

# MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID

## *Supporting students in crisis*

**Asses the risk of harm** Engage the person in a serious conversation about their risk.

Asking about suicide does not make it more likely for the person to commit suicide. Talking about it shows that you care and is often a great relief.

- Ask if the student is thinking of suicide or harming others
- Ask if they have a plan for suicide
- Ask about the supports, if they have a safety plan, if they will be **OK**

### **Listen non-judgmentally**

Avoid confrontation with the individual. Listen actively without being critical or showing frustration.

### **Give reassurance & information**

Help the person feel hopeful and to realize that effective help is available

### **Encourage the person to get professional help**

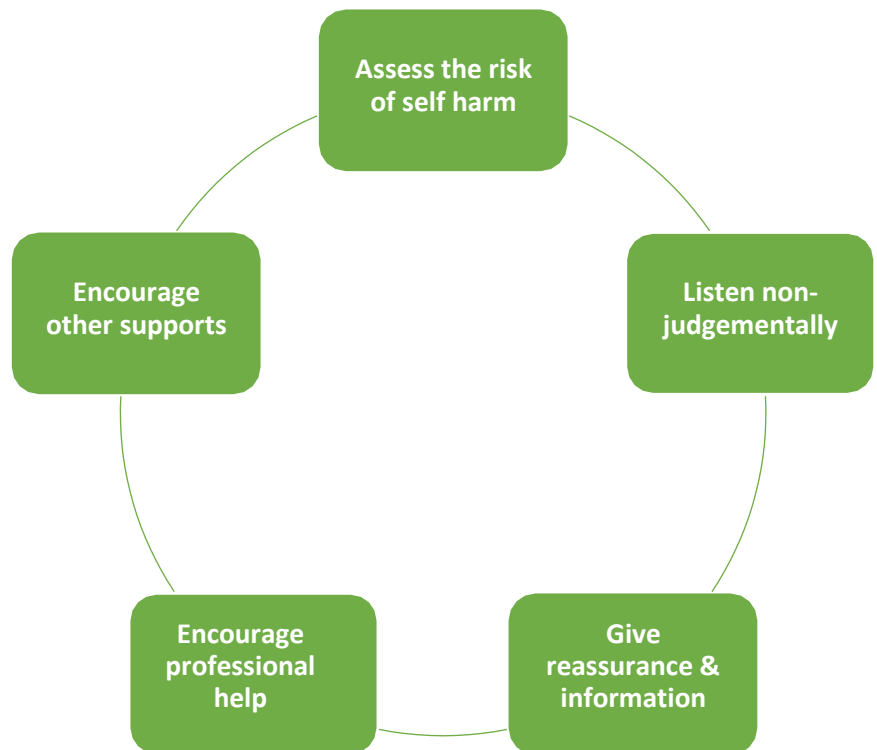
If you are with a person during business hours, encourage them / walk them to Counselling Services. If the student does not want to go, encourage them to connect with a friend or call a crisis phone line. Please **connect with the academic advisor** and share your concern or call Police Services directly if the student's safety is of immediate concern.

If it is after hours, encourage students to go to the hospital or use the helplines.

- Download **WatSafe** on their cell phones for immediate access to the helplines
  - Grand River Hospital – 519-749-4300
  - St. Mary's Hospital – 519-744-3311
  - Here 24/7 – 1-844-437-3247
  - Good2Talk [post-secondary student helpline] – 1-866-925-5454

### **Encourage other supports**

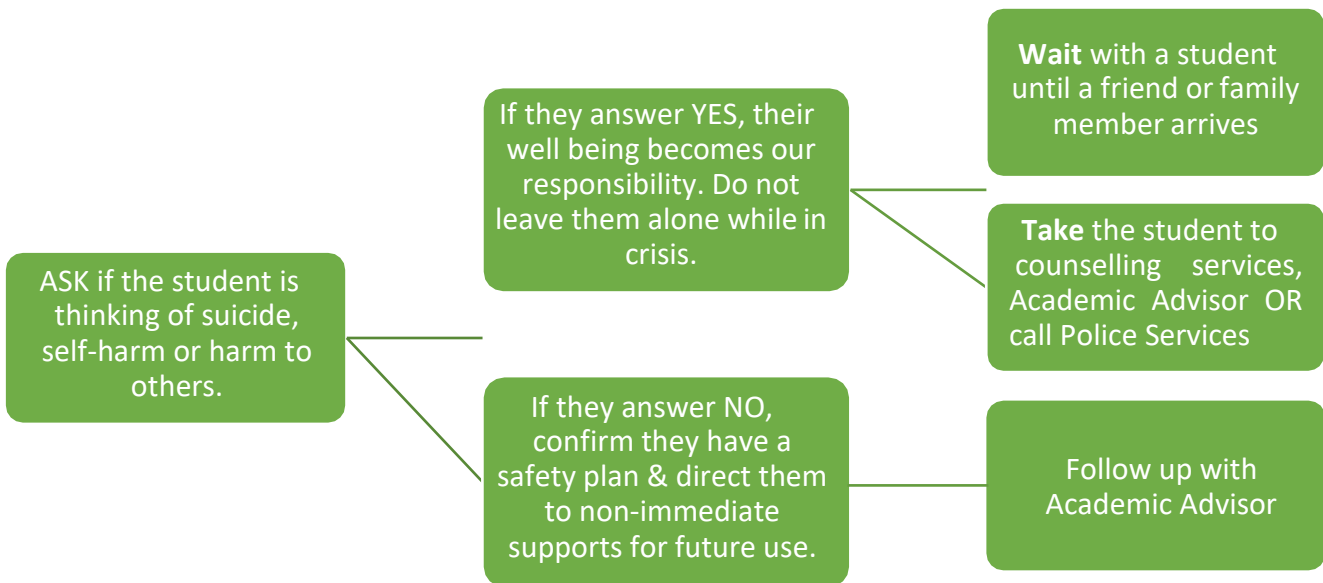
If the student is not in immediate danger, encourage them to engage in other supports



- Connect with their academic advisor
- UWMATES – A counselling based one-to-one peer support program offered by FEDS. UWMATES provides services to students who are experiencing social difficulties, mental health challenges and transitional challenges adapting to university life or different cultures.
- Coping skills seminars – 1hr seminars that cover resilience, motivation, managing emotions and challenging thinking
- Group therapy – Brings students together to find new perspectives on shared challenges

## If you have a student in crisis

*As faculty, staff and teaching assistants, we are not trained mental health professionals. Our role is to support our students by connecting students with the appropriate resources available.*



Once the student is out of immediate danger, connect with the Undergraduate Academic Advisor so they can check-in with the student and ensure they are getting the support they need.