

Assisting Students in Distress

Awareness

Personal and academic challenges may lead to distress. You are in a unique position to help identify students who may be in need of help.

SEE

Communication

Sharing your concern directly with the student or reaching out to campus partners can be an important first step in helping a student access help and services. Our campus partners can help ensure the safety of the student and our campus and provide a coordinated response.

SAY

Engagement

Students may not know that help is available, or where to find it. Reach out to a student who you believe to be in distress, using the guidelines provided on the interior of this document.

DO

Privacy Laws and Confidentiality

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) permits communication about a student of concern with a health and safety emergency. Observations of a student's conduct or statements made by a student are not FERPA protected. Such information should be shared with appropriate consideration for student privacy.

Rio's Behavioral Intervention Team (B.I.T.)

Purpose

B.I.T. responds to non-immediate concerns and takes a proactive approach to discuss potential issues, early intervention, and provide support and behavioral response to students displaying varying levels of disruptive, disturbed, and/or distressed behaviors.

Process

- Receive info about students of concern.
- Maintain/handle confidentially.
- Provide consultation and support.
- Intervene and connect students with resources; address concerns.
- Coordinate follow-up; effective deployment of resources.

B.I.T. members:

- Chair, Alicia Kruizenga, Student Affairs
- Dr. Connie Gutiérrez, Director, DSP&S
- Shaina Phillips, Director, Student Live & Leadership
- Dr. Mark Yokoyama, Dean of Public Safety

What to Report to B.I.T.

Any behavior that disrupts the mission or learning environment of the College or causes concern for the campus community's well-being.

How to Report to B.I.T.

- Inform your Dean or immediate supervisor, or
- Contact the Chair via email at:
akruizenga@riohondo.edu

April, 4, 2016, April 23, 2023



Rio Hondo College



Assisting & Managing Challenging Students



**If You Feel Unsafe
CALL 911
Or Campus Security
3490**

When in Doubt, Reach Out! Rio's Behavioral Intervention Team (B.I.T.) Can Help.

Does the Student Need Immediate Assistance?



YES

Student's behavior is reckless, disorderly, dangerous or threatening and is suggestive of immediate harm to self or others.

CALL

Life threatening call 911 then Campus Security 3490

NOT SURE

Student appears distressed, dazed or confused but severity is unclear. The interaction has left you feeling uneasy or concerned about the student.

Call for consultation:
Psychological Services (3438).

NO

I am not concerned for the student's immediate safety but s/he is having significant academic and/or personal issues.

Refer student to appropriate campus resource(s) such as: Counseling, DSPS, Psychological Services, Dean of Student Affairs, or Veterans Services

Tips on Addressing Students with Behavioral Issues

Verbally Aggressive Student

DO NOT

- Get into an argument or shouting match with the student.
- Become hostile or punitive, e.g., "You can't talk to me that way?"
- Threaten or corner the student.
- Don't ignore the situation.

DO

- Prevent frustration and helplessness by calmly acknowledging the situation, offer assistance.
- In a calm manner, be directive and firm.
- If student is not responding, contact Campus Security. Develop a code for help with colleagues in your work area.

Guiding/Talking Points

- "Please stand back, you're too close."
- "I can not listen to you when you are yelling."
- "I can see that you're upset and would like to help you."
- Respond to issues raised with realistic options.

Depressed/Suicidal Student

DO NOT

- Be afraid to ask whether the student is suicidal if you think s/he may be.
- Challenge or agree with any mistaken or illogical beliefs.
- Minimize the student's feelings, e.g. "Don't worry, everything will be better tomorrow.;" OR let the student minimize their feelings, e.g. "I'm fine; I'm okay."
- Bombard the student with "fix it" solutions or advice.
- Use words that embarrass or shame.

DO

- In an emergency, call **911**, Campus Security (3490) or Psych Services (3438).
- Listen, let the student know you would like to help.
- If the student mentions feeling suicidal, take the student seriously—80% of suicides give warning of their intent.
- If the student does not say it, directly ask if the student wants to hurt him /herself, if s/he has a plan and means to execute it.
- If there's a detailed plan, you **MUST call 911**.

Guiding/Talking Points

- "You seem to be having a hard time lately, and I would like to find a way to support you."
- "Maybe it seems like things are so bad that you can't find a way out. Have you thought about hurting yourself?" "If you have, how would you do it?"
- "I am concern about you, I want to get you some help." "I am going to call Psych Services now."