

Guidelines for Responding to Students in Crisis at the University at Albany



Statement of Purpose

These guidelines are intended to assist faculty, professional staff, administrators and other University employees to address student related crises. While some campus officials play more active roles in responding to student crises, it is important for all University staff members to have a working knowledge of these guidelines.

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at the University at Albany**

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Part I:
An Overview of Key Concepts

Introduction

In any setting, a crisis requires both quick thinking and a coordinated, efficient response. At the University at Albany, we may be presented with a number of such challenges, including student deaths, suicide attempts, the impact of major stressors such as the loss of friends or family members, disruptive behavior in classrooms, residence halls, and other parts of the university community, and other crises.

When a student in the university community is facing a crisis, the entire university may be affected. Therefore, it is critical that a basic framework exist to enhance coordinated efforts that protect the safety and well-being of the student in crisis and each member of the campus community. The primary goals of these crisis response strategies are:

- 1) To provide support and assistance to the student in crisis and to insure their safety and the safety of others.
- 2) To respond, as confidentiality regulations permit, to persons or groups such as:
 - a. the student's parents, legal guardians, and/or significant others,
 - b. the student's friends, roommates, suitemates, and hall residents,
 - c. various University offices to provide services and support to the student and other affected members of the University community,
 - d. the University and Albany communities, as appropriate.
- 3) To address system-wide issues surrounding the crisis.
- 4) To work toward the prevention of similar crises in the future.

Please keep in mind that the strategies listed in Part II are not all-inclusive. As additional needs for specific intervention strategies arise, these additions/modifications will be addressed by the Crisis Response Team (see Appendix A).

Confidentiality

University staff members who respond to crises must remain aware that students have a right to privacy and that, in some instances, they may not wish to have information shared with others. At the same time, there are situations in which it is necessary and legally permissible for professional staff, faculty members and other members of the community to release information. For example, information should be disclosed to appropriate individuals in connection with an emergency when the knowledge of such information is necessary to protect the health or safety of the student or other individuals. In other situations, the need to release information without the permission of the student is less clear and, in such cases, the Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs or the Office of the University Counsel should be consulted. In any situation, it is best to attempt to obtain the student's permission to release information.

Different University records are subject to varying standards of confidentiality. For example, Counseling and Psychological Services records are subject to stricter standards of confidentiality under state law than many other kinds of records. The general principal is that such records should not be released without the written permission of the individual to whom the record pertains. There are a few exceptions to this principle, most notably, as mentioned above, records may be released to appropriate persons and entities when necessary to prevent serious harm to the client or another person.

Judgment

Any staff member involved in a crisis at the University must use his/her own best judgment regarding how to respond. Questions which should be addressed include:

- 1) Which issues require immediate action?
- 2) What else should be done for the student in crisis?
- 3) Who else may be affected, and what support is available for them?
- 4) Who should be notified?

These questions must be answered quickly in an emergency. **When in doubt, consult with other professionals.**

Coordination

Crisis prevention, intervention and postvention involve a number of different units of the University that typically communicate with each other and share responsibility for intervening and deciding whom else to involve. In general, the Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs will coordinate notification and crisis intervention services but, in some specific cases, other offices might be more appropriate for coordination.

Coordination of services involves a number of steps that include:

- 1) Assessing the situation, with particular attention to the nature and extent of the crisis;
- 2) Identifying person(s) who may need support;
- 3) Determining who will provide direct and indirect services;
- 4) Informing appropriate individuals or offices of the situation;
- 5) Following up with individuals and offices about what action they will take;
- 6) Following up to assess the impact of interventions;
- 7) Determining whether or not future action is necessary;
- 8) Holding a postvention review two weeks after the crisis to examine the effect of the response. Persons who were involved in responding to this crisis, including all back-up and support services, will be involved in this review. In addition, persons affected by the crisis will be invited to provide feedback regarding the response.

Support

Support may be provided to a student in crisis through a number of methods. Since students in crisis are often more receptive to intervention, staff members may use this opportunity to help them learn from their experiences. Students who are in crisis may benefit from personal, academic and/or financial support. Providing support is a responsibility that can be shared among staff members, family, friends, and other persons. As part of a broad-based umbrella of support, a student can be referred to such services as Counseling and Psychological Services, the Office of the Dean of Undergraduate Studies, Financial Aid, and other units as appropriate (See Appendix B for a listing of resources).

