

Working with

Talk One-2-One

Student Assistance Program

**A Manual for Faculty and
Staff**



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Your college/university has contracted with AllOne Health Resources to provide a student assistance program. Through Talk One-2-One, its student assistance program, AllOne Health provides assessment, short-term counseling, referral and follow-up for students who may be dealing with personal problems or concerns. Faculty and staff consultations, trainings and trauma support, and the management of administrative referrals are also fundamental components of the program. AllOne Health maintains a network of counselors throughout the United States and Canada. All contacts with Talk One-2-One are strictly confidential and follow accepted professional and legal standards.

The Talk One-2-One student assistance program serves as an important resource, assisting faculty and administrative staff in resolving academic and behavioral health problems that their students may have. As a faculty member or staff person, you are in a unique position to observe your students' behavior. Dealing with behavioral problems is rarely easy, consistent, or simple. Talk One-2-One is a resource available to you to assist you in helping difficult or troubled students.

This manual provides practical help about:

- How to address issues regarding your students
- How to encourage them to seek help informally
- How to make formal referrals of those students whose behavior may pose a threat to themselves or to others

Talk One-2-One is designed to help students deal with their personal issues. Left unattended, these problems can lead to deteriorating academic and interpersonal functioning. Students struggling with personal problems can take advantage of Talk One-2-One on their own. However, there may be occasions in which a student is unaware they have a problem, or doesn't want to confront it. When students experience a decline in their ability to perform at school, it can be helpful to encourage them to seek help. In fact, encouragement from a faculty member or staff person is among the most effective ways to motivate a student towards help.

The first step is to identify the patterns of academic and interpersonal deterioration in functioning. **Below is a list of warning signs that may suggest that a student is in need of some help:**

- Getting poor grades
- Increased absence in class attendance
- Irritability or angry mood
- Depression and isolation
- Recurrent interpersonal difficulties
- Paranoia



- Threats, either veiled or unveiled, of harming self or others
- Dramatic weight loss
- Evidence of abuse in a relationship
- Expression of unusual beliefs or thoughts
- Alcohol/substance abuse

Advice for Faculty and Staff

How you approach a student after you have observed concerning behavior will depend on the specific situation. Below are some general guidelines:

- **Speak with a Talk One-2-One Consultant before you intervene.** We have the expertise to offer practical advice about the particular student situation with which you are dealing.
- **Collaborate with other campus resources.** You may be able to partner with campus medical or residence life staff, security officers, student services, or other internal resources to identify the best way to approach the student.
- **Meet with the student in a private location.** In most cases, this type of meeting will foster trust, allowing the student to feel more secure. There are some situations (such as those in which there are safety concerns) where it is better to talk in a more public area.
- **Speak with the student at eye level.** If the student is seated, you should be seated as well.
- **Use a calm, even tone of voice.** This is especially important if the student is highly emotionally charged.
- **Don't probe.** Your goal is not to explore mental health issues but rather to let the student know you are there to offer him/her support.
- **Don't try to come up with the 'perfect' response.** There is probably nothing you can say that will make everything OK. Focus on listening well and on providing resources such as the campus Counseling Department (if available) and the Talk One-2-One program.
- **Consult with Talk One-2-One after the meeting.** Discussing next steps with a Talk One-2-One consultant can be helpful.
- **Get support for yourself as needed.** Managing difficult situations is stressful for all of us. Use your campus resources and/or Talk One-2-One as needed for yourself.



As a member of the administration, students may open up to you because they trust you and appreciate your concern. Remember that your role is neither to diagnose mental health issues nor become the student's therapist. It is to be a supportive, active listener who facilitates getting the student to appropriate care and resources.

There are two different ways a student can be referred to the student assistance program: informally and through a formal, administrative referral.

Informal Referrals

When you are concerned solely about your student's personal welfare, you can make an informal referral to the student assistance program. It is usually as simple as saying, "Why don't you call Talk One-2-One? They are here to help with difficult personal situations."

Note - If the student is informally referred, there will be no feedback provided to you regarding any contacts that the student may have with Talk One-2-One.

Formal Referrals

Formal referrals are used when a student demonstrates a behavioral problem that represents a departure from acceptable participation in campus/academic community life. Such behavior may include: alcohol or drug abuse, aggressive or intimidating interpersonal behaviors, or the making of threats against self or others.

How to Make a Formal Referral

Follow your school's policies and procedures and consult with Talk One-2-One as appropriate. Inform us of the specific circumstances that have led to the referral. We will help you strategize about how to best connect the student to Talk One-2-One. This consultation will also provide useful information to us so that we can understand the nature of the school's concerns and better coordinate services for the student. If the student signs a release, we will provide feedback to you about the student's follow-up with our program.

- Tell the student that you are referring him/her to the student assistance program. Inform the student how to contact Talk One-2-One and, if a specific contact person has been identified, how to contact that individual.
- Remind the student that student assistance program participation is a tool for the student to use to resolve whatever personal problem(s) that may be interfering with his or her acceptable engagement in the campus community. The administrative referral is separate from any disciplinary action that the school may take and does not prevent the school from taking further disciplinary action should this be warranted.



- Make it clear that what the student discusses with the student assistance program is confidential, and that the school has no right to know the student's personal business. However, you do expect to hear back from Talk One-2-One as to whether or not the student is attending sessions and following through with treatment recommendations.
- You don't need to, nor should you, make presumptions about what's interfering with the student's academic or behavioral functioning.
- Speak to the student's strengths and his or her desire to improve the situation. Seeking help is a positive step.

It can be uncomfortable to refer someone for help; there is no perfect way through the process. All you can do is indicate your concerns and direct the student to the Program. It's up to the student to make use of these resources.

Feedback

It is the student's choice whether to sign the ***Authorization to Inform College***. If signed, this allows Talk One-2-One to provide feedback and its recommendations. There is no information communicated about problems or kind of treatment. If the student chooses not to sign, then no information can be transmitted. Students almost always consent, realizing that it is to their advantage to show the school that they are taking action to correct the problem. Talk One-2-One will continue to follow-up, monitor treatment, and provide feedback to you.

The Collaboration between Talk One-2-One and the College

Experience shows that the formal referral process is highly effective because it is a two-fold approach: an administrative intervention and a counseling intervention.

- You are encouraging the student to take responsibility for the problem.
- You are providing outside resources to address academic/behavioral concerns.
- You are offering help for the problem.

Other Talk One-2-One Services:

- Crisis intervention services for faculty, administration, and students in the event of a campus tragedy.
- Financial consulting and resources on topics such as budget planning and preventing credit card debt.
- After hours and weekend telephonic consultation and crisis intervention.