



PARENT AND FAMILY GUIDE: SUPPORTING STUDENT MENTAL HEALTH

Created by the Office of the Chancellor, University Health and Counseling Services, and the Office of Prevention and Education at Northeastern

TABLE OF CONTENTS

The Transition to College 03

A Proactive Approach to Supporting Well-Being 04

Mental Health + College Students 08

Signs Your Student May Be Struggling 10

Support at Northeastern 11

Creating a Plan 13

When Should I Intervene? 15

 Addressing Concerning Behaviors 16

 Signs That Indicate Need for Urgent Intervention 18

 Emergency Situations That Require Immediate Intervention 19

Suicide: Recognizing and Responding to Concerns 20

Northeastern Resource Guide 23

Further Reading 27

THE TRANSITION TO COLLEGE

Your student has worked tremendously hard to get to Northeastern, and as a parent, guardian, or family member, you have offered immeasurable time and effort to support them in their endeavors. While the transition to college can be a joyful celebration of your student's accomplishments, it also comes with stress and uncertainty.

As your student begins to navigate their life at Northeastern and as an emerging adult, you will see shifts in relationship dynamics and the role you play in their life. Even though your student may be living away from home for the first time and gaining more autonomy and responsibility, this does not mean that you no longer have influence. As a parent, guardian, or other family member/support, what you say and do still matters. This is especially true with regard to your student's mental health and well-being.

Until this point in your student's life, you have likely taken an active role in doing things for them, such as scheduling appointments, coordinating with providers, and advocating for their needs. However, it is developmentally appropriate for your student to take on more responsibilities for themselves while at college. Additionally, it is important to keep in mind that there are limits to what you may now be able to do for them or what information you can access without their permission (i.e., grades, health records, etc.). More information will be available throughout this guide to support you in facing these challenges and changes, and we recommend that you check out the resources about the transition to college listed below:

- **[Parents' Survival Guide: How to Let Go and Still Hang On](#)** (Boston University)
- **[Managing the First Year Transition](#)** (James Madison University)
- **[Transition Tips for Parents & Families](#)** (Georgia Tech)
- **[Managing College Transitions: A Guide for Parents](#)** (Psychology Today)

A PROACTIVE APPROACH TO SUPPORTING WELL-BEING

Although college brings so many exciting opportunities for your student, it also comes with new stressors, difficulties, and changes that can adversely impact their mental and emotional health. It is not uncommon for mental health and or substance concerns to arise during this time in a student's life. Therefore, it is essential for both you and your student to be able to identify the factors that can support their mental health and well-being as well as the signs that they may need more support.

Families who cultivate an open space to discuss mental health concerns with their students will be better able to notice early warning signs for emerging issues. While this guide will talk more about those warning signs and Northeastern resources to support your student on later pages, below are suggestions about how to proactively create open lines of communication so that your student feels comfortable coming to you about the mental health challenges they may encounter while in college.

1 PREPARE YOUR STUDENT FOR THE UNEXPECTED.

Even students who excel at planning will not be able to account for or control all the new challenges that college brings. Whether it's a change of major, a shift in social dynamics with friends back home, or an emerging mental health concern, it's crucial that when these unexpected issues arise, your student knows they aren't alone, and it's okay to ask for help.

While the end of high school was likely marked by celebrations of your student and their friends finding their "new homes" at college for the next few years, it's normal for that excitement to change or even dissipate once they are actually adapting to life on campus. It will take time for your student to adjust to the academic rigor of college as well as their new social setting. The mythos that college is "the best years of a person's life" contributes to some students feeling disillusioned during their first semester if or when things become challenging. You can prepare your student in advance by letting them know that, for most students, starting college comes with a difficult and even awkward adjustment period, but they can rely on you and resources on campus to navigate any unexpected challenges that arise.

2 ENCOURAGE WELLNESS PRACTICES.

In order for your student to thrive, it's important that they know how to care for all aspects of their health: physical, social, mental, emotional, spiritual, etc. Encourage your student to develop healthy habits (i.e., a good sleep schedule, regular movement, a balanced diet, and prioritizing time for socializing or fulfilling hobbies) so that they cannot only be productive but feel good and enjoy life at school. Remind your student that it is okay for them to unplug, take a break, and practice self-care if/when they are engaging with distressing news or media. Model this for them as well.

