



Fostering Student Health and Well-Being

A Guide for Faculty and Staff



THE NEW SCHOOL

www.newschool.edu/studentservices

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TO NEW SCHOOL FACULTY AND STAFF:

National data indicate that mental health problems are increasingly prevalent among college students. Studies show that both the complexity of student cases and the number of students on medication is on the rise. This phenomenon has been seen at The New School, too.

Fortunately, The New School has an extensive network of trained professionals who are able to work directly with students in distress and who are also able to offer advice and intervention strategies to faculty and staff members who suspect that a student has a problem. In this guide, you will find a list of offices that you can contact to discuss student health issues.

You are encouraged to tap into these resources and ask as many questions as you need in order to serve students in the best possible manner. The success of our students in and outside the classroom demands that we all work together to ensure they are able to cope with the academic pressure of being in college and the social pressure of living away from home. This guide has been created as a resource to help in this important endeavor.

Please feel free to contact me if you have questions or comments.



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Table of Contents

Overview

IT TAKES THE WHOLE COMMUNITY	4
STRESS: NORMAL AND UNUSUAL	4
EMBRACING DIFFERENCE	4
STUDENT RIGHTS, NEW SCHOOL RESPONSIBILITIES	5
CONFIDENTIALITY	5
THE FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT (FERPA)	5
RECOGNIZING THE SIGNS OF DISTRESS	6
ACADEMIC INDICATORS	6
BEHAVIORAL AND EMOTIONAL INDICATORS	6
PHYSICAL INDICATORS	6
REFERENCE TO SUICIDE, HOMICIDE, OR DEATH MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEM OR MISBEHAVIOR?	7
RESPONDING TO STUDENTS IN DISTRESS	8
BE AN ACTIVE LISTENER	8
KNOW THE LIMITS OF YOUR ROLE	8
MAKE A REFERRAL	8
ACCEPT A STUDENT'S RELUCTANCE TO SEEK HELP	8
DIFFUSE ANGER; CALM A HEATED CONVERSATION	8
DEAL WITH DRUG AND ALCOHOL ABUSE	9
SITUATIONS REQUIRING A CALL TO 911	9
INCIDENT REPORTS	9

Situations Causing Student Distress

STUDENT RECEIVES DISAPPOINTING OR BAD NEWS	10
STUDENT EXPERIENCES CULTURE SHOCK	10
HEALTH PROBLEMS INTERFERE WITH DAILY LIFE	10
FAMILY CRISIS	11
ABUSIVE PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP	11
VICTIM OF STALKING	11
VICTIM OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT	12
VICTIM OF SEXUAL ASSAULT	12
VICTIM OF DISCRIMINATION OR DISCRIMINATORY HARASSMENT	13

Student Behaviors Warranting Concern

DISAPPEARANCE FROM CAMPUS	14
CREATING DISTURBING CONTENT IN WRITTEN OR ARTISTIC WORK	14
MAKING THREATS OR EXHIBITING EXTREME ANGER	14
ABUSING DRUGS OR ALCOHOL	14
SELF-INJURY	15
CONTEMPLATING SUICIDE	15
WARNING SIGNS OF SUICIDE THAT DEMAND IMMEDIATE ACTION	15

Appendix 1: Glossary of Mental Health Terms

DEPRESSION	16
BIPOLAR DISORDER	16
ANXIETY	16
PANIC	16
PHOBIAS	16
POST-TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER	16
OBSESSIVE-COMPULSIVE DISORDER	17
PSYCHOTIC DISORDERS AND SCHIZOPHRENIA	17
ATTENTION-DEFICIT DISORDER	17
EATING DISORDERS	17

Appendix 2: Student Services Offices and Contact Information

A NETWORK OF SUPPORT	18
CAREER DEVELOPMENT	18
COUNSELING SERVICES	19
HIGHER EDUCATION OPPORTUNITY PROGRAM	19
INTERNATIONAL STUDENT SERVICES	19
MEDICAL SERVICES	19
INTERCULTURAL SUPPORT	19
STUDENT DEVELOPMENT AND ACTIVITIES	19
RECREATION AND INTRAMURAL SPORTS	20
STUDENT DISABILITY SERVICES	20
STUDENT HEALTH INSURANCE	20
STUDENT HOUSING AND RESIDENCE LIFE	20
STUDENT OMBUDS	21
STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES	21
STUDENT SUPPORT AND CRISIS MANAGEMENT	21
WELLNESS AND HEALTH PROMOTION	21



Overview

IT TAKES THE WHOLE COMMUNITY

Students in college are coping with many significant life changes that can cause distress. These include:

BECOMING AUTONOMOUS: *managing time, money, and other resources; taking care of oneself emotionally and physically; learning when and how to seek help; working independently and interdependently*

ESTABLISHING IDENTITY: *developing a realistic self-image; responding constructively to feedback and criticism; exploring abilities; defining limitations; and understanding oneself in a culture context*

ACHIEVING COMPETENCE: *managing emotions appropriately; developing and pursuing academic and other interests; identifying and solving problems; building self-confidence; and preparing for adult life and career*

UNDERSTANDING AND SUPPORTING DIVERSITY: *meeting and working with people from diverse backgrounds; respecting and learning from differences; and appreciating the contributions of others*

ESTABLISHING CONNECTION AND COMMUNITY: *living respectfully with and among others; developing skills in group decision-making and teamwork; making a positive difference*

Identifying and responding to students in distress is the responsibility of every faculty and staff person at The New School.

STRESS: NORMAL AND UNUSUAL

While the challenge of being away from home is exhilarating for most college students, it may also bring feelings of stress. This is important because stress is at the root of many mental and physical illnesses. In most cases, stress is temporary and manageable, but some students experience prolonged periods of stress related to academic difficulties, their personal lives, or both. High levels of stress may result in physical illness, destructive coping mechanisms, and emotional breakdown. It is part of our responsibility to help our students respond maturely and constructively to stressful situations that may arise while they are enrolled at The New School. In your interactions with students, you can help them understand their feelings and identify healthy ways to cope with all kinds of emotional pressure by setting realistic and clear goals. You can also encourage making connections with others in

and outside of the university, joining student organizations and other group activities, and, perhaps, making an appointment with Counseling Services. In helping students manage their stress, you are enhancing their overall health and well-being.



