

Colgate Red Folder

*Guidance and resources on how to respond to,
support, and refer students in distress*

COLGATE UNIVERSITY

Statement of Purpose

The Colgate Mental Health Advisory Board has adopted and modified best practices from other institutions to bring this booklet — based on the Red Folder Initiative launched by the University of California in 2012 — to Colgate. The Red Folder serves as a quick reference guide to mental health resources for faculty and staff and provides a framework of compassion for supporting students in distress. Colgate faculty and staff are in a unique position to demonstrate compassion for these students and to assist them with connecting to appropriate resources. The framework in this booklet highlights how to recognize symptoms of student distress, respond appropriately and with compassion, and how to identify appropriate referrals to campus resources.

College students may feel alone, isolated, and even hopeless when faced with academic and life challenges. Students exhibiting concerning behaviors in your presence are likely to have difficulties coping with life stressors. Trust your instincts, say what you see, show your care, and follow up if a student leaves you feeling worried, alarmed, or threatened.

Colgate faculty and staff interact with students on a daily basis and are therefore able to observe student behavior over a period of time. Learning the symptoms of distress will allow you to recognize them when they surface with your students, and the framework of compassion will allow you to act in a caring and proactive way.

In this booklet, you will find:

- Distress level indicators
- Actionable steps to take when supporting a student in distress
- Campus resources available for students
- A guide for appropriate intervention
- Resources for faculty and staff mental health management

Safety first: Your welfare and the welfare of the campus community are top priorities when a student displays threatening or potentially violent behavior. Do not hesitate to call **Campus Safety** at **315-228-7333** for help.

A Guide for Appropriate Intervention

1. Say what you see

Be direct. Let the student know that you've noticed a change and you want to talk. Say what you've noticed, share facts not opinions, and avoid making any judgments or assumptions. Start this conversation in a setting where the student will feel safe to be open and honest with you. Follow up with residential life staff, the administrative dean's office, or the counseling center if you still have concerns.

INDICATORS OF DISTRESS

Academic

- Repeated absences and/or a sudden decline in quality of work or classroom performance
- Multiple requests for extensions or grades of incomplete
- Course warnings
- Inappropriate and disruptive classroom behavior
- Writing or creative work that includes disturbing content and/or themes of despair, hopelessness, suicide, violence, death, or aggression
- A need for more personal counseling rather than academic counseling

Physical

- Marked changes in physical appearance, including changes in hygiene or excessive weight loss/gain
- Repeatedly appearing ill, excessively fatigued, or lacking motivation
- Obvious changes in mental state and/or apparent intoxication
- Appearing disoriented or garbled, tangential, or slurred speech
- Excessive cuts, bruises, or other injuries

Psychological and Interpersonal

- Drastic change in interactions with others; withdrawing from social groups/support; loss of interest in activities, etc.
- Direct comments about distress, family problems, etc.
- Extreme changes in personality and/or mood; unprovoked anger or hostility; excessive tearfulness, panic reactions, irritability or unusual apathy; signs/expressions of hopelessness, worthlessness, or shame
- Self-injurious, destructive, or reckless behavior
- Implied or direct threats of harm to self/others
- Expressions of concern by peers

2. Show that you care

Be warm. We all need to know others care about us. Showing you care about students' well-being can have a positive impact on their mental well-being and increase the likelihood they seek help if needed. Build trust. Ask what they need. The kind of support students need will change based on the context, and the only way to know what they need from you is to ask. Sometimes students may not know what they need in the moment, but giving them your time and assuring them that you are there to figure it out together can make a world of difference. Everything you do can signal to students that you care about them and that you're a safe person to whom they can reach out.

This is not a script, but rather examples of what you might say in a conversation with a student. It is important that you use language that feels natural to you and fits the context of your interaction with the student. →

3. Hear them out

Be there to listen. Your priority is to provide a space where students can speak and be heard. They need you to be warm, compassionate, and fully present. Listen patiently as you try to understand where they're coming from and take time to affirm their feelings. This is about them, not you.

Be curious. As an active listener, ask follow-up and open-ended questions that might help you understand students and ensure they feel heard. Most importantly, listen and let them speak.

