



Responding to Students with Mental Health Concerns

This guide is intended to be a quick reference for assisting students who may benefit from mental health services. Further information and additional resources can be found at <https://www.westmont.edu/counseling-and-psychological-services>

IDENTIFYING A STUDENT IN DISTRESS

As a faculty or staff member at Westmont, you may be the first to notice a student who is experiencing difficulty. In these situations, your relationship and experience with the student can bridge the individual to available resources and care. For detailed indicators of types of student distress, please see the “Distressed and Disruptive Students” file on the CAPS webpage.

MAKING A REFERRAL TO CAPS

Recommending therapy can be feel challenging, but most college students are open to these recommendations. Here are some strategies on what to communicate:

- Express gratitude that the student opened up about concerns
- Normalize the difficulty of college life
- Inquire about resources in life they can reach out to in times of difficulty
- If applicable, recommend that they reach out to CAPS. Normalize that over half of Westmont students use the service at some point in their time at Westmont
- Inform them about how to initiate services at CAPS (see below). Encourage them to try a couple sessions.

HOW TO SCHEDULE AN APPOINTMENT

To schedule an appointment, students can navigate to our webpage and select the link, “Request an Appointment.” The online forms take approximately 10 minutes to complete. They will receive a response within 1-2 business days.

IMPORTANT DETAILS ABOUT CAPS SERVICES

- Counseling provided is FREE (students have already paid for it in their tuition)
- Services are CONFIDENTIAL. By state law, therapists are not able to disclose confidential information outside of the session
- Therapy is provided by licensed mental health providers and doctoral students in clinical training (under supervision by a licensed provider)
- After requesting an appointment, students will be provided a scheduled appointment typically within 2-5 days of the request (sooner if the concern is urgent).

RESPONSE PROTOCOL QUICK REFERENCE

<p>Situation</p> <p>Student's conduct is clearly and imminently reckless, disorderly, dangerous, or threatening (including suicidal self-harm behavior).</p>	<p>Contact</p> <p>Call 911 Then Public Safety (805.565.6222)</p>
<p>Situation</p> <p>Student shows signs of distress but I am unsure how serious it is. I'm feeling uneasy and/or really concerned about the student's safety</p>	<p>Contact</p> <p>Call CAPS during normal business hours (805.565.6003), or On-Call Resident Director (805.565.6273) if no response from CAPS or if contacting after-hours.</p>
<p>Situation</p> <p>I'm not concerned for the student's immediate safety, but they are having significant academic and/or personal issues. Student needs support.</p>	<p>Contact</p> <p>Complete Online Care Report westmont.edu/student-care</p>

COMPLETE A CARE REPORT

You may be the only individual on campus aware that the student is struggling, and/or the information you have may provide additional context for resources to be provided. Consider completing a Care Report for the student. Navigate to: <https://westmont.pharos360.com>

INTERESTED IN MORE RESOURCES?

Responding to students in distress can be challenging, and there is no “one size fits all” response. To support faculty, CAPS has created multiple guides related to student mental health, including:

- *Distressed and Disruptive Students: A Guide for Faculty and Staff*
- *Student Requests for Academic Leniency Due to Psychological Reasons*
- *Off-Campus Programs Mental Health Resource Guide*
- *Responding to Anxiety and Panic Attacks*
- *Facing Critical Incidents as a Community*