EMBRACING DIFFERENCES

The New School is proud of its diverse community, and students are taught to appreciate the vibrant group of people who are their classmates and friends, professors and staff members, or deans and administrators. Nevertheless, students may face obstacles as a result of race, sexual orientation, sexual and gender identities, disability, religion, age, and socioeconomic background. These students are at greater risk of becoming isolated, especially if they are not aware of the extensive support system available at The New School, or if support and validation from their families are not strong enough.

At every point of working or interacting with students, reassure each one that he or she is valued as an individual with unique skills, talents, thoughts, and dreams. By promoting an open, tolerant, and supportive environment both in and outside the classroom, we help students from all backgrounds thrive at The New School.

STUDENT RIGHTS, NEW SCHOOL RESPONSIBILITIES

CONFIDENTIALITY

Medical and mental health providers are bound by strict professional and legal standards to preserve client confidentiality. Faculty and staff are not bound by the same obligations. All university employees are required to report concerns they may have about a student's health or safety. Once a student has divulged a serious concern to a member of the university community, the university has officially been "put on warning." **If a student asks before a conversation for a promise to keep it confidential, do not say yes.** Faculty and staff are bound by law to disclose information if they have reason to believe that someone is in danger of injuring self or others. Determining the safety or mental health of a student is not always simple. Seek guidance from Counseling Services if you have any doubts.



THE FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT (FERPA) AS IT RELATES TO STUDENT HEALTH AND SAFETY

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), which prohibits the university from sharing student educational records with any third party without the student's written consent, does NOT apply to information gleaned from direct personal contact with a student. Any information relevant to concerns about a student's health or safety may be shared with other appropriate professionals.

FERPA expressly permits the disclosure of information from student education records to appropriate parties inside or outside of the university if knowledge of the information is necessary to protect the health or safety of the student or other individuals. For example, a faculty or staff member who personally observes a student engaging in erratic and threatening behavior is not prohibited by FERPA from disclosing that observation to "school officials" who have "legitimate educational interests" in the information. Another example: A student informs his resident advisor that he has been diagnosed with a highly contagious disease such as measles. The university should alert the student's roommates and others with whom the student has come in close contact and urge them to seek appropriate testing and medical care.

Note: For more information about FERPA, visit www.newschool.edu/student-services/registrar/ferpa.

RECOGNIZING THE SIGNS OF DISTRESS

Because you interact with the same students on a regular basis, you will often be among the first people to know when one of them is struggling. Most times, a student will start exhibiting signs when he or she is in distress. The lists below are not meant to be comprehensive. They include some of the more common and easily spotted signs that a student may be struggling.

ACADEMIC INDICATORS:

- Repeated absences or tardiness
- Disruptive behavior that is not responsive to classroom management
- Exaggerated emotional responses obviously inappropriate to the situation
- Continual seeking of special provisions (extensions on papers and exams)
- Patterns of perfectionism (grades other than "A" will not do)
- Disturbing written or artistic expression that exposes unusual violence, morbidity, social isolation, despair, confusion, or focus on suicide or death
- Incoherent or extremely disorganized written work or verbal presentations
- Deterioration in quality or quantity of work; missing work

BEHAVIORAL AND EMOTIONAL INDICATORS:

- Direct statements indicating distress, family problems, financial problems, social problems, or loss
- Angry or hostile outbursts, yelling, or aggressive comments, irritability
- Unusually withdrawn
- Expressions of hopelessness or worthlessness
- Crying or tearfulness, or signs thereof
- Expressions of severe anxiety or irritability
- Excessively demanding or dependent behavior
- Depressed or lethargic mood
- Hyperactivity or very rapid speech

- Inappropriate behavior: outbursts, bizarre speech, continuous daydreaming, excessive giggling, continuous provocative behavior, intrusiveness, emotional withdrawal, mood changes
- Another student, friend, classmate, roommate, or teaching assistant expresses concern

PHYSICAL INDICATORS:

- Deterioration or dramatic change in physical appearance or personal hygiene
- Excessive fatigue; falling asleep in class repeatedly
- Noticeable cuts, bruises, or burns
- Frequent or chronic illness or physical complaints
- Unusual inability to make eye contact
- Dramatic weight loss or gain
- Signs of drug use or alcohol use (e.g., nodding off, disoriented responses, change in speech pattern, smell of alcohol)

REFERENCE TO SUICIDE, HOMICIDE, OR DEATH:

- Expressed thoughts of helplessness or hopelessness
- Overt or veiled references to suicide, homicide, or death
- Written or verbal statements that mention despair, suicide, or death
- Severe hopelessness, depression, isolation, or withdrawal
- Statements to the effect that the student is "going away for a long time"

Note: If a student is exhibiting any signs of suicidal or homicidal ideas, behavior, or intent, he or she may pose an immediate danger to him/herself or others. In these cases, stay with the student and contact Counseling Services at 212.229.1671 option 1 or Campus Security at 212.229.7001 (24 hours).



- Behavior that creates a hostile environment for other students and/or staff***
- Indications that the student is often intoxicated or under the influence of alcohol or drugs***
- Words and/or behavior threatening others***
- Inappropriate behavior that has previously been addressed but persists or worsens***

You can play a crucial role in supporting a student's academic success and/or preventing a personal crisis by opening the door to The New School's comprehensive support network: Student Services staff, faculty, academic advisors, parents/family, and outside professionals. In conversations you may have with a student about the various resources and support options available, always emphasize that seeking help is a sign of strength.

Staff members from Student Support and Crisis Management and Counseling Services are always available to help you determine whether referral, immediate intervention, or outreach to the student is the best course of action. Counselors in this office can also provide suggestions about how to discuss sensitive mental health related subjects with a student.

MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEM OR MISBEHAVIOR?

It can sometimes be difficult to tell the difference between students who are exhibiting signs of a mental health issue and those who are acting out. In most situations, your first step should be to address the problematic behavior and see how the student responds. If the problematic behavior ceases and there are no more alarming signs, it is probably safe to assume that the issue was not related to a mental health problem. If you are unsure about what you are witnessing or if the behavior continues, the following guidelines might be helpful in deciding whether to refer this behavior to the appropriate university resources.

Consider seeking assistance if you observe:

- Sudden, significant, and persistent changes in behavior, appearance, class participation, hygiene, or attendance***
- Nonsensical, hard-to-follow thoughts in written work, class discussion, emails, or personal conversations***
- Irrational outbursts or inappropriate demonstrations of emotion***

RESPONDING TO STUDENTS IN DISTRESS

A single indicator, by itself, may simply mean that a student is having an “off” day; however, any one serious sign (e.g., a student writes a paper expressing hopelessness and thoughts of suicide) or a cluster of smaller signs (e.g., emotional outbursts, repeated absences, and noticeable cuts on the arm taken together) calls for action. Expressing your concern directly to the student is the best option. During the conversation, point out any specific behaviors you have observed in a non-judgmental manner. You might, for example, tell a student you have noticed that she often falls asleep in class, not that you think he or she is taking drugs.