3 RESIST PERFECTIONISM.

Your student has worked exceptionally hard to get to Northeastern and is joining a new, rigorous academic environment. As students adjust to college, they are balancing new classes, a new social life, new activities, and other responsibilities like work or athletics in a way that is not quite the same as high school. Juggling many different activities means they cannot do every single thing "perfectly."

Remind your student that all they can do is try their best to accomplish what needs to be done. Perfection does not exist, and pursuing it should not get in the way of having a fulfilling college experience. Verbalize these things early and often so that your student feels confident that they can come to you as challenges arise.

4 MAKE ROOM FOR MISTAKES AND FAILURE.

Students will inevitably encounter struggles, stress, and challenges in college, whether it's a bad exam grade, not getting the co-op they wanted, a romantic/interpersonal rejection, or any other disappointment. Avoid judgment of your student, and remind them that failure is how we learn to self-assess and grow. Instead of fostering shame, encourage them to learn from what did not go well, practice self-forgiveness, adapt, and persevere. Accepting and growing from failure or rejection are key elements of cultivating resilience, which is a significant protective factor for mental health challenges.

5 ENCOURAGE HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS.

Remind your student that they are not only at college to learn but to engage with others and forge new relationships. Being away from an existing social support network of friends and family can be stressful. Students struggling with meeting new people often forget that it took time for close friendships in high school to develop and that the path might not have always been smooth. Normalize that they might not feel a sense of belonging right away and the importance of continuing to put themselves out there.

Talk with your student about their new relationships and support them in navigating challenges. It's important to help your student understand the difference between healthy and unhealthy relationships, especially when it comes to romantic partners. If you are worried about your student's dating relationship, talk to them about your concerns and tell them what you're observing. **Look at this page from the Office of Prevention & Education at Northeastern that discusses supporting your student around unhealthy relationships and dating violence.**

6 TALK OPENLY ABOUT SENSITIVE TOPICS.

No parent or family member wants to consider the possibility that their student may encounter difficulties around more sensitive topics, such as suicidality, substance use, or sexual violence. However, we know young adults experience issues around these topics at higher rates than other age groups. Therefore, one of the best things you can do is educate yourself and foster open dialogue so that you are prepared if they come to you for support.

Let your student know they can come to you without judgment before they leave for school. You are an invaluable resource for your student whether they're struggling to support a friend around these issues or seeking support for themselves. **To learn more about supporting your student around alcohol and other drugs as well as sexual violence, visit this page from the Office of Prevention & Education at Northeastern (OPEN).** The rest of this guide will provide more detailed information about talking about other mental health concerns.

7 KEEP COMMUNICATING.

Take the time to communicate with your student intentionally. While your student is fostering their independence at school, they may not respond well to repeated texts or emails throughout the day. However, it is very important to find a regular time to connect that works for both you and your student. While communication via text can be helpful for brief exchanges, it's crucial that you and your student find time to call, video chat, or even have an in-person visit when possible. These methods of communication will help you get a more complete sense of how your student is doing by allowing you to observe their tone, body language, etc. If your student is experiencing difficulties, this will help you identify what seems different and support your student more easily. Using open-ended questions, or questions that cannot be answered with a "yes" or "no," will be helpful in facilitating more open and honest discussions.

If you have other college-age students or recent college graduates in your family, you may also encourage them to check in on your student. Your student may appreciate outreach from someone who's recently "been there," and it can be reassuring to know your student has an extended support network.

8 EDUCATE YOURSELF.

Continue to educate yourself about mental health and issues that may impact your student. **The Set to Go Program from the Jed Foundation** is an excellent resource that offers information, tools, and guidance related to the transition to college, developing important emotional and life skills, and increasing mental health literacy for families. Northeastern-specific resources, as well as additional readings, will be highlighted at the end of this guide.

9 HONOR YOUR OWN FEELINGS.

Don't forget to honor that your student going to college is an enormous transition for you as well, and it's okay to experience a wide array of emotions. You can model help-seeking behavior for your student by leaning on your own support system as you navigate this change for your family.

MENTAL HEALTH + COLLEGE STUDENTS

It is common for young adults to experience mental health challenges. The National Institute of Mental Health estimates that 1 in 5 young adults will experience a mental health condition. Your student is not a "failure" if they're struggling.

On the National College Health Assessment Survey in 2022, Northeastern students were asked about issues that might have negatively impacted their academic performance (either impacting their performance in a class or delaying progress towards their degree) within the last 12 months. The following are a few of the top factors students indicated.