The following steps, adapted from Suicide Prevention and Crisis Service, suggests a framework for providing support in a crisis.

- 1) **Stay Calm.** Since a person in crisis may lose perspective, it is important that you stay calm so that the situation can be assessed and an intervention planned.
- 2) **Make contact at a feeling level rather than a factual level.** As crises often involve loss or grief, it is important to try to identify feelings that the student may have, such as anger, sadness, and hopelessness. Keep in mind that the student has a right to experience his/her feelings, and try not to rush the student through this phase. Stay attuned to your responses to the feelings, and try to respond without being judgmental or dogmatic.
- 3) **Explore the current problem.** Focus on the past six weeks and identify what might have occurred to precipitate the onset of the crisis. Ask open-ended questions, and encourage the student to be specific.
- 4) **Summarize the problem.** Summarize the problem so that you and the student are in agreement regarding the issues.
- 5) **Focus on amelioration and explore resources.** It is important to ask the student about what resources/willingness they have to resolve the crisis. Questions can focus on the nature of the student's support system, the positive things in their life, and their willingness to seek appropriate assistance.
- 6) **Contract.** Set up a contract, preferably written and signed, containing steps that the student will take to help him/herself through the crisis period.
- 7) **Consult.** If there are any questions, please contact Counseling and Psychological Services (518-442-5800) or the Crisis Response Team (Appendix A).

Support may also be provided to students in the academic and financial areas. For example, if the close friend of a student dies suddenly or if the student is the victim of a fire, the Division of Academic Affairs (Graduate or Undergraduate Deans) can be notified of this situation, which may result in the student's being permitted to take incompletes in all courses. Likewise, if the parent of a student dies suddenly, causing financial problems for the student's family, the Office of Student Accounts can be contacted to approve alterations in the billing schedule.

Below are listed some possible methods of response to student crises that can be made by academic staff. When appropriate, academic chairpersons and/or deans should be consulted.

- 1) Recommending psychological counseling services;
- 2) Extending a deadline;
- 3) Offering special tutoring, make-up work, or examinations;
- 4) Excluding one or more test grades from the final grade computation;
- 5) Computing the final grade or class standing, without all work being completed;
- 6) Facilitating a personal or medical withdrawal.

In the case of financial crisis, the Offices of Financial Aid and/or Student Accounts may be able to assist by suggesting whom to notify in order to alter payment schedules, receive emergency funds, or facilitate other arrangements.

What To Do To Respond To Immediate Danger To Self Or Others
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The University Police Department (UPD) is responsible for maintaining the safety and well-being of all persons at the University at Albany. In the event of a dangerous or hazardous condition, such as physical danger due to potential violence or suicide, bomb threats, or similar situations, **call UPD at 911 (from an on-campus phone) or 518-442-3131 (from a cellular phone or off-campus phone).**

Part II
Response Strategies For Specific Crises

- Student Death
- Attempted Suicide In Progress
- Threat Of Harm To Self Or Others
- Arrest Or Incarceration
- Disruptive Behavior
- Other Crises

Student Death

In crisis situations, the primary concern is saving human life. Therefore, first render aid and summon medical assistance for injured people at the scene. Please be aware that all deaths are viewed and investigated by the police as potential homicides until determined otherwise.

The death of any student in the campus community can be a stressful event for a wide array of individuals. Until an official determination is made, the labeling of a death as suicide or homicide may complicate the matter all the more for family, friends, and University staff. For this reason, great care and discretion must be employed in such cases.

Guidelines

1. **Call 911** - University Police Department will alert medical personnel as needed. Be prepared to report your exact location.

NOTE: DO NOT DISTURB A DEATH SCENE

Remember that, unless rendering first aid, it is extremely important not to disturb a death scene. Therefore, exit the area immediately. If at all possible, secure the area in question being careful to touch as little as possible. If there is another person with you, one of you should stay at the scene while the other calls the University Police.

2. The University Police will notify:
 - a) Hometown police, who will inform parents, guardians, or significant others;
 - b) The Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs for notification of the President and executive staff. When appropriate the Vice President's Office will also notify the Office of Communications and Marketing for dissemination of information to the public.