BE AN ACTIVE LISTENER

- Listen attentively and encourage the student to talk. (“Tell me more about that.”)
- Ask open-ended, non-judgmental questions that deal directly with the issues without judging. (“What problems has that situation caused you?”)
- Communicate understanding by paraphrasing what the student has said, including both content and feeling. (“It sounds like you’re not accustomed to such a big city, and you’re feeling lost.”)
- Ask the student what he or she thinks could help.
- Empathize with the feelings being expressed. Consider the perspective of the student.
- Help the student realize that there are options and that things will not always seem hopeless or be so difficult.

KNOW THE LIMITS OF YOUR ROLE

- Do not take on the role of counselor. Listen, care, and offer resources.
- Maintain the professional nature of the faculty-student or staff-student relationship.
- Be clear and consistent with the message of support and the scope of help.
- Maintain consistent expectations of appropriate student behavior, especially of academic performance. “Feeling sorry” for a student is not always the best foundation for wise counsel.
- Avoid making promises of confidentiality.

MAKE A REFERRAL

- Try to normalize the need to ask for help as much as possible. Convey the spirit of hopefulness and that troublesome situations can and do get better.
- Suggest resources: friends, family, clergy, or campus professional help. Share information about the suggested resource and the potential benefit. (“I know the folks in that office, and they are really good at helping students work through these kinds of situations.”) Focus on one resource that seems particularly relevant.
- Alert the appropriate office or administrator as soon as the referral has been made—this ensures that the student is served promptly.
- If a student seems reluctant to accept a referral, suggest the student try it once.
- Offer to make the phone call for the student.
- Walk the student over to the referral, if needed or desired.
- End the conversation in a way that leaves open the possibility for further discussion. Keep the lines of communication open. Invite the student back to follow up.

ACCEPT A STUDENT’S RELUCTANCE TO SEEK HELP

- Unless the student is suicidal or a danger to others, he or she must make his or her own decisions about taking advantage of the resources available. If the student says, “I’ll think about it,” that’s okay. Invite the student to get back in touch in a day or two.
- An offer of help may be rejected. A student may deny problems exist because it is difficult to admit that he or she needs help. The student might assume that things will get better soon. Take time to listen to the student’s fears and concerns about seeking help. Let the student know that the referral comes as a result of concern for his or her well-being.
- Outreach is like planting a seed of information, concern, and support that may be useful in the future.

DIFFUSE ANGER; CALM A HEATED CONVERSATION

- Acknowledge anger and frustration calmly. (“I can see how upset you are because you feel your rights are being violated and no one is listening to you.”)
- Allow the venting of feelings and frustrations.
- Calmly insist that verbal abuse is

unacceptable. ("When you are yelling, it is hard to listen.")

- Avoid arguing, shouting, showing hostility, or threatening a student.
- Never touch a student.
- Stop the conversation if anger continues to escalate.
- If necessary, walk away from the situation and seek immediate help from Campus Security, or, if there is threat of violence, call 911.

If there is an imminent threat of harm, call Campus Security at 212.229.7001 (24 hours).

DEAL WITH DRUG AND ALCOHOL ABUSE

- Address behaviors without making judgments.
- Use the observable facts to substantiate your concern.
- Recognize that impairment of short-term memory, concentration, mood, motor behavior, interpersonal relationships, and academic and work performance may all be related to drug and alcohol abuse.
- Refer a student to campus resources such as Counseling Services to help address a possible drug- or alcohol-related problem.

CALL 911 IN THE FOLLOWING EMERGENCY SITUATIONS

- Out of control, violent, and/or homicidal or suicidal behavior
- Seizures (convulsions)
- Obvious difficult or painful breathing
- Deep wound or other clear indication of severe physical injury
- Unconsciousness or complaint about losing consciousness, sight, hearing, or other life function
- Hearing or seeing things, swirling or dizziness, intense pain, or strange sensations
- Inability to speak, walk, or otherwise communicate
- Signs of dangerous level of intoxication (Never assume that an intoxicated student has given accurate information about the nature or quantity of what has been ingested.)
- Student complaining about possible life-threatening symptoms or requesting emergency services

Note: Follow the advice of 911. After calling 911, contact security at 212.229.7001 and notify them of the situation. Do not leave the distressed student alone. Send someone to the entrance of the building to show the emergency medical staff where to go upon arrival. Security will contact Student Support and Crisis Management. Once the student is in the hands of emergency medical staff, write an incident report. See below for details.

INCIDENT REPORTS

An incident report is a tool to document concerns about a student and share that information with those who need to know. Examples of concerns can include disruptive behavior that continues despite intervention; behavior that raises concerns about a student's health or safety or the safety of others; or disturbing written content on a class assignment, such as an essay. Once an incident report is submitted, the information within it can be reviewed and appropriate action can be taken. These actions can include issuing a warning, removing a student from class, initiating a leave of absence, or requiring a health assessment. Faculty and staff are encouraged to write incident reports as soon as there is concern about a student. All incident reports in which students are named should be sent to Student Rights and Responsibilities.

The incident report form is available on the Student Rights and Responsibilities webpage at www.newschool.edu/student-services/rights.

Guidelines for writing a report are provided and include the following:

- Focus on observable behaviors (e.g., student has noticeable body odor).
- Provide specifics (e.g., how often the particular behavior is observed).
- Avoid labels (e.g., don't describe someone as "crazy").

It is important to know that a student has a right to see any incident report in which he or she is named. Incident reports should be written with that in mind. If there are concerns about a student's behavior but discomfort writing about these concerns, contact Student Rights and Responsibilities for guidance.

Situations Causing Student Distress

STUDENT RECEIVES DISAPPOINTING OR BAD NEWS

A student might receive bad news at school—he or she has failed a test, or, worse, a course, or even that he or she is being dismissed from the university. Sometimes bad news comes from home—a family member has been diagnosed with a life-threatening illness or has died, for example. Receiving bad news can trigger a wide range of emotions and may have a serious impact on a student's sense of well-being. In the worst cases, it might precipitate a deep depression, bring on thoughts of suicide, lead to a wild drinking or drug binge, magnify a preexisting eating disorder, etc.