FACTORS NEGATIVELY IMPACTING ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE*:

40.8% STRESS

31.0% ANXIETY

22.6% SLEEP DIFFICULTIES

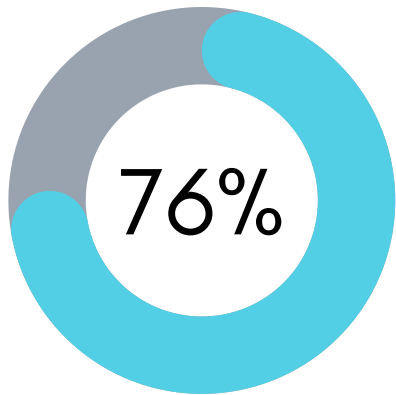
23.1% DEPRESSION

10.8% INTIMATE RELATIONSHIPS

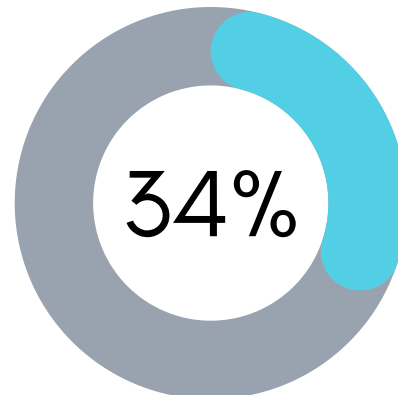
*% all students in the sample who indicated factor negatively impacted academic performance in last 12 months.



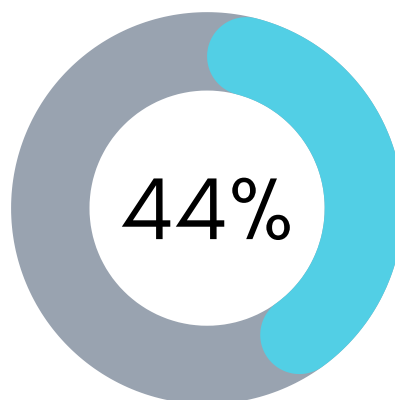
National data collected during the pandemic demonstrates exacerbated mental health symptoms and challenges for college students:



% respondents who reported that their mental health had worsened to some degree since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic ([National Active Minds Student Mental Health Survey, Fall 2020](#)).



% respondents who reported experiencing clinically significant anxiety in the last 12 months ([National Healthy Minds Study, Winter 2021](#)).



% respondents reporting they felt so sad (all of the time, most of the time, some of the time, or a little of the time) that nothing could cheer them up in the past 30 days ([National College Health Assessment, Spring 2021](#)).

While your student may not have had any mental health challenges during high school, it's important to know that young adulthood is a time when some mental health conditions, including bipolar disorder, schizophrenia, and major depressive disorder, are most likely to emerge. [Learn more from the National Alliance on Mental Illness by clicking here.](#)

SIGNS YOUR STUDENT MAY BE STRUGGLING

How can you know if what you're observing or what your student is telling you is a cause for concern or action? You want to be aware of the following:

- **Excessive worrying, fear, or anxiety**
- **Excessive sadness or feeling low**
- **Uncharacteristic crying or tearfulness**
- **Change in academic performance, personality, or behavior**
- **Noticeable change or withdrawal in your student's typical engagement with their friends or family**
- **Direct comments such as, "I'm having a hard time lately," "I blew this semester," or "I'm struggling"**
- **Distressing content written in texts or other communications**
- **Deterioration in personal hygiene**
- **Changes in concentration, sleep, appetite, or eating behaviors**
- **Noticeable cuts or bruises**
- **Overuse of substances like alcohol or other drugs**
- **Anger, agitation, or irritability**
- **Reports from others that your student is struggling**
- **Significant change in responsiveness/communication that is concerning**

It can be challenging to know if some of what your student is experiencing are signs of an emerging mental health condition or temporary difficulties associated with the transition to college. In either case, take these signs seriously. If you notice one or more of these warning signs, we recommend you check in with your student and/or consult with the appropriate resources for guidance on the next steps. See more specific guidance beginning on page 14.

SUPPORT AT NORTHEASTERN

Northeastern University is committed to supporting your student's mental health and well-being. If your student is seeking mental health support, it's important that you are aware of the resources available to them so you can point them in the right direction. While this page will highlight key services, all relevant resources will be detailed at the end of this guide (see page 22).

