

# STUDENTS OF CONCERN

As a faculty or staff member at GVSU, you may be the first to recognize that a student is struggling. Our environment encourages faculty and staff to show care and concern for students. Please check in with them to see how they are doing. There are times when a quick check-in may not be enough and you discover more support is needed. When more support is needed, GV Cares\* is an online referral system where trained staff will review each referral and provide appropriate outreach and resources.

## WHERE YOUR SUPPORT MIGHT BE ENOUGH:

IF A STUDENT...	YOU CAN TRY...
Discloses they are stressed.	→ Encouraging them to try positive coping strategies (taking a break, working out/ being active, hanging out with friends). Stress is a common and normal feeling, one a student will experience throughout their time at GVSU.
Discloses they missed class due to illness.	→ Having open communication about expectations.
Is disruptive, but ceases behavior when addressed.	→ Addressing the behavior. Student will demonstrate disruptive behavior from time to time and it is OK to address it and share your expectations. Typically, once addressed the behavior will cease.

## WHERE YOUR SUPPORT MIGHT BE LIMITED:

- Student discloses they are having family issues and living on a friend's couch.
- Student discloses they are failing all of their classes, struggling to get out of bed, and are not eating.
- You observe mood shifts, poor hygiene, and poor attendance, especially if these are not normal for the student
- Student discloses that a family member has passed or is going to pass away.
- Student demonstrates disturbing (concerning?) behavior such as expressing themselves with incoherent or confused thoughts and speech.
- Student demonstrates disruptive behavior and it continues after being addressed.

All of these are cause for concern. We encourage you to reach out to the student and address your concerns, as well as share that you will submit a Care Referral. This lets the student know you care about their success and that resources are available. Talking with students about GV Cares\* explains the purpose of the referral, engages the student in the process, and creates transparency. In most situations, after you submit a Care Referral, it is OK and even helpful to follow-up with a student to see how they are doing.

**SAMPLE OUTREACH EMAILS** (if not communicating in person):

- 1 *Thank you so much for sharing that you are stressed and may need to extra support. You are not alone. Students (and faculty/staff) often experience stress throughout the academic year. If at any time you are feeling more than “stress”, come to me and I can help connect you to support.*
- 2 *Thank you so much for chatting with me today. I know that you cannot be successful if you are hungry. Are you aware that there is a food bank on campus specifically for students? You can visit their website at [gvsu.edu/replenish](http://gvsu.edu/replenish).*
- 3 *Thank you so much for sharing some of the things impacting your life right now. It sounds like you have a lot on your plate. There are so many resources available to students. One of those resources is a Care Referral. This allows me (or anyone) to share privately with a few individuals that you are struggling. They will then reach out to you and help connect you to the appropriate resources. I think you could really benefit from the support, so I plan to submit a referral on your behalf. I hope you will share with them what you shared with me so they can help you in the best ways possible.*

**WHERE TIME IS IMPORTANT AND GETTING IMMEDIATE HELP IS CRUCIAL:**

*Below are cause for greater concern, and we encourage you to call 911.*

*\*Care referrals must be submitted after the call.*

- Student discloses they are having thoughts of self-harm or suicide.
- Student is actively demonstrating threatening behavior.
- Any of the earlier situations that are worsening and impacting a student’s safety, academics, or ability to take care of themselves.

**FACULTY CAN SHARE ABOUT GV CARES IN THEIR SYLLABUS:**

- “Student success includes more than just academic performance.”
- “Feel comfortable speaking to me about any challenges you are facing in and out of the classroom.”
- “I can connect you to resources who can submit a Care Referral on your behalf.”

**HOW DO CARE REFERRALS WORK?**



*We will follow up with a referring party only when additional information is needed. If you submitted a Care Referral and have more information, contact Emily First, Student Support Manager, at 616 331-3585.*