If you are responsible for delivering disappointing or bad news to a student, it is best to do so in person. In your conversation with the student, try to use unambiguous language that clearly explains the situation. It is helpful to plan what to say in advance. Ask the student how he or she is doing after sharing the disappointing news. If the student does get upset or angry, validate these emotions and express understanding. Avoid giving false hope. Have names, phone numbers, and email addresses for individuals and offices that the student can contact to discuss the situation and his or her feelings. Try not to deliver bad news on Friday, particularly late in the day; it is better for a student to hear bad news during the week, when university offices are open and support is readily available.

STUDENT EXPERIENCES CULTURE SHOCK

Living and studying away from home may cause culture shock—the feeling of not knowing how to do things or what is appropriate or inappropriate. Culture shock can affect students from other places around the country and those from around the world when they arrive in New York City.

Common symptoms of culture shock are sadness, loneliness, melancholy, inexplicable crying, and longing for family; feelings of powerlessness; preoccupation with health, aches and pains, allergies, insomnia; sleeping too much; anger, irritability, and resentment; and an unwillingness to interact with others.

You can help a student experiencing culture shock by assuring him or her that feelings of turmoil and uncertainty

are normal. Emphasize that many students use the support services of the university as a tool to succeed in school; for example, suggest that a student from another country take advantage of programs offered by International Student Services to learn about living in New York and in the United States. If the problem of culture shock seems particularly severe, refer the student to Student Support and Crisis Management, or perhaps to Counseling Services, where the student can speak confidentially to a counselor.



HEALTH PROBLEMS INTERFERE WITH DAILY LIFE

Most college students do not require more than routine check-ups and regular screenings to remain healthy, vibrant, and active. There are some students, however, who come to college with a history of health issues, which may be chronic, acute, or recurring. Others may develop significant illnesses or conditions while in college.

Illness, regardless of its nature, may cause disruption in a student's academic life and have an impact on his or her mental state. Something as common as an intestinal bug or seasonal flu can zap a student's energy for a week or more. Other conditions, such as diabetes, migraine headaches, mononucleosis, pregnancy, or an eating disorder may require a much longer adjustment, support, or accommodation. Each student will demonstrate a different level of comfort in sharing information about her or his health. It is important to understand that a student has a right to keep health information confidential.

If a student is willing to discuss his or her health issues with you, encourage the student to make an appointment

at Medical or Counseling Services if he or she has not been seen by a health care provider and medical attention seems appropriate. If you become aware that a student might need accommodations for a disability, contact Student Disability Services, where staff will work with the student to make sure his or her needs are addressed.

A student who has been seen by Medical or Counseling Services may receive written confirmation that he or she was seen by a clinician. That confirmation will not, however, indicate diagnosis or treatment, and it is not a waiver that can excuse missing classes. This practice is consistent with the recommendations of the American College Health Association and resembles the practices of other universities.

FAMILY CRISIS

Normal stress is compounded when a family encounters a crisis. Crises can include divorce, death, job loss, financial hardship, physical or mental illness, legal issues, or anything that disrupts a family's normal functioning. What constitutes a "family" for many students may not fit the Western European or North American nuclear ideal. Many cultures define "family" more broadly than one's immediate blood relatives. Some families require older children to take on some of the financial and decision making responsibilities. Some international students are caregivers for their siblings in the United States while their parents are back home. Some students are caregivers of their non-English-speaking parents who live in the United States. These expectations make juggling a family crisis with academic responsibilities especially difficult and may lead to feelings of distress and despair in students.

You can consult with academic advisors about reasonable accommodations for a student who is in the midst of a family crisis, and you can also refer him or her to Academic Advising or Student Support and Crisis Management.

ABUSIVE PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP

Experiencing abuse—psychological, sexual, or physical—can have many negative ramifications for a student's emotional and physical well-being. While it is impossible to know what goes on behind closed doors, there are noticeable warning signs that a student may be involved in an abusive relationship. Some

of the signs a student might exhibit include the following: appears afraid or anxious; receives frequent, harassing phone calls; talks about a partner's temper, jealousy, or possessiveness; has frequent injuries that are explained as "accidents"; frequently misses work or school without explanation; wears clothing that seems intended to hide bruises or scars (like long sleeves in summer or sunglasses indoors); has unexpected and unexplained money problems; exhibits major personality changes (an outgoing person becomes withdrawn); begins performing poorly or threatens to drop out of school. Some of these symptoms may arise from other causes, but they should always be cause for concern.

If you suspect a student is being abused, let him or her know of your concern. It is natural to want to encourage a student to leave an abusive relationship, but don't. National crime data shows that the highest risk for the escalation of violence occurs when the victimized partner leaves, so it is important for a student to work with counselors and other professionals to create an exit plan that will keep him or her safe. Inform the student that help is available on and off campus 24 hours per day.

VICTIM OF STALKING

Stalking takes many forms, but some of the more prominent types include overtly or covertly following a student; secretly waiting for the student to arrive home; making inappropriate phone calls; obsessively communicating either directly with the student or through his or her friends; communicating with increasing frequency and intensity; making threats and using intimidation tactics. In most situations, a student is dealing with an ex-partner, but others may become the targets of obsessive attention, as well. Many states, including New York, have enacted anti-stalking laws to stop this type of harassment. Being stalked can cause a student to feel a great deal of fear and anxiety, making it difficult for him or her to focus on studies.

If a student tells you he or she is afraid of a stalker, the situation may be dangerous; strongly urge the student to consult with Campus Security, who will discuss options with him or her.

VICTIM OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Sexual harassment is conduct that exploits power or authority in order to elicit sexual submission or that creates an intimidating, hostile, or abusive environment for working, learning, or enjoying other opportunities and activities. Examples of harassment include demanding sexual acts in exchange for maintaining or enhancing academic benefits; persistent, pervasive, or severe unwelcome sexual behavior a student finds hostile or offensive. Sexual harassment can occur between or within genders.

There are many types of sexual harassment, including coercing sexual relations and the inappropriate sexualization of the working or learning environment with words, materials, or behaviors. Other types of sexual harassment include communicating via phone, email, websites, chat groups, fax, or letters; giving of unwanted gifts; displays of sexual material; and unwanted physical contact. A one-time incident can be considered harassment.

As a result of sexual harassment, a student may experience emotions such as shame, anger, fear, and denial and may display signs of distress. A caring response allows him or her to feel some control in choosing a course of action. If you become aware that a student is being sexually harassed, refer him or her to Student Rights and Responsibilities to make a report. If the student feels unsafe at any time, refer him or her to Campus Security immediately. If the student wishes to speak to someone confidentially, refer him or her to Counseling Services.