UNIVERSITY HEALTH & COUNSELING SERVICES (UHCS)

Confidential mental health support is available at UHCS through in-person visits and telehealth. Students wishing to initiate services can reach out to UHCS to schedule a brief telephone triage call. Students are also welcome to come to UHCS during designated mental health walk-in hours to speak with a clinician if preferred.

In a telephone triage or walk-in visit, a mental health clinician will conduct a brief assessment of the student's concerns, identify and address immediate concerns, and make recommendations for the next steps. Clinicians will take into consideration a student's unique circumstances as well as the level of acuity or concern when determining next best steps. These recommendations may include:

- Scheduling follow-up care with a UHCS clinician.
- Scheduling a medication assessment appointment with a UHCS clinician.
- Referral to unlimited free counseling sessions in the local community through Find@Northeastern.
- Referral to a support group at UHCS.
- Connection to other campus or community resources or supports.
- Emergency response or connection to higher levels of care, if appropriate.

Students enrolled in Northeastern University's Student Health Plan (NUSHP) can access virtual mental health visits through Well Connection. More information is available [here](#).

To learn more about mental health visits at UHCS, **[visit the "What to Expect" page on the UHCS website.](#)**

FIND@NORTHEASTERN

Through Find@Northeastern, all full-time, degree-seeking students across the global university system have access to a variety of services. By calling Find@Northeastern (see phone numbers below), students can access:

- Confidential, 24/7 support from a licensed mental health clinician who is available to assess their concerns, provide support and assistance, and connect them to additional care.
- Unlimited, free, in-person or virtual counseling sessions with a clinician in the student's local area, wherever that may be. These sessions are completely free – no need to use insurance or pay a co-pay.
- If needed, referrals using the student's insurance to a specialist in their local area.

Additionally, through Find@Northeastern, students have free access to Headspace, a popular science-backed meditation, and mindfulness skill-building app. Students also have free access to SilverCloud, a self-guided, interactive online resource to help build skills and strategies for managing depression, anxiety, and difficulty sleeping. Students can visit UHCS' website for instructions on registering for SilverCloud and Headspace.

All support through Find@Northeastern is confidential.

Website: <https://www.northeastern.edu/uhrs/find-at-northeastern/>

US Phone: 877.233.9477

Canada Phone: 855.229.8797

International Phone: +1.781.457.7777

CREATING A PLAN

If your student is coming to Northeastern with an already diagnosed condition, it is important that a plan is in place for continued care. Have a conversation to ensure that your student knows about their health insurance coverage and how insurance works. It is also vital to establish a transition plan in consultation with your student's current providers and the relevant offices on campus if your student has a condition requiring ongoing management and treatment. Learn more below about offices beyond UHCS that might be relevant to your student's ongoing support.

DISABILITY RESOURCE CENTER

The Disability Resource Center (DRC) serves Northeastern students with documented disabilities as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act as Amended (ADAAA) of 2008.

If your student had an IEP or 504 plan in high school to support them around a mental health condition (i.e., ADD or ADHD, anxiety, depression, etc.), it's important to know that support in college exists but does not look the same. Your student will no longer have an IEP or 504 plan, but they can request accommodations through the DRC.

The DRC encourages incoming students to manage their own communications with the DRC. **Parents, guardians, and family members can support students in applying for DRC accommodations by:**

- **Encouraging the student to contact the DRC several weeks before classes begin.**
- **Assisting the student in locating necessary documentation, such as neuropsychological evaluations or history of accommodations.**
- **Brainstorming questions that the student can ask a DRC specialist.**

DISABILITY RESOURCE CENTER (CONTINUED)

To learn more about securing accommodations, visit the **[DRC's web page for Incoming and Unregistered Students.](#)**

On this page, you and your student can also find an informational video series for students who are transitioning to Northeastern's Disability Resource Center or Learning Disabilities Program.

The DRC has a specific video for about parents supporting their students, which can be accessed [here](#).

The DRC is located in Dodge Hall on the Boston campus, though services are available to students throughout the Northeastern global university system. Questions about DRC services may be directed to DRC@northeastern.edu or (617) 373-2675.

