

## *Checking In with Those Who May be Struggling*

COVID has stressed us all, impacting our sleep, our concentration, our moods, our productivity. It's important to give ourselves and those around us a break in this – we all need some understanding that we are not at our best. We need to go easy on ourselves and others.

But some folks may be causing us concern. There may be students or colleagues or friends or family who seem to be having an especially rough time of it.

Perhaps everything is fine, but it can be important to reach out to folks, express your care for them, and, if appropriate, offer some help. If there's no problem, all that's happened is that you let someone know you care about them – that's hardly a mistake!

Below are some suggestions for how you can reach out. Your suggestions or questions are welcome at [UNCPSCore@unc.edu](mailto:UNCPSCore@unc.edu)

### ***Behavior that might cause us to be concerned about family, friends, or colleagues could look like:***

- A student who seems not to have left their room for a number of days or is otherwise self-isolating
- A colleague who has shown withdrawal or substantial change in attendance, participation, or work contributions
- A student who has stopped attending class and/or stopped turning in assignments, being prepared in class, or otherwise has shown change in usual patterns
- A general noticeable change in normal patterns of socializing, work, attendance, hygiene, etc.

### ***First and foremost: Reach out to the individual***

- Explain your concern and listen to the individual.
- Offer to talk further or suggest resources (or take time to help them find resources)
- You can reach out via email, knocking on their door, text, phone call, or other ways.
- You might try saying:
  - We've all been stressed out by COVID so I know it's hard...
  - I noticed that you missed a few classes/work/assignment/meeting. I was just concerned and wanted to see how you're doing.
  - This week/month/exams period has been really tough, how's it been for you?
  - I'm available to listen if you'd like to talk. No need to respond unless you'd like.
  - Would you like me to help you find some resources to address that?

***When in doubt, reach out!***

## ***Specific Resources***

### For everyone:

- If you believe harm or possible harm to self or others is ***about to happen***,
  - Call 9-1-1, or Call campus security at 919-962-8100 if the person is on-campus.
  - Important note: Involving emergency services or law enforcement can have negative long-term implications for an individual. Do not call 9-1-1 or involve law enforcement unless you are certain there is imminent harm to self or others.
- If you believe the person might want to speak with someone unrelated to UNC-CH, they can contact the following resources:
  - National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-8255 or in Spanish by calling 1-888-628-9454
  - Text Support Line - text STEVE to 741741 to connect with a trained crisis counselor.
  - For anyone affected by abuse or needing support, visit the National Domestic Violence Hotline ([thehotline.org](http://thehotline.org)) or call 800-799-SAFE (7233) (TTY: 800-787-3224) or send the text LOVEIS to an advocate at 22522.
- Contact the individual's supervisor, residential advisor, program director, course instructor, or others who may have role with the individual to express your concern and plan a response together – do not assume that what you have noticed has been recognized by others. **When in doubt, do something!!**
  - Discretion is important in this. For example, if you are unsure of a colleague's relationship with their supervisor, it's probably better to discuss first with another colleague you can trust.
- Speak with a University Ombud - The University Ombuds Office ([ombuds.unc.edu](http://ombuds.unc.edu)) is a safe place where all Carolina staff, faculty, students and administrators are welcome to come and talk in confidence about any campus issue, problem, or dispute. Our office supplements, but does not replace, the University's formal channels, such as the grievance policy. Services are free and voluntary.

### For UNC-CH Students only:

- UNC Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS): 919-966-3658 (24/7)
  - Students who pay the campus health fee (included in student fees) can use the 24/7 line and most CAPS services free of charge.
  - If a student does not pay campus health fees, they can e-mail [CAPSreferrals@unc.edu](mailto:CAPSreferrals@unc.edu) to get assistance with locating a therapist in their community.
- If a student is not responsive to point of serious concern for their welfare, you may complete a Care Referral Form ([odos.unc.edu/carereferral](http://odos.unc.edu/carereferral)) from the Dean of Students. Your referral will be assigned to a member of staff in the Office of the Dean of Students for review and response within two business days. If you would like to speak with a staff member during normal business hours to discuss your concern, call 919-966-4042. The Care Referral Form may be completed by fellow students or faculty and requires that you provide your own name and contact, how you know the student about whom you are concerned, and the nature of your concern.

### For UNC-CH faculty and staff only:

- GuidanceResources: Whether you're looking for free counseling\*, self-improvement tools or solutions to everyday issues call 877-314-5841 (TTY: 800-697-0353) or browse the many helpful tools online at [www.guidanceresources.com](http://www.guidanceresources.com)
  - Use Web ID: TARHEELS to sign up for [GuidanceResources](http://www.guidanceresources.com).
  - \*As a UNC employee, you can receive three free counseling sessions per issue, per year, in-person or over the phone. Temporary employees can access GuidanceResources, but some services may be limited.