The university's sexual harassment policy is published on the website at www.newschool.edu/student-services/rights.

VICTIM OF SEXUAL ASSAULT

Sexual assault is any sexual touching by an individual or group upon an individual or group without consent or with the use of threat or force. Sexual assault also includes sexual exploitation, which includes when a person takes non-consensual or abusive sexual advantage of another for his or her own advantage or benefit, or to benefit or advantage anyone other than the one being exploited. Perpetrator and victim can be of any gender, and the assault can be made using any object or body part.

Psychologically, this kind of trauma can have many different effects. A student who has been the victim of sexual assault may have difficulty concentrating and studying, experience flashbacks and have trouble sleeping, feel powerless or not in control, have bouts of sadness and depression, and have recurrent nightmares. It is not uncommon for a victim to remain silent about sexual assault, hoping the emotional pain will go away and pretending that if no one knows “It didn't happen.” Victims sometimes do not seek police or legal assistance for fear that their own behavior, such as drinking or consensual sexual relations, will be criticized, but the university strongly encourages students to come forward and report instances of sexual assault.

When a student does disclose a sexual assault, listen attentively and respond sensitively. Open-ended questions such as “How can I help?” or “What do you need?” convey your support and will help start the healing process. It is important to immediately refer the student to Student Support and Crisis Management, Student Rights and Responsibilities, or Campus Security. Once a report is filed, the university official receiving the report or another appropriate official will provide the student with the following information: a clear explanation of the university investigative and hearing procedures, where to obtain medical care, legal options, and how to access support services on and off campus. A student who has been a victim of sexual assault may require time away from school to heal physically and emotionally and/or pursue judicial or criminal action. If this is the case, Student Support and Crisis Management can help the student identify the people and paperwork he or she needs to apply for a leave of absence.

Several offices on campus—including Medical Services, Counseling Services, Campus Security, and Student Support and Crisis Management—can help a student who has been the victim of sexual assault. If another member of the university community committed the assault, the victim has the right to file a complaint with the office of Student Rights and Responsibilities.

The university's policy on sexual assault and the complaint procedure may be found at www.newschool.edu/student-services/rights.

VICTIM OF DISCRIMINATION OR DISCRIMINATORY HARASSMENT

Discrimination is unfair, prejudicial treatment of an individual or group based on race, ethnic identity, social class, gender, sexual orientation, disability, etc. In extreme cases, discrimination can rise to the level of harassment or even “hate crimes,” the latter defined as violence directed against people or property that is motivated by hatred of a class or category or person.



Discrimination and harassment can cause a victim severe emotional distress with consequences ranging from lower academic performance and social withdrawal to thoughts of suicide or retaliatory violence. The New School is committed to fostering and preserving a climate of diversity and inclusion. It is important that all members of the community react accordingly when they

become aware of discrimination or discriminatory harassment. If you discover that a student feels he or she has been discriminated against for any reason, advise him or her to contact Student Rights and Responsibilities. A student who has experienced discrimination or harassment is likely to recover more quickly when given support and access to appropriate resources as soon as possible after the incident occurs.

Any student who reports he or she has been the victim of a hate crime should be advised to contact Campus Security and Student Rights and Responsibilities about the situation. The student will be offered a range of support services, which may include assistance in filing a police report, access to Medical and Counseling Services, and assistance from Student Support and Crisis Management.

The university's policy on discrimination and related subjects may be found at www.newschool.edu/student-services/rights.

If there is ever an imminent threat of violence or injury, call 911 without delay.

Student Behaviors Warranting Concern

DISAPPEARANCE FROM CAMPUS

Any member of the university community who believes that a student has gone missing should submit an incident report to Student Rights and Responsibilities. The Incident Report should include all pertinent information and address the questions below:

- Is the student missing from campus, his or her residence, or another location?*
- Is there a witness to or physical evidence of abduction or other foul play?*
- Is the student despondent or known to have psychological or medical problems?*
- Is the student experiencing academic, personal, or financial problems?*
- Has the student disappeared before?*
- Is the student known to have a problem with alcohol and/or other drugs?*
- Has the student received any threats or warnings?*
- What is the student's lifestyle? Does the student have a criminal record?*
- Did the student or perpetrator leave a note?*
- Have similar incidents (attempted abductions, suspicious persons) been reported within the area?*

After a report is filed indicating that a student is missing, the next step will be to try and contact him or her using the information the university has on file. After four hours, if the student is still missing, the university will get in touch with his or her emergency contact. If the student is still missing 20 hours after the university's outreach to the emergency contact, the missing student's parents and the local authorities will be notified that he or she has been missing for 24 hours. Student Services and Campus Security will follow established legal protocol in helping local law enforcement to locate the missing student. If the student is located, his or her health and well-being is the top priority—refer to the appropriate support services.

Note: Please be sure that all avenues of investigation (outreach by email and telephone, confirmation that student has not attended any classes, a personal visit if the student resides in university housing) have been exhausted before filing an Incident Report stating the student is a missing person.

CREATING DISTURBING CONTENT IN WRITTEN OR ARTISTIC WORK

It is not always clear when disturbing content in student work is a warning sign of emotional problems. To make a better judgment about a student's state of mental health, reflect on his or her behavior otherwise. For example, if a student who writes about suicide also appears to be sad, withdrawn, or angry, the writing may be cause for concern. If disturbing content, especially if reinforced by disturbing demeanor, rises to a level of concern, it is a good idea to speak directly but informally to the student about your concern. It is legitimate to ask a student what inspired the work in question. In the case above, you might lead a conversation about the "disturbing" content of the student's writing in the direction of inquiring about whether the student is thinking about suicide. If the student admits to being distressed, show your concern. Even a small caring gesture or word can be very reassuring. Then, encourage the student to contact Counseling Services.

MAKING THREATS OR EXHIBITING EXTREME ANGER

When a student is faced with a frustrating situation, he or she may become angry and direct that anger toward others. If you are comfortable with doing so, meet with the student and ask him or her what is causing his or her anger and how he or she can change the behavior that is causing a problem. Not every student who expresses anger is a threat, but to avoid problems make sure other staff or faculty members are nearby when meeting with the student. If the student acknowledges having anger management issues, refer him or her to the proper office or person who can help diffuse the cause of the problem (e.g., stress, learning difficulties, or personal issues). If the student does not change his or her behavior, complete an Incident Report, identifying your specific concerns: the student is rude, speaks in a loud or threatening manner, or makes threats, for example.