WE CARE

If your student is encountering other unexpected challenges that impact their health and well-being (i.e., a loss in the family, an illness, unforeseen family circumstances, etc.), support is available through We Care. We Care staff work one-on-one with students to assess problems, provide appropriate resources, and identify solutions. They can act as a liaison between students, campus offices, and/or faculty to explore options and provide assistance during times of difficulty or challenge. Assistance may involve on-campus or off-campus referrals.

Students can connect with We Care directly, or parents and families can contact We Care if they are concerned about their student. Support is available to all students across the Northeastern global university system.

Phone: 617-373-7591

Email: wecare@northeastern.edu.

[A FAQ for parents & families is also available here on WeCare's website.](#)

WHEN SHOULD I INTERVENE?

Seeing your student struggling or in pain can be very difficult. This can feel especially challenging if your student lives away from home while in college. You may be unsure what steps are appropriate to take or how to best support them. What you do next will depend on what is coming up for your student.

It might feel natural to want to seek support on your student's behalf or plan a visit to see them, but it's important to remember that in many circumstances, it's developmentally appropriate for your student to take responsibility for managing their healthcare and initiating contact with support services on their own. There may be times, however, when you may need to be prepared to take a more active role.

The following pages of this guide will review what to do in various circumstances, such as when you've noticed concerning behaviors and up to the point of a mental health emergency that requires immediate intervention.

SUGGESTED READING

Check out the JED Foundation's article:

Supporting Mental Health from a Distance: When Should a Parent Intervene?

ADDRESSING CONCERNING BEHAVIORS

Below is some guidance for what to do if you notice concerning behaviors from your student or they directly tell you they are struggling (i.e., feeling lonely, anxious, or stressed), but there is no threat of harm to self or others.

1 EXPRESS CARE AND CONCERN.

Talk with your student about your concerns discreetly and non-judgmentally.

Strategies:

- Thank them for coming to you (if they have) and acknowledge the situation.
- Reference the specific behavior you have noticed and that it is out of the ordinary.
- Ask an open-ended question (which cannot be answered with yes or no).

SAMPLE SCRIPT

You: I noticed that you've seemed down lately and sound sad when we talk. I know that's not like you, so I wanted to check in. How are you doing?

Student: I'm sorry, and I don't want to worry you, but I've been having a hard time this semester.

You: I'm sorry that's been happening. I'm glad that you're telling me so we can work together to help you. How can I support you?

Student: Honestly, I'm not really sure.

You: Would it be helpful to talk more about it with me, or would you prefer I help identify other resources and supports?

2 REFER TO RESOURCES.

Encourage your student to connect with the available resources.

Strategies:

- Be clear about the resources that are available.
- Give your student a choice about if or how they'd like your support in getting connected.
- Summarize or reflect back what they're saying to show you're listening.
- Avoid judgment if the student doesn't want to use the resource or isn't ready to do so.

SAMPLE SCRIPT

Student: I think it would really help me to start therapy but I'm so overwhelmed I haven't had time to figure out finding a therapist.

You: It sounds like things have been really hard lately, and I'm grateful you're telling me about it.

Student: I know, it's been so overwhelming.

You: During Orientation I learned that the health and counseling center has mental health walk-in hours and that Northeastern has a 24/7 hotline to connect with a mental health clinician. What do you think of those options?

3 FOLLOW UP.

Check back in with your student at a later time to see how they are doing and if they need any other support getting connected to the referral.

Strategies:

- Be non-judgmental. The student may not have followed up with **the** resources you discussed.
- Ask your student if they are in a private space to have a follow-up conversation about these topics.
- When you contact your student, you could say something like, "I just wanted to check in to see how you're doing since we last talked. How else can I support you?"

WHAT IF YOU'RE STILL WORRIED ABOUT YOUR STUDENT?

There here may be situations where you've noticed concerning behaviors and talked to your student about the resources available to them, but you're still very worried. Your concerns go beyond your student feeling stressed, sad, or anxious. Perhaps your student is telling you they're struggling to get out of bed every day or crying all the time and can't do their assignments. This can be especially challenging if your student is struggling to get connected to resources on their own.

If consultation is needed at any point, you can call UHCS at 617-373-2772 to consult with a mental health clinician. Clinicians from UHCS can reach out to the student, if appropriate, to check on their well-being. Learn more about the limits of consultation with UHCS on the next page.