Share carefully. Most of the time it may not be helpful to share your experiences. Your role is to listen and learn so you can connect the student to resources. Sometimes, however, it can be helpful for a student to hear about your experiences with your own well-being or interactions you've had with mental well-being resources, but you do not need to go into much detail.

4. Connect to help

Determine need. Does the student need resources for social connection, specialized professional help, or is this an emergency?

Reaffirm your connection. Sometimes communicating to students that they may benefit from professional help can make them feel like they are being passed off as a problem or burden. Prevent this by explicitly affirming your connection with them. Again, show you care.

Help them connect to resources. Students in distress may need help connecting with a resource. Showing them how to access the resource increases the likelihood that they actually do so. If able, physically accompany the student to the resource or office.

Follow up. If possible, reconnect with students to make sure that they successfully connected with the resources that you suggested.

SAY WHAT YOU SEE

- “Hi _____, I just wanted to check in. I’ve noticed _____ and wanted to see if you want to talk about it.”
- “I’ve noticed _____ and I want you to know that I am here to support you.”

SHOW THAT YOU CARE

- “I care about your well-being, so I just wanted to check in to see how you’re doing. I want to know how I can be most helpful.”
- “Thanks for taking some time to talk with me. I wanted to have this conversation because I care about how you’re doing and want you to know that I’m here to support you in the ways you need.”

HEAR THEM OUT

Listen. Ask questions if appropriate:

- “Wow, I’d like to hear more about that.”
- “That sounds hard; how does that affect your life at Colgate?”

CONNECT TO HELP

- “Thank you for being so open with me. I want to continue this conversation, and I also want to make sure that you’re getting the help you need. I really think you may find _____ to be a very helpful and comforting resource.”
- “Reaching out to _____ for the first time can be a little confusing. Would you like help connecting to _____?”
- “I really think _____ can address some of your needs, but sometimes it takes several tries to find a place that is the best fit. For any reason, if it doesn’t feel like a match, then ask [the resource] what other resources may be a better fit for your needs.”

Responding to a Student of Concern

KNOW YOUR ROLE

Safety first. Do not hesitate to call Campus Safety for help. Your safety, and that of our students and community, are our top priority. Campus Safety can also direct you to other resources on campus, such as the dean or counselor on call.

CONSULT

Call the student's administrative dean for consultation whenever you need to. Sharing your concerns about students helps the deans learn more about our students' well-being and concerns.

SET CLEAR BOUNDARIES

Set boundaries around anything that helps to preserve your own mental well-being. You can't give students the support they need if you are suffering. You're not their therapist.

BE WARM

Your role is to be a warm, supportive presence for the student who is struggling. You're not there to fix anything or give unsolicited advice.

BE PROACTIVE

Have conversations about well-being with students early and often. This normalizes the process of accessing help and becoming well.

DOCUMENT

Always document your interactions with distressed students and consult with your department chair or director after the interaction/incident.

PRACTICE SELF-CARE

Supporting students' well-being can take a toll on our own. If this happens, please do what you need to recover and recharge. When students see you practicing self-care, it helps them realize that their community supports and prioritizes self-care.

SET EXPECTATIONS ABOUT RESOURCES

Help the student be realistic about what to expect from the resource and on what timeline. No resource can meet all needs, and it may take patience to access a resource and/or to experience the benefits.

If the resource wasn't helpful for the student, ask follow-up questions to understand what about the resource didn't fit the needs and determine which resource would be a better fit.

If the severity of the situation is unclear, and you don't know which resource is the best fit, consult with an administrative dean or a counselor.

Urgent Consultation Resources

When using a University phone to reach an off-campus line, dial “91” before entering the phone number.

Support available 24/7:

Administrative dean on call
315-228-7333

Counselor on call
315-228-7385

Campus Safety
315-228-7333

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline offers free and confidential support for people in distress. Call 800-273-8255.

For all emergency situations, call:

Campus Safety — Emergency line
315-228-7911

OR 911
(91-911 from a University phone)

Student Resources

Resources marked with an asterisk (*) offer confidential support.

Academic Support and Disability Services

provides a wide array of support services, accommodations, and programs to remove barriers to full participation in the life of the University. Call 315-228-7375.

Administrative Deans assist students in navigating and understanding administrative policies and procedures and offer advice regarding personal and/or academic matters or information on the many support resources available at Colgate. Contact at 315-228-7368 or 315-228-6131.