ABUSING DRUGS OR ALCOHOL

Sometimes students who are having trouble coping turn to drugs or alcohol as an escape. These students are then at risk for a host of physical, mental, emotional, and social problems. Alcohol is the most commonly abused substance on college campuses, and it can cause serious problems for students. Some of the signs that might help you identify students who are abusing drugs or alcohol include the following: the smell of alcohol or marijuana

on breath or clothes; hand tremors; watery or blood shot eyes; frequent bruises, cuts, or other injuries; frequently missed classes; continuous excuses for submitting work late or not at all; extreme negativism (“don’t care” attitude); bragging about the amount of alcohol or other drugs used. It is important to address what you observe in a factual manner without making judgments about the person. Refer a student to campus resources such as Counseling Services to help address a possible drug- or alcohol-related problem.

SELF-INJURY

Self-injury, often referred to as “self-mutilation” or “cutting,” refers to an individual intentionally inflicting harm on his or her body without suicidal intent but in ways not socially recognized or sanctioned. Self-injury is most commonly associated with carving or cutting the skin, subdermal tissue scratching, burning, ripping or pulling skin or hair, swallowing toxic substances, or bruising oneself or breaking bones. Intervening in cases of compulsive self-injury can be difficult. The practice is often secretive and involves body parts that are relatively easy to hide. Unexplained burns, cuts, scars, or other clusters of similar markings on the skin can be signs of self-injurious behavior. Other signs include inappropriate dress for season (consistently wearing long sleeves in summer), constant use of wristbands/coverings, unwillingness to participate in activities that require less body coverage (such as athletic activities), frequent bandages, or displaying odd paraphernalia (e.g., razor blades or other cutting implements), combined with signs of depression or anxiety.

If you suspect that a student needs help with issues of self-injury, ask, in a casual way, emotionally neutral questions about the injuries or other signs that prompt your concern. Don’t be surprised if you get evasive responses. Self-injury is often motivated by and creates intense feelings of shame and guilt that often prevent the sufferer from seeking help. A student who self-injures may, however, need and want attention. If you probe gently and use neutral questions, you may elicit honest responses. Refer any student you think has issues with self-injury to Student Support and Crisis Management or Counseling Services.

CONTEMPLATING SUICIDE

Passing thoughts about death and suicide are common among students. Some polls say that over 70 percent of people have these thoughts. The difference between a passing thought and a serious risk is vast; however, it is best to err on the side of safety and take all direct or indirect references to death or suicide seriously. A student who is feeling suicidal may be relieved when someone finally asks, “Are you thinking of killing yourself?” because she or he no longer has to struggle with these feelings alone. If a student is not contemplating suicide, asking the question will not “put ideas in her head.” Counseling and, sometimes, medication can help a student who is suicidal. Hospitalization for a short time may enable medications to take effect, ensure immediate safety, and help connect with resources.

WARNING SIGNS OF SUICIDE THAT DEMAND IMMEDIATE ACTION

- Student announces intention to kill himself or herself***
- Student talks or writes about suicide or death in a way that seems ominous***
- Student sends cryptic or indirect messages (“I wish I were dead”; “You’ll be better off without me”; “Soon you won’t have to worry about me”; “Time is running out”) expressing feelings that life is meaningless***
- Student gives away prized possessions without explanation***
- Student otherwise describes or exhibits feelings of desperation or intense psychic pain***
- Student obtains a weapon or other articles that could be used to inflict self harm***

The staff of Student Support and Crisis Management and Counseling Services are available to discuss your concerns about any student.

If there is an immediate threat of harm, call Campus Security at 212.229.7001 (24 hours).

Appendix 1:

Glossary of Common Mental Health Terms

DEPRESSION

There is no single known cause for depression. Potential factors for developing depression include a family history of depression, life events such as death of a loved one, early trauma, chronic stress, and alcohol/drug abuse. A student, like most other people, will experience feelings of sadness in her or his life. Usually, these feelings run their course and do not have a major impact on the capacity to function for a prolonged period of time. However, when depressed feelings persist, it is important to seek help.

COMMON SIGNS OF DEPRESSION:

- Persistently sad, irritable mood or apathy***
- Difficulty thinking, concentrating, and remembering***
- Lack of interest in or pleasure from activities that were once enjoyed***
- Feelings of guilt, worthlessness, hopelessness, and emptiness***
- Morbid thoughts of death or suicide***
- Decreased energy and fatigue***

The most severe form of depression, major depression, is persistent and can significantly interfere with a student's thoughts, behavior, mood, activity, and physical health. Without treatment, the frequency of major depression as well as the severity of symptoms tends to increase over time, including contemplation of suicide.

BIPOLAR DISORDER

Bipolar disorder, or manic depression, is an illness that causes extreme shifts in mood, energy, and functioning. These changes may be subtle or dramatic and typically vary greatly from one student to another. Bipolar disorder is characterized by episodes of mania and depression that can last from days to months. A student diagnosed with bipolar disorder will generally require some sort of lifelong treatment. Medication is one key element in successful treatment of bipolar disorder. Others include psychotherapy, support, and education.

ANXIETY

Anxiety is a natural response to stress with symptoms ranging from increased heart rate and loss of appetite to a general feeling of nervousness. The anxiety can be of a general nature, or the anxiety can be specific, such as social anxiety or a phobia. A student may feel anxiety from a number of sources. Anxiety may interfere with a student's academic functioning by causing him or her to lose the ability to concentrate, process information, comprehend, or memorize material effectively. In addition, anxiety may make it difficult to manage time and tasks effectively.

PANIC

Panic attacks are characterized by palpitations, sweating, trembling, sensations of shortness of breath, feelings of choking, chest pain, feeling dizzy, fear of losing control, fear of dying, numbness, and chills or hot flashes. Panic attacks typically last about 10 minutes, but may be shorter or longer. During the attack, the physical and emotional symptoms increase quickly in a crescendo-like way and then subside. A student may feel anxious and jittery for many hours afterward.

PHOBIAS

Phobias are irrational, involuntary, and inappropriate fears of (or responses to) ordinary situations or things. Phobias can severely restrict a person's activities. They fall into three categories: specific phobia (e.g., unreasonable fear of cockroaches), social phobia, and agoraphobia (fear of crowds). A student who has a phobia may experience a panic attack when confronted with the fearful situation or object.

