </ol>	<p>Follow the <b>Recognize, Respond, Refer, Reflect</b> guidelines in this folder, and:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Offer to call Student Development &amp; Services to connect with a professional x4507, room B210</li> <li>2. Offer the student resources for support found on the inside of the folder</li> <li>3. If you are worried about the safety of the student or yourself, contact Nipissing University Campus Security at x5555 or 24-hours at 705-498-7244, or call 911</li> </ol>

## Step 2: Respond

A supportive response and approach can make all the difference, but that does not mean that it will come easy. This also does not mean that you need to be an expert. It is important to remember that it is okay to not have all the answers. Being aware of these simple steps can help you to provide a supportive response.

### Starting the Conversation

- Meet in safe & private location
- Be open to listening
- Express your concern for the student
- Ensure the student is open to talking further

### Provide a Supportive Referral

- Share that support is available
- Create an individual plan of next steps for student by providing support(s) listed in this folder, whom referral(s) being made to/ support person for student
- Summarize the plan including when you will follow up with the student

### Listen & Respect Confidentiality

- Take a non-judgmental approach
- Validate feelings of stress
- Communicate any limits to confidentiality
- Limits may include concerns about student’s safety and/or professional responsibilities

### Follow Up Plan

- Follow up based on your plan with the student



# Step 3: Refer

## Nipissing University Resources (705) 474-3450

### Academic Advising

Academic Planning/  
Course Selection  
x4358 A207  
advising@nipissingu.ca

### Campus Health Centre

Medical Concerns  
705-474-7600 x5261 B205

### Campus Security

Safety or Emergency Support  
x5555 B203  
24-Hours 705-498-7244  
security@nipissingu.ca

### International Initiatives

International/Exchange  
Student Programs  
x4321 B210  
myinternational@nipissingu.ca

### NipissingSafe App

Interactive, Mobile Safety App  
sds@nipissingu.ca

### Nipissing University

#### Student Union

Food Security/Health Plan  
x4801 F204/F205  
info@nusu.com

### Office of Indigenous Initiatives

Cultural Support  
x4899 F215  
biindgen@nipissingu.ca

### Residence Life

Student Housing x4855  
residence@nipissingu.ca

### Sexual Violence Prevention & Education

Referral & Support  
x4075 B210  
svsupport@nipissingu.ca

### Student Accessibility Services

Academic Accommodations  
for Disabilities  
x4362 B210  
sas@nipissingu.ca

### Student Counselling

Emotional or  
Mental Health Needs  
x4507 B210  
counselling@nipissingu.ca

### Student Financial Services

Financial Support  
x4419 G215  
finance@nipissingu.ca

### Student Intervention Services

Complex Concerns or  
Multiple Support Needs  
x4605 B210  
sis@nipissingu.ca

### Student Learning & Transitions

Academic & Transition Support  
x4459 B210  
slt@nipissingu.ca

### Student Success

Support for Student Success  
www.nipissingu.ca/nusuccess  
nusuccess@nipissingu.ca

## Helplines

### Amelia Rising (Sexual Violence Report Centre)

24-Hour Crisis Line  
705-476-3355  
ameliarising.ca

### Assaulted Women's Helpline

24-Hour Helpline  
1-866-863-0511

### Crisis Intervention Program

North Bay Regional Hospital  
24-Hour Support  
1-800-352-1141

### Good2Talk

24-Hour Student Helpline  
1-866-925-5454

### Help for Male Survivors of Sexual Abuse

24-Hour Helpline  
1-866-887-0015

### Talk4Healing

24-Hour Indigenous  
Women's Helpline  
1-855-554-HEAL

### Youth Line

LBGTT2Sq+ Peer Support  
Limited Hours  
1-800-268-9688

# Student Retention Alert

## What Is It?

Student Retention Alert is a referral-based early alert program that provides timely support to students who may be facing challenges.

## How Do I Use It?

1. Log into WebAdvisor
2. Select "Student Retention Alert" from the Faculty/Employee main menu
3. Select Submit Student Concern
4. Type the first and last name of the student or their Nipissing University student identification number (you may also choose to submit anonymously if this information is unknown)

## Contact Us

[nusuccess@nipissingu.ca](mailto:nusuccess@nipissingu.ca) or [sis@nipissingu.ca](mailto:sis@nipissingu.ca)

## Step 4: Reflect

### What Type of Support Did I Provide?

Did the student require immediate assistance, a referral or follow-up? Was there a safety concern?

### Did I Consider My Own Limits?

It is okay to not know the answer to a question and to set personal boundaries. Encourage students to call on other resources provided in this folder when possible.

### How Am I Feeling?

It is common to feel upset or anxious after dealing with a student's distress. Get help for yourself. If you need to debrief, have a question or want to report a concern with a professional, please contact Student Intervention Specialist at x4605. Further support is available through your Employee Assistance Program (EAP), contact Human Resources for details.

Visit  
[nipissingu.ca/training](http://nipissingu.ca/training)  
for mental health  
training opportunities