The **ALANA Cultural Center** serves as a learning place and social space that provides multicultural exploration, social justice education, and campus community building for Colgate students, faculty, and staff. Call 315-228-7330 or email alana@colgate.edu.

Alcohol and Other Drugs Services* are designed to educate students about the negative consequences of substance use by utilizing harm-reduction strategies and skill building, as well as correcting misperceptions that many students hold about college alcohol, tobacco, and other drug use. Contact at wellness@colgate.edu or 315-228-6403.

Athletics and Recreation is home to the NCAA Division I Raiders, plus more than 50 club and intramural sports programs, numerous fitness facilities, and organized outdoor activities. Visit colgate.edu/campus-life/athletics for more information.

The **Campus Safety Department** is committed to maintaining the safety and security of the campus community in a caring, respectful, and professional manner and can be reached 24/7 at cusafety@colgate.edu or 315-228-7333 (for campus emergencies: 315-228-7911).

Career Services empowers our students and alumni to engage in strategic exploration, preparation, and action, translating the liberal arts into a lifetime of meaningful work. They offer opportunities to connect with alumni for networking, professional development, and social connections. Call 315-228-7380 or email ccs@colgate.edu.

Center for Leadership and Student Involvement (CLSI) advises student groups and their leaders in planning the year's educational and social events, facilitates collaboration, and promotes student leadership and skills development. Contact CLSI at 315-228-6843, clsi@colgate.edu, or visit getinvolved.colgate.edu.

The **Center for Learning, Teaching, and Research (CLTR)** is dedicated to enhancing learning and teaching in support of the liberal arts. Students can connect with the office regarding tutoring options. Call 315-228-7375.

The **Center for Women's Studies** is a multipurpose space where students, faculty, and staff can gather to discuss topics like feminist theory and praxis, intersectionality, privilege, and oppression. Contact wmst@colgate.edu.

The **Counseling Center*** focuses on helping students to ameliorate problems that might be obstacles to their growth and development. Contact counselingcenter@colgate.edu or 315-228-7385 (After hours/emergencies: call 315-228-7385 and dial #2.)

Equity and Diversity staff are available for questions regarding Title IX, equity, and diversity and reporting options associated with bias and discrimination. Call 315-228-6161.

Fraternities and Sororities can provide students with a home away from home and a foundation for leadership, academic, athletic, service, and interpersonal opportunities. Call 315-228-7368 or email ofsa@colgate.edu.

Haven* is a sexual violence response center that provides confidential care, support, advocacy, and trauma-informed clinical

Privacy and information sharing: Mental health professionals are confidential resources. Although they will gladly accept any information you are willing to provide them about a student's well-being, they cannot share information with you without the student's written consent. Students sometimes grant permission for a counselor to speak with a faculty/staff member, but this is not always the case. It is important that you follow up with the student about your concerns and check in directly.

services for survivors of sexual assault, intimate partner violence, child/family abuse, stalking, and/or harassment. Contact haven@colgate.edu or 315-228-7385.

Human Resources is responsible for student employment and opportunities for students to fulfill work-study commitments and on-campus paid positions. Contact humres@colgate.edu or call 315-228-7411.

The **Max A. Shacknai Center for Outreach, Volunteerism, and Education (COVE)** fosters a commitment to social responsibility and engagement through mutually beneficial, community-centered partnerships. Call 315-228-6880 or email cove@colgate.edu.

Office of the Chaplains* provides the Colgate community with a dynamic, friendly, and supportive place in which to seek answers to life's biggest questions. Call 315-228-7682 or email chaplainsoffice@colgate.edu.

The **Office of Financial Aid** supports access to quality education for students from all socioeconomic backgrounds, and is committed to lessening the burden of debt to better prepare students for opportunities after graduating. Contact finaid@colgate.edu or 315-228-7431.

Office of LGBTQ+ Initiatives works to enhance campus inclusion and provide support for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, questioning and ally students, staff, and faculty through intellectual and leadership development, building community, outreach, and visibility. Call 315-228-6840 or email lgbtq@colgate.edu.

Office of Residential Life extends student learning and growth into the campus' residential community, promoting a purposeful and inclusive environment. Contact reslife@colgate.edu or 315-228-7367.