POST-TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER (PTSD)

It is quite normal for a person to experience emotional and physical aftershocks or stress reactions following a traumatic event such as a natural disaster, physical abuse, sexual assault, war, or a severe car crash. The event can trigger feelings of helplessness and fear, sometimes leading to an anxiety disorder called Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). A student suffering from PTSD may find it difficult to function in daily life and may suffer from the following: intrusive thoughts and nightmares about the event; anxiety, guilt, or depression; feeling numb and disconnected from others; or flashbacks. These aftershocks may appear immediately following the event. Sometimes it takes days, weeks, or even months before stress

reactions appear. Depending on the severity of the event, the signs and symptoms of these reactions may last a few days, several weeks, or longer. The manner in which a student copes with crisis depends on personal history and prior experiences. Professional assistance may be necessary in order to cope with PTSD.

OBSESSIVE-COMPULSIVE DISORDER (OCD)

Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder (OCD) is characterized by recurrent obsessions (intrusive, irrational thoughts) and/or compulsions (repetitive rituals) that interfere substantially with how a student functions. OCD occurs when the obsessions or compulsions are severe enough to cause serious distress, occur consistently, and interfere with daily functioning. A student with OCD often attempts to hide the problem rather than seek help. He or she can be remarkably successful in the endeavor to conceal the behavior and may not, unfortunately, receive professional help until years after onset.

PSYCHOTIC DISORDERS AND SCHIZOPHRENIA

Psychotic disorders are serious illnesses that impair an individual's ability to think clearly, behave appropriately, make good judgments, communicate effectively, and understand reality. Even the most severe psychotic disorders are usually treatable. When symptoms are severe, a person with a psychotic disorder may be unable to meet the ordinary demands of daily life. There are different types of psychotic disorders, the most serious being schizophrenia. These disorders most often first appear in the late teen years, 20s, or 30s. It is not uncommon for a person to have a first psychotic breakdown as a student in college.

ATTENTION-DEFICIT DISORDER

Attention-Deficit Disorder (ADD) or Attention-Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) is an illness characterized by inattention, hyperactivity, and impulsivity. Noticeable symptoms include organizational difficulties, attentional difficulties, consistently losing objects, excessive restlessness or fidgeting, incomplete tasks, and strangely impulsive behavior. A student exhibiting these symptoms can benefit from a psycho-educational assessment to determine if ADD or ADHD is a proper diagnosis. Psycho-education assessments are available on campus at Student Health Services or off campus.

EATING DISORDERS

An eating disorder can permeate all aspects of a student's life. These illnesses are caused by a variety of emotional factors and influences. Eating disorders include Anorexia Nervosa, Bulimia Nervosa, Compulsive Overeating, and Disturbed Eating Patterns. They range from mild to life-threatening. Timely treatment for all eating disorders is recommended to avoid worsening symptoms and long-term complications.

BEHAVIORAL SIGNS OF ANOREXIA NERVOSA:

- Obsessive exercise, calorie, and fat gram counting***
- Starvation and restriction of food***
- At least 15 percent below a healthy body weight***
- Self-induced vomiting***
- Use of diet pills***
- Use of laxatives or diuretics to control weight***
- Persistent concern with body image***
- Amenorrhea in women***

BEHAVIORAL SIGNS OF BULIMIA NERVOSA:

- Recurring episodes of rapid food consumption followed by tremendous guilt and purging (laxatives, enemas, self-induced vomiting, excessive exercise)***
- Lacking control over eating behaviors***
- Regularly engaging in stringent diet plans and exercise***
- Misuse of laxatives, diuretics, and/or diet pills***
- Persistent concern with body image***

Appendix 2:

Student Services Offices and Contact Information

A NETWORK OF SUPPORT

The material in this guide has focused on recognizing and responding to students in distress. As members of The New School community, each of us has a role to play to ensure that a struggling student receives appropriate support and, when necessary, treatment. Working together, we can optimize the potential for a student, whether facing a momentary hurdle or a serious mental illness, to succeed. Continued collaboration and connection of all of the dots are the key components to ensure that our process continues to be proactive, responsive, and prepared for the unexpected.

It is important to note that, in addition to recognizing and responding to students in distress, the university provides numerous opportunities for a student to learn about and engage in healthy living practices. Health is not just the absence of illness. It encompasses a sense of biological, psychological, and spiritual well-being. It includes the presence of the following:

- Close personal relationships**
- Strong connections to the community**
- A sense of purpose and meaning**
- Family support**
- Problem solving skills**
- Conflict resolution skills**
- A healthy lifestyle (sleep, exercise, and nutrition)**
- Accessible and effective health care**

Promote general health and well-being by encouraging students to get involved and take advantage of resources on and off campus. Some suggestions:

- Encourage a student to assume a leadership position such as peer health advocate, resident advisor, or student organization leader.**
- Partner with students and Student Services staff on projects that build community and promote health.**
- Include information about support services and events on departmental web pages, emails, bulletin boards, and newsletters.**
- Include a statement in your course syllabus about asking for help when needed, for example: "If you experience personal or academic stress at any time during the semester**

and need to talk to someone who can help, contact your academic advisor, Student Support and Crisis Management, or Student Health Services."

-Make your space a "Safe Zone" for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and intersex students. To receive Safe Zone training information email safezone@newschool.edu.

-Identify opportunities for curricular integration where Student Services staff can offer guest lectures on issues of health and well-being.

-Encourage civic engagement activities by students. Student Development and Activities organizes a wide range of volunteer activities with New York Cares.

There is an extensive network of support for students at The New School. This support network includes faculty and academic advisors. Get to know these partners. It includes Campus Security, available around the clock to help ensure that students are safe. It includes a vast array of public and private services throughout New York City. The following list details our own Student Services support network. Never hesitate to reach out to us. Remember, support begins with listening. Your commitment to our students is invaluable.

CAREER DEVELOPMENT

Career Development provides innovative programming, counseling, educational resources, and opportunities to network and build positive relationships between The New School and the world.

Address: 79 Fifth Avenue, 5th floor

Phone: 212.229.1324

Website: www.newschool.edu/student-services/careers

Email: careers@newschool.edu



COUNSELING SERVICES

Counseling Services offers crisis intervention, brief counseling (12 sessions per academic year), psychiatric evaluation and medication management, group therapy, art therapy, low-cost psycho-educational assessments, and referrals to community-based and specialized services. Students are encouraged to seek appointments for any concern or problem. Students who request or require ongoing treatment will be referred to an off-campus professional.

