

Students in distress...

How to recognize and respond to a student in distress

A moozoom is a learning platform that can provoke strong emotions and reactions!

The topics covered in moozoom may provoke strong emotions and reactions from your students, and that's completely fine! In fact, it's what you're aiming for, because by using moozoom and talking about topics that affect children, you're working on developing their emotion regulation skills. However, some students may be more fragile or may be going through difficult situations that can mean they are more impacted by moozoom and need more support beyond the tools provided with the platform.

B How do you recognize when a student is in distress?

- They may cry when you're working on a certain topic.
- They may cry during an activity or video.
- They may completely change their attitude when you're working on a certain topic. For example, they might become very quiet and withdrawn, whereas they are normally very talkative and outgoing. Or they might become very agitated, whereas they are normally very calm and quiet.
- They may become withdrawn.
- They may have trouble concentrating, which they do not normally struggle with.
- They may verbalize having experienced something that has disturbed them, such as bullying, rejection, humiliation, failure, etc.
- They may make comments that worry you, for example talking about or alluding to death, mentioning no longer wanting to be here, that they don't want to suffer anymore, etc.
- They may display self-harming behaviours or you may observe marks that you believe to have been caused by self-harm, such as suspicious-looking burns, cuts, scratches, etc.
- They may display signs of extreme tiredness that lead you to believe they are not sleeping enough.

C How should you react to a student in distress?

- You should start by speaking to the student in private to share your observations and worries.
- Create an environment of trust and ask them to share with you what is bothering them.
- Speak to their parents. Parents need to be informed as soon as possible if their child is showing signs of emotional distress at school.
- If the student is displaying signs of distress following something that has happened at school (for example, they have been rejected by their friends or have been bullied), work with their parents and other staff to implement the necessary means to put an end to whatever is happening and to prevent it from happening again.
- If required, and if you have the parent's approval, refer the student to a third party with whom they can speak and who will help them (special education technician, psychoeducator, psychologist or other professional).
- You can invite the child's parent to contact their physician or other healthcare provider for specialized services if required.
- Make yourself aware of the community resources available in your area so that you can refer to them for advice or direct parents to them as needed, such as suicide prevention hotlines, psychological support hotlines, crisis hotlines, children's support hotlines, etc.

D Warning

- moozoom tackle emotionally charged topics. If you yourself are affected by any of the topics or feel overwhelmed by your emotions, we recommend that you consult a professional.
- You may be tempted to take a student in distress under your wing and go above and beyond your role as teacher to provide them with emotional support. However, you should leave this to a qualified professional and continue to support the student without overstepping the boundaries of your teacher-student relationship. Be open and understanding, but don't try to fill the role of parent or psychologist.



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