RESPONDING TO SUICIDE RISK

Warning signs that someone may be at risk of suicide:

- Talking or writing about death, dying, or suicide
- Talking of feeling hopeless or having no reason to live
- Talking about feeling trapped or being in unbearable pain
- Talking about being a burden to others
- Threatening to hurt or kill oneself
- Seeking pills, weapons, or other means to kill oneself
- Giving away personal or prized possessions
- Displaying extreme mood swings
- Increases in alcohol and/or drug use
- Taking risks/engaging in reckless behaviors
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- Taking risks/engaging in reckless behaviors

If you are NOT concerned for your immediate safety or that of others:

- Do not leave him/her alone if there is a risk of self-harm.
- Talk to the individual privately and acknowledge the individual’s feelings.
- Take it seriously and communicate your concern.
- Know that talking to individuals about suicide does not increase their risk.
- Urge the person to seek professional help immediately, and suggest the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>KSU Faculty/Staff Resources</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Psychological Services, University Health Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P: 330.672.2467</td>
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<tr>
<td>Counseling and Human Development Center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P: 330.672.2208</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University Health Services 24-hour Nurse Line</td>
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<tr>
<td>P: 330.672.2326</td>
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<tr>
<td>IMPACT: Employee Assistance and Work/Life Program</td>
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<tr>
<td>P: 800.227.6007</td>
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If you are concerned about the individual’s self-harm outside of business hours, consider the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>KSU Police Services</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>P: 911 [Emergency]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P: 330.672.2512 [Non-emergency]</td>
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<tr>
<td>W: <a href="http://www.kent.edu/police">www.kent.edu/police</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coleman Access Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P: 330.296.3550</td>
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<tr>
<td>W: <a href="http://www.coleman-bh.com/portage">www.coleman-bh.com/portage</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University Health Services 24-hour Nurse Line</td>
</tr>
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<td>P: 330.672.2326</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For more information visit our website at stepupspeakout.kent.edu

It’s our campus. It’s our community. We’re all responsible.

Step Up and Speak Out.

These warning signs may mean that someone is at risk for suicide. The risk may be greater following a tragic event or loss, if the individual has increased his/her use of alcohol or drugs, or the individual is behaving in a reckless or agitated manner.

IF YOU ARE CONCERNED FOR YOUR IMMEDIATE SAFETY OR THAT OF OTHERS, CALL 911
DEALING WITH DISTRESSED INDIVIDUALS

What is my role? How can I help?
You may be one of the first individuals to notice something is wrong or that a person is distressed. Although emotional distress may be expected, especially during times of high stress, you may notice that a person is acting out of character or in ways that are inconsistent with his/her previous behavior. You may be a resource in times of trouble, and your expression of interest and concern may be critical in helping the individual regain emotional stability. You may also be in a good position to alert the university so that appropriate interventions can occur.

Signs of possible distress
• Marked change in performance or behavior
• Excessive absence or tardiness
• Trouble eating and/or sleeping
• Disruptive behavior
• Undue aggressiveness
• Exaggerated emotional response that is disproportionate to the situation
• Depressed or lethargic mood
• Hyperactivity or very rapid speech
• Marked change in personal hygiene
• Excessive confusion
• Dramatic weight loss or gain
• Dependency (e.g., individual spends an inordinate amount of time around you or makes excessive appointments to see you)
• Behavior indicating loss of contact with reality
• Feelings of helplessness or hopelessness
• References to suicide
• References to homicide or assault
• Isolation from friends, family, or classmates
• Giving away personal or prized possessions
• Preparing for death by making a will and final arrangements

The DOs
• Do trust your intuition.
• Do speak with the individual privately.
• Do let him/her know you are concerned about his/her welfare.
• Do express your concern directly, in non-judgmental terms.
• Do tell him/her that you are willing to help.
• Do listen carefully to what he/she is upset about; use active listening.
• Do acknowledge the feelings of the individual.
• Do help him/her explore options.
• Do point out that help is available and that seeking help is a sign of strength and courage, rather than weakness or failure.
• Do suggest resources.
• Do make personal referrals. Provide the name of an individual when possible, and call ahead to brief the person.
• Do maintain clear and consistent boundaries and expectations.
• Do recognize his/her limits.
• Do enlist the help of others as appropriate.
• Do document the interaction or incident.

The DON'Ts
• Don't ignore the unusual behavior.
• Don't minimize the situation.
• Don't ignore warning signs about the individual's safety or the safety of others.
• Don't promise confidentiality.
• Don't judge or criticize.
• Don't make the problem your own.
• Don't involve yourself beyond the limits of your time, skill, or emotional well-being.

DEALING WITH DISRUPTIVE INDIVIDUALS

What is disruptive behavior?
Any behavior that interferes with students, faculty, or staff and their access to an appropriate and safe educational or work environment is considered disruptive. It is important to note that "disruptive behavior" as defined in this section may differ from classroom disruptions. Policy information regarding classroom disruptions can be found at: http://tinyurl.com/outtdpld

Examples of Disruptive Behavior
• Behavior that draws inappropriate attention to oneself
• Verbal outbursts (e.g., arguing, yelling, screaming)
• Words or actions that intimidate or harass others
• Words or actions that cause others to fear for their personal safety
• Threats of physical assault or violence

How should I deal with a disruptive person?
Disruptive behavior should not be ignored. It is important to remain calm. Remind yourself that the person is upset about the situation—not with you. Tell the person that such behavior is inappropriate and that there are consequences for failing to alter or improve the disruptive behavior. Many disruptive situations involve anger. Recognize that the period of peak anger usually lasts 20-30 seconds. Often, it is best to wait out the initial outburst before addressing the individual.

If you feel threatened, seek to remove yourself from the situation or secure appropriate assistance.

Documentation
Disruptive behavior should be documented. After the situation has been resolved, or the current incident has subsided, write a factual, detailed account of what occurred. Use concrete terms; be specific. Share the documentation appropriately.

The DOs
• Do listen to the person, through the anger. Use active listening.
• Do acknowledge the feelings of the individual.
• Do allow the person to vent and to tell you what is upsetting to him/her. Use the silence to allow the person to talk it out.
• Do set limits. Explain clearly and directly what behaviors are acceptable (e.g., "I will be willing to speak with you as long as you lower your voice").
• Do be firm, steady, direct, and honest, but also compassionate.
• Do trust your intuition.
• Do focus on what you can do to help resolve the situation.
• Do make personal referrals. Provide the name of an individual when possible, and call ahead to brief the person.
• Do report the behavior to the appropriate resources on campus.

The DON'Ts
• Don't interrupt, particularly during the first 20-30 seconds.
• Don't minimize the situation.
• Don't get into an argument or shouting match.
• Don't blame, ridicule, or use sarcasm.
• Don't touch or become physical.
• Don't ignore warning signs that the person is about to "explode."
• Don't ignore your own limitations.