Address: 80 Fifth Avenue, 3rd floor

Phone: 212.229.1671

Website: www.newschool.edu/student-services/health/counseling-services/

Email: shs@newschool.edu

HIGHER EDUCATION OPPORTUNITY PROGRAM (HEOP)

HEOP provides academic support (tutoring and counseling) and financial assistance to students enrolled at Parsons or Lang through this program.

Address: 90 Fifth Avenue, 2nd floor

Phone: 212.229.8996

Website: www.newschool.edu/student-services/intercultural/HEOP

Email: heop@newschool.edu

INTERNATIONAL STUDENT SERVICES (ISS)

International Student Services staff is available to assist faculty and staff with any suggestions, questions, or concerns about international students or scholars.

Address: 79 Fifth Avenue, 5th floor

Phone: 212.229.5592

Website: www.newschool.edu/student-services/international

Email: iss@newschool.edu

MEDICAL SERVICES

Medical Services offers primary medical care: health assessments, physical exams, diagnosis and treatment of illnesses and injuries, management of chronic health problems, and pharmacy services. For issues that require consultation with a specialist, Medical Services provides and helps coordinate referrals. Routine office visits are by appointment, but there are same-day and next-day appointments available for urgent concerns. Medical Services is not equipped to handle emergencies—for medical emergencies, call 911.

Address: 80 Fifth Avenue, 3rd floor

Phone: 212.229.1671

Website: www.newschool.edu/student-services/health/medical-services

Email: shs@newschool.edu

INTERCULTURAL SUPPORT (OIS)

Intercultural Support (OIS) works with students of diverse backgrounds to build and establish community at The New School. The OIS offers individual advising services and sponsors events and workshops to promote intercultural awareness.

Address: 90 Fifth Avenue, 2nd floor

Phone: 212.229.8996

Website: www.newschool.edu/student-services/intercultural

Email: ois@newschool.edu

STUDENT DEVELOPMENT AND ACTIVITIES (OSDA)

Student Development and Activities provides meaningful student interaction outside the classroom through a range of social, cultural, leadership, educational, and recreational experiences.

Address: 90 Fifth Avenue, 2nd floor

Phone: 212.229.5687 x4603

Website: www.newschool.edu/student-services/development

Email: studev@newschool.edu

RECREATION AND INTRAMURAL SPORTS

Recreation and Intramural Sports offers students many ways to become physically active and meet new friends. Throughout the academic year, the office hosts weekly recreation programs and intramural team sports in addition to outdoor activities and special events. These events help students develop life skills such as working in groups, meeting new people, and relieving stress.

Address: 79 Fifth Avenue, 5th floor

Phone: 212.229.5900 x3801

Website: www.newschool.edu/student-services/recreation

Email: recreation@newschool.edu

STUDENT DISABILITY SERVICES (SDS)

Student Disability Services (SDS) helps students with disabilities obtain equal access to education and programmatic services by providing academic adjustments and accommodations. Examples of a disability can include mobility, visual, or hearing impairment; a learning disability; or a psychiatric or medical condition. The SDS webpage has a detailed faculty and staff resource page. This page includes information on working with students with disabilities, a suggested syllabus statement, tips for talking with students about disabilities and related services, and attendance and disability.

Address: 80 Fifth Avenue, 3rd floor

Phone: 212.229.5626 x3135

Website: www.newschool.edu/student-services/disability

Email: studentdisability@newschool.edu

STUDENT HEALTH INSURANCE

The Student Health Insurance office offers a central resource for students who need answers to insurance questions and advocacy for insurance problems.

Address: 80 Fifth Avenue, 3rd floor

Phone: 212.229.1671

Website: www.newschool.edu/health/health-insurance

Email: shs@newschool.edu

STUDENT HOUSING AND RESIDENCE LIFE

Student Residence Halls house more than 1,700 students in Greenwich Village, Chelsea, and Lower Manhattan. There is 24-hour security coverage, and a professional staff member lives in each residence hall. Residence Hall staff and the resident advisors (RAs) are trained to handle personal crises and other emergencies should the need arise.

Address: 79 Fifth Avenue, 5th floor

Phone: 212.229.5459

(after 6:00 p.m. contact Campus Security)

Website: www.newschool.edu/student-services/housing

Email: myhome@newschool.edu



STUDENT OMBUDS

The Student Ombuds office provides guidance for all types of problems in a safe, supportive, and confidential manner. The activities of the office supplement but do not replace the existing resources for conflict resolution and fair practice. Student Ombuds has dealt with conflicts with faculty and other students, trouble negotiating a school policy or procedure, and complaints about a school office or procedure. The tenets of confidentiality, neutrality, informality, and independence are absolute and non-negotiable. Therefore, a visitor cannot request that the Ombuds staff breach any of these tenets.

Address: 79 Fifth Avenue, 5th floor

Phone: 212.229.8996

Website: www.newschool.edu/student-services/intercultural/ombuds

STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Student Rights and Responsibilities works with students and university policy to ensure that the university living and learning environment is positive and safe. The office provides guidance about students' rights and responsibilities as an individual student and as a part of the larger community.

Address: 79 Fifth Avenue, 5th floor

Phone: 212.229.5349 x3653

Website: www.newschool.edu/student-services/rights

STUDENT SUPPORT AND CRISIS MANAGEMENT (SSCM)

The primary role of Student Support and Crisis Management (SSCM) is to support students who find themselves in crisis situations. SSCM helps them secure safety, obtain needed resources for stabilization, and return to normal functioning. SSCM works with faculty and staff to direct students and parents, family members, or guardians to appropriate resources and services on and off campus. In addition, SSCM works with faculty, staff, and fellow students to identify students who are struggling with non-academic problems and develop a support network for them.

Address: 79 Fifth Avenue, 5th floor

Phone: 212.229.5900 x3189 or x3710

WELLNESS AND HEALTH PROMOTION

The Wellness and Health Promotion program empowers students; connects them to information, resources, and support; cultivates healthy attitudes, skills, and behaviors; and fosters a culture that values a healthy community. Professional health educators meet with students one-on-one, develop workshops, and provide interactive programs on a variety of health, wellness, and safety topics including, but not limited to, stress reduction, money management, time management, meditation, acupressure, nutrition and cooking, physical activity, smoking cessation, sexual health, depression, sexual assault, HIV/AIDS, harm reduction, and interpersonal violence.

Address: 80 Fifth Avenue, 3rd floor

Phone: 212.229.1671

Website: www.newschool.edu/student-services/health

Email: wellness@newschool.edu





THE NEW SCHOOL