SIGNS THAT INDICATE NEED FOR URGENT INTERVENTION

There may be times when it's appropriate to intervene on behalf of your student. More urgent intervention may be warranted if your student expresses any of the following:

- **Non-immediate references to suicide or thoughts of death (without reference to an immediate plan or intent to die)**
- **Severe hopelessness, despair, or isolation**
- **References to self-harm (e.g., cutting, burning)**

WHAT YOU CAN DO

If you are in contact with your student while they express any of the above, stay connected to them (for example via phone or text) and encourage them to utilize UHCS' [mental health walk-in hours](#), or call Find@Northeastern.

If you are not in contact with your student but believe they need more urgent assistance (but are not in immediate danger), you can call UHCS at 617-373-2772 to consult with a mental health clinician ([see UHCS hours here](#)).

You are welcome to share as much information as you are comfortable with the UHCS clinician about your student. The clinician will determine the appropriate next steps and may reach out to your student as soon as possible (please note that the call may not happen immediately). **While you can share any relevant information with UHCS, privacy laws dictate that UHCS cannot share information about your student without your student's consent.**

If it is after hours, contact Northeastern University Police Department for guidance at 617-373-3333. NUPD will assess the situation and determine appropriate next steps, which might include checking in with the student or working with other campus partners, such as Residence Life staff, to do so.

EMERGENCY SITUATIONS REQUIRING IMMEDIATE INTERVENTION

If your student expresses any of the following, it's critical that you seek help on their behalf immediately:

- **Explicit and immediate comments about wanting to die by suicide**
- **Expressed access or actively seeking access to means to die by suicide**
- **An indication that they are in immediate danger**

WHAT YOU CAN DO

If you have an emergent concern for your student's health or well-being, contact NUPD at 617-373-3333, or 911 if your student is off-campus. If you are actively talking to your student (and if possible), keep them engaged in a conversation while you reach out for help. For example, if texting with your student, continue participating in the conversation while contacting NUPD. Try to remain as calm as possible. Once you call, someone from NUPD will contact your student immediately and identify their location to offer support and identify the next steps.

Whether you are calling a Northeastern resource about a non-immediate or an immediate concern, it is strongly advised that you communicate with your student about the steps you are taking to maintain a sense of trust. Your student may be upset that you have contacted someone on their behalf. However, your student is much more likely to maintain open communication when they feel you are as transparent as possible and, when feasible, treat them as collaborators in their care.

SUICIDE: RECOGNIZING & RESPONDING TO CONCERNS

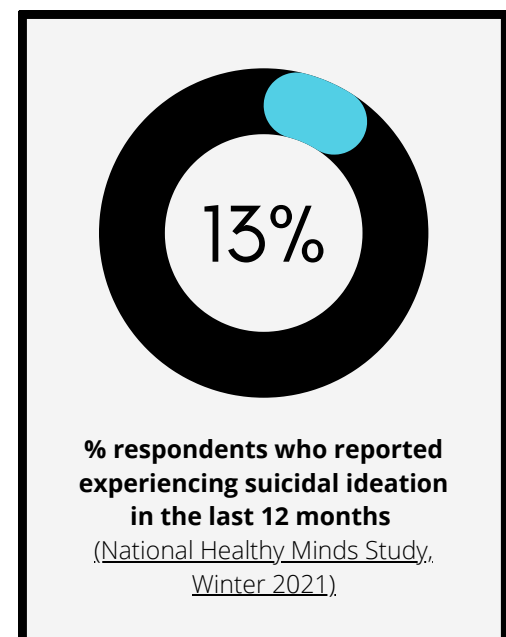
When the stressors in a person's life cause them to feel severe emotional pain, hopelessness, or an inability to cope, they may have thoughts of suicide. This is not a scenario that any parent, guardian, or family member wants to imagine for their student, but it's important for everyone to be aware of risks, warning signs, and how to appropriately respond if these concerns arise. Suicide is preventable, and those struggling with suicidal thoughts are deserving of compassion and support.

FACTS ABOUT SUICIDE

Suicide is a pressing public health concern in the United States and globally. According to the CDC, an estimated 12.2 million American adults seriously thought about suicide in 2020, and in that year, suicide was the third leading cause of death for people ages 18-24.

