

BMCC Counseling Center
Free and Confidential
Monday – Friday 9 a.m. – 5p.m.

Referring A Student to the Counseling Center

Faculty and staff members are often the first to notice when a student is struggling. Especially now with the added stress of the pandemic, students may be expressing more distress to faculty and staff. You have the advantage of seeing students over time and may notice subtle or clear academic, physical or emotional changes. Here are a few signs to look for and ways to help your student obtain the assistance he or she may need.

Distressed vs. Disruptive vs. Dangerous:

Distressed: Behavior that causes us to feel worried, upset, or alarmed

Disruptive: Behavior that interferes with or interrupts the education process of other students or the normal business functions of the university

Dangerous: Behavior that leaves us feeling frightened and in fear for our personal safety or the safety of others

Potential indicators of distress:

Academic	Physical	Emotional
Frequent absences or lateness	Disheveled appearance	Changes in ability to concentrate
Decrease in quality of work	Poor hygiene	Decrease in motivation
Missed or late assignments/exams	Visible increase or decrease in weight	Social isolation
Lack of participation/disengaged	Dilated or constricted pupils	Suicidal thoughts or statements
Work containing troubling themes	Rapid speech	Hopelessness
Inappropriate behavior in class	Dazed expression	Mood swings

Other Indicators:

- Direct statements of distress
- Expression of concern by peers
- Written or verbal statements that have a sense of finality
- YOUR GUT FEELING, however vague – in general, if something doesn't feel right, something isn't right

Problems tend not to go away unless addressed. Be aware of the signs of distress and be aware these signs can be verbal, non-verbal and behavioral; look for changes. Talk with your student privately, show respect and concern, and be non-judgmental and objective in your support.

Focus on things you have directly observed and invite students to identify what is preventing them from performing as well as they can. Ask open-ended questions and avoid diagnosing.

While you are not a mental health provider, you are well qualified to have a conversation that conveys your care and concern. Should the student require professional assessment and intervention, we encourage you to refer to the Counseling Center.

Making a Referral:

- Explain the services provided by the Counseling Center
- Normalize - the student is not the first to need assistance
- Provide contact information (counselingcenter@bmcc.cuny.edu; 212-220-8140)
- Help the student make an appointment
- Follow-up with student (counselors cannot share confidential information)

Emergencies:

- All suicidal statements and threats must be taken seriously
- During business hours, the Counseling Center can be reached at counselingcenter@bmcc.cuny.edu. The Counseling Center Director, Dr. Neda Hajizadeh can be reached at nhajizadeh@bmcc.cuny.edu
- Outside of business hours or if you believe there is an imminent threat of harm to self or another, you must take immediate action.
- If someone is having a mental health emergency, DO NOT WAIT to hear back from a counselor. Call 911, the National Suicide Prevention Hotline at 1-800-273-TALK or NYC WELL at 1-888-NYC-WELL. Email is not monitored continuously. It is also not monitored outside business hours or when the college is closed. An emergency cannot wait and you can access the above resources for immediate help at any time.

BMCC Resources:

- BMCC Counseling Center – counselingcenter@bmcc.cuny.edu – open Monday to Friday 9 a.m. – 5 p.m.; free and confidential
- BMCC Counseling Center Director, Dr. Neda Hajizadeh - nhajizadeh@bmcc.cuny.edu
- BMCC Public Safety – 212-220-8080 (24 hours)
- BART – Behavioral Assessment and Response Team - <http://www.bmcc.cuny.edu/bart/>
- Student Conduct Coordinator – 212-220-8000 x1334
- Office of Student Affairs – 212-220-8130

Other Resources:

- NYC WELL: 1-888-NYC-WELL; text “WELL” to 65173; <https://nycwell.cityofnewyork.us/en/>
- COVID-19 Emotional Support Hotline: 1-844-863-9314
- National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1-800-273-8255(TALK)
- Military Veteran Suicide hotline: 1-800-273-8255(TALK), press 1
- National Domestic Violence Hotline: 1-800-799-7233 or text “LOVEIS” to 22522
- Rape, Abuse, and Incest National Network (RAINN): 1-800-656-HOPE