Office of Student Accounts manages collections and billing of student-related fees and payment plans. Call 315-228-7812.

In the **Office of Sustainability**, students are vital contributors to the University's sustainability efforts through both independent involvement and curricular projects and research. Contact sustainability@colgate.edu.

The **Registered Dietitian*** is a resource for those with nutrition-related questions or concerns or any special dietary needs and/or food allergies, and can help you navigate the dining halls. Contact wellness@colgate.edu or 315-228-6403.

Shaw Wellness Institute is a centralized location for health and wellness resources on Colgate's campus. Call 315-228-6403 or email wellness@colgate.edu.

The **Student Government Association (SGA)** of Colgate University is made up of elected student representatives from each class and governs student groups, representing their interests to the larger Colgate community and administration. Contact sga@colgate.edu.

Student Health Services* is available to provide responsive, confidential, and high-quality medical care for the Colgate student community. Contact 315-228-7750.

Thought Into Action (TIA), Colgate's entrepreneurial program, helps students develop solutions that address the biggest challenges in business and society, supported by a rigorous liberal arts education, dedicated alumni and parent mentors, and action-oriented programs. Contact tia@colgate.edu.

Faculty and Staff Mental Health Care

Colgate University provides a range of health-related resources for faculty and staff, including benefits for mental health services and substance abuse treatment. Faculty and staff can use these behavioral health benefits for a personal consultation or to discuss a concern about an employee or colleague. Sessions with counselors, psychologists, and/or psychiatrists are available to address a wide range of issues. This guide provides a summary of the resources available to assist you.

Faculty/Staff Wellness Resources

EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (EAP)

The EAP is separate from your medical plan behavioral health benefits. EAP is a free, confidential benefit that helps with problem identification, assessment, and referral to treatment providers and community resources. The first six sessions are free. EAP Benefits are available 24/7 to employees and their dependents. Call 315-451-2161 for a free, confidential appointment or visit colgate.edu/jobs-colgate/worklife-programs for more information.

Support is offered for a wide range of issues, including:

- Work-related stress
- Relationship/couples issues
- Family problems
- Depression, anxiety, and other emotional issues
- Grief and loss
- Alcohol, drug, and other addictions
- Consultations/training services for faculty and staff

Community Resources

CAMPUS RESOURCES

- **ALANA Cultural Center:** 315-228-7330, alana@colgate.edu
- **Chapel House:** 315-228-6087, chapelhouse@colgate.edu
- **Office of the Chaplains:** 315-228-7682, chaplainsoffice@colgate.edu
- **Counseling providers in the community:** humres@colgate.edu
- **CU Well Employee Wellness Program:** 315-228-7411, humres@colgate.edu
- **Equity/Inclusion Office:** 315-228-7014
- **Focus on Fitness Classes/Trudy Fitness Center:** 315-228-7624
- **LGBTQ+ Initiatives:** 315-228-6840, lgbtq@colgate.edu
- **Shaw Wellnes:** 315-228-6403, wellness@colgate.edu

SOCIAL/EMPOWERMENT GROUPS

- **Colgate Hello:** hello@colgate.edu
- **Colgate WoLF:** colgatewolf@colgate.edu
- **LGBT-ERG:** lgbtq@colgate.edu

Behavioral Health Benefits With Medical Coverage

Depending on your medical plan, faculty and staff have access to behavioral health providers in the community through Excellus Blue Cross Blue Shield. Please visit colgate.edu/jobs-colgate/worklife-programs or excellusbcbcs.com for more information.

Human Resources Wellness Programs

Human resources sponsors the CU Well Employee Wellness Program, which provides activities and resources to help faculty and staff reach their wellness goals. Colgate's wellness program works to build a healthy workplace culture and offers on-site activities, health education, local programs, and more to help you lead a healthy life. Learn more at colgate.edu/jobs-colgate/worklife-programs.

An accessible PDF version of the Colgate Red Folder is available to download at colgate.edu/counseling.

COLGATE UNIVERSITY

Dean of the College

Counseling and Psychological Services

counselingcenter@colgate.edu

315-228-7385

Location: Conant House

Campus map available online at colgate.edu/map

Crisis consultation hours

Monday–Friday, 1:30 p.m.–4:30 p.m.

After hours

Call the counseling center. For an emergency, dial #2.