According to the [Suicide Prevention Resource Center](#), the following are some of the identified risk factors for suicidality among college students:

- Mental health concerns including depression, anxiety, eating disorders, obsessive compulsive disorder, etc.
- Substance use
- Previous suicide attempts
- Hopelessness
- Social isolation, alienation, or thwarted belongingness
- Perceived burdensomeness on family and friends
- Limited problem-solving or coping skills
- Experiences of discrimination, loss, violence, and/or abuse
- Stressors related to school, work, and/or finances
- Insomnia
- Lack of family support
- Limited access to effective mental and physical healthcare
- Access to lethal means



WARNING SIGNS

The following are warning signs for suicide to be aware of*:

- Specific mentions of wanting to die or kill oneself
- References to a specific plan for ending one's life
- Expressed feelings of hopelessness, a lack of purpose, feeling trapped or being a burden to others
- Unusual behavior changes
- Giving away personal items or wrapping up loose ends
- Saying goodbye to friends and family
- Intense mood swings
- Increased substance use
- Increased agitation, anger, anxiety, or recklessness
- Sleeping too little or too much
- Withdrawing or feeling isolated
- Emotional detachment

*Source: The Jed Foundation

SUGGESTIONS FOR SUPPORTING YOUR STUDENT

If you notice any of the warning signs above, it is crucial that you ask your student directly if they are thinking about ending their life. Contrary to common myths, **asking someone about suicide does not put the idea in their head.** Being direct is essential and can even feel like a relief to someone feeling shame and isolation because of suicidal thoughts.

It is important to remember that your student is not wrong, bad, selfish, or immoral if they are having thoughts of suicide. They are struggling and in need of care. For some people experiencing suicidal ideation, the thought of ending their life is less about wanting to die and more about wanting a way to escape the pain they are experiencing. **If your student references thoughts of suicide, it should always be taken seriously.**

If your student shares thoughts of suicide, it's natural that you may have a range of emotional reactions, such as confusion, fear, sadness, or anger. However, it's important to manage your own feelings to best support your student's needs. **The best thing you can do for your student is to listen to them compassionately and non-judgmentally.** Ask open-ended questions to better understand their feelings.

SUGGESTIONS FOR SUPPORTING YOUR STUDENT (CONT'D.)

If your student expresses any thoughts related to suicide, your instinct may be to call 911 immediately or to have them go to the emergency room. While there are some scenarios in which this would be the most appropriate course of action, the best thing to do will depend on the severity of what your student is expressing or experiencing.

To gauge what the next best steps might be, ask your student the following questions:

- **Do you have a plan to hurt or kill yourself?**
- **Do you have access to the means to carry out that plan?**

If your student does not have a specific or immediate plan, continue talking with them and assist them in seeking further support, such as connecting with a counselor. If your student does have a plan, then it is essential that you call for help immediately. Refer back to pages 17 - 18 of this guide for more information.

RESOURCES (CLICK TO ACCESS):

- **"Supporting Your College Student Through Mental Health Challenges" by Forefront Suicide Prevention**
- **"Teens and Suicide: What Parents Should Know" by the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention**
- **"How to Talk to Your Teen About Suicide" by the National Alliance on Mental Illness**
- **"Preventing Suicide: Know the Warning Signs and How to Help" by the JED Foundation**
- **"10 Things to Say to a Suicidal Person" by Dr. Stacey Freedenthal, LCSW**
- **"10 Things NOT to Say to a Suicidal Person" by Dr. Stacey Freedenthal, LCSW**
- **"10 Reasons Teens Avoid Telling Parents About Suicidal Thoughts" by Dr. Stacey Freedenthal, LCSW**

NORTHEASTERN RESOURCE GUIDE

No matter what challenges they are facing, your student is not alone. Below are Northeastern resources that can offer support.

Resource	Why Connect?	More Information
<u>University Health and Counseling Services</u> * 617-373-2772 Forsyth Building, 1st Floor	A student is looking for medical care or mental health services or you are concerned about their mental health and well-being.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Dedicated daily walk-in hours are available for mental health support.• In more urgent situations, family can call UHCS and request to consult with a clinician. If appropriate, a clinician can reach out to students of concern.
<u>Northeastern University Police Department</u> Emergency: 617-373-3333 Non-emergency: 617-373-2121 716 Columbus Ave.	A student shares information that indicates a need for urgent intervention including immediate concerns for health or well-being.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• NUPD officers can respond urgently to emergency situations and conduct well-being checks.• NUPD can provide after hours guidance to both students or a family member concerned about a student's well-being, as appropriate.
<u>Find@Northeastern</u> * 877-233-9477 (U.S.) +1-781-457-7777 (Int'l).	A student is looking for immediate or 24/7 mental health services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Students can access an immediate connection to a licensed mental health clinician, available at any time from any location.• Find also offers referrals to free therapy in the local community.

**Indicates a confidential resource. Staff do not have an obligation to report disclosures of sexual violence to the Office for University Equity and Compliance/Title IX.*

Resource	Why Connect?	More Information
<p><u>We Care</u> 617-373-7591 wecare@northeastern.edu 354 Richards Hall</p>	<p>A student is looking for support or assistance with a difficult circumstance (e.g., interpersonal problems, academic concerns, medical or mental health issues, a personal tragedy).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We Care is a network of administrative offices, university faculty, and staff that serve as a support system for students during times of difficulty or challenge. • See page ## of this guide for more information.
<p><u>Office for University Equity and Compliance</u> ouec@northeastern.edu 125 Richards Hall</p>	<p>A student is looking to make a report or considering making a report related to sexual violence or any other form of harassment or discrimination.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The OUEC investigates all allegations of discrimination. • Students who have experienced sexual violence are encouraged to report to OUEC. This does not commit students to future action; the hope is for OUEC staff to explain their rights and reporting options.
<p><u>Office of Prevention and Education at Northeastern *</u> open@northeastern.edu 307 Ell Hall</p>	<p>A student is struggling with substance use.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students can self-refer to OPEN to confidentially talk about their substance use. • OPEN can make referrals for more high level care. • OPEN offers information about how to speak with your student about alcohol and other drugs (see page ## of this guide).

Resource	Why Connect?	More Information
<u>OPEN's Sexual Violence Resource Center *</u> open@northeastern.edu 407 Ell Hall bit.ly/svresourcecenter	<p>A student who has experienced sexual violence is looking for resources, referrals, or to discuss reporting options.</p> <p>A student is looking to support a friend who has experienced sexual violence.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The SVRC can be a place for students to start if they don't know what to do. • Staff can explain options and connect students to resources. • The SVRC is not an ongoing counseling service, but works to connect students with resources. Staff can accompany students through a university reporting process as wanted. • OPEN (which runs the SVRC) has information about talking to your student about sexual assault and dating violence (see page ## of this guide).
<u>Confidential Resource Advisor *</u> https://studentlife.northeastern.edu/open/confidential-resource-advisor/	<p>A student who is a respondent in a Title IX case or who has been accused of sexual violence is looking for resources.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The CRA can accompany students through a University investigation process. • The CRA can explain options and connect students to resources. • The CRA is not an ongoing counseling service.
<u>Disability Resource Center</u> 617-373-2675 TTY: Contact DRC via Relay 711 20 Dodge Hall	<p>A student is seeking accommodations for a disability, including documented mental health concerns.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DRC staff can guide a student through the process of applying for accommodations and navigating university systems. • The DRC has resources for families on their website (see pages 12-13 of this guide).

**Indicates a confidential resource. Staff do not have an obligation to report disclosures of sexual violence to the Office for University Equity and Compliance/Title IX.*

Resource	Why Connect?	More Information
<p><u>Office of the Graduate Ombudsperson</u> 617-373-6904 (office) 617-545-7989 (cell) graduateombuds@northeastern.edu</p>	<p>A graduate student wants to discuss concerns related to university experience, speak off the record about concerns, and identify options for resolving conflicts informally.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Ombudsperson for Graduate Students serves as a confidential, neutral, and informal resource for graduate students seeking to address concerns that may be impacting their studies.

For additional information about Northeastern resources, visit the Student Life web page:

<https://studentlife.northeastern.edu/>

FURTHER READING

Click on each title to visit the accompanying links.

Protecting Your Student's Mental Health: What Parents Can Do from The Jed Foundation

Set to Go: A JED Program from The JED Foundation

A Parent's Guide to College Student Mental Health from McLean Hospital (Harvard Medical School Affiliate)

Life On Campus from Mental Health America

A Parent's Guide to Mental Health for College Students from The National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI)

Starting the Conversation: College and Your Mental Health from The National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI)*

**NOTE: This guide is created for both students and their parents, guardians, and/or families. Pages 15 through 21 cover very useful information about health privacy laws, including The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) and The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).*

This guide was created by Office of the Chancellor, University Health and Counseling Services and the Office for Prevention and Education at Northeastern. It was last updated in June 2022.