3. As soon as possible and within 48 hours, the Vice President for Student Affairs will determine the need for additional support and refer to appropriate individuals or agency resources including:

- a) Student Health Services and Counseling and Psychological Services for medical/psychological concerns;
- b) The Interfaith Center, who can provide pastoral services to those affected by the death;
- c) Offices in the Division of Student Affairs, whose staff members may be able to address specialized issues if the student is a student of color, an international student, a member of the LGBTQ community, or a disabled student. Such offices may provide assistance regarding both educational and support services for our diverse population;
- d) Offices in the Division of Academic Affairs, including: the appropriate academic dean's office (graduate or undergraduate) who will notify the faculty and provide assistance with academic accommodations, and the Educational Opportunity Program for support of their students;
- e) The Director of Residential Life, who will notify Quadrangle Coordinators for transmission of information to their respective Quadrangle staff, such as Residence Directors and Resident Assistants. Residence Hall staff will assess the residents' response to the student's death and may request support services through their supervisory channels and/or through their Quadrangle consultants from Counseling and Psychological Services;
- f) The Financial Aid Office, who will notify the employer on campus if the student was employed;
- g) The Student Accounts Office, to insure updating and appropriate management of billing records;
- h) The Registrar, to update the student information system.

NOTE: CONSULT THE NATURAL SUPPORT SYSTEM

Made up of friends, family, mentors, etc., the natural support system is both essential in providing support to its own members, and at the same time, is likely to also be in need of services. Every effort will be made to work with the natural support system to assist its members in supporting each other and in accessing the broad range of University services listed above.

- 4. The Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs will coordinate support offered to groups affected by the death, such as the student's friends. Outreach services will be provided, as appropriate, by units such as the Department of Residential Life, Counseling and Psychological

Services, Disability Resource Center, or Office of International Education Offices, Interfaith Center, EOP, and other offices. Outreach services should address the following points:

FOR STUDENTS:

- a) Make timely contact with friends of the deceased student;
- b) Encourage expression of feelings;
- c) Promote peer support among friends of the victim;
- d) Encourage campus attendance at a memorial service as appropriate;
- e) Avoid glamorization of death;
- f) Encourage resumption of routine as soon as possible.

FOR FAMILY:

- a) Make appropriate housing arrangement for parents and/or other family members visiting campus;
 - b) Offer pastoral care;
 - c) Offer brief psychological counseling as appropriate;
 - d) Provide assistance in concluding University business, i.e., gathering the student's personal effects. In this, as in all instances, sensitivity to the family's wishes and requests will be paramount.
5. The Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs will work with Interfaith Center staff to coordinate a university-wide memorial service for the deceased student.
 6. Letters of condolence will be sent by the following individuals:
 - a) The President
 - b) The Vice President for Student Affairs;
 7. The Vice President for Student Affairs will call a meeting of a postvention group to review the circumstances of the death or suicide approximately two weeks after the event. Units who have played a role in crisis intervention/management of the incident will be represented at the meeting. In addition to a review of the interventions used, postvention efforts and support strategies will be discussed as well as recommendations for an enhanced response to similar crises.

Attempted Suicide In Progress

While the nature of suicide attempts vary greatly, each suicide attempt must be taken seriously. In order to protect a student's privacy, suicide attempts should be addressed with discretion. In all

instances, the best interests of the student as well as the university's aim to protect the student's welfare must be considered paramount.

Guidelines

1. **Call 911.** When a suicide attempt is in progress, the University Police Department should be notified immediately by telephone. (**Issues of confidentiality do not apply when a person's life is in danger**).

In many instances a suicide attempt constitutes a medical emergency (e.g. bleeding from self-injury, confusion or coma from drug overdose).

University Police will:

- (1) Arrange for emergency medical transport by Five-Quad (call 911) or, in their absence, by the City of Albany Department of Fire and Emergency Services. The student will be transported to the Emergency Department of the Albany Medical Center Hospital. It is the policy of the Albany Medical Center Emergency Department to assess such patients medically, and then refer them to the Capital District Psychiatric Center (CDPC) for assessment, or in some cases, to their private psychiatrist.
- b) In exigent circumstances, in order to insure the student's safety or that of another member of the campus community, a police officer may be required to take the student into custody and direct the person's transport to Albany Medical Center Emergency Department or to the Capital District Psychiatric Center for evaluation. Exigent circumstances include: violence, serious injury or conduct likely to result in immediate serious harm to the student or others.
- c) In other circumstances, the police will consult with and, when possible, arrange for the Albany County Mobile Crisis Team to come to the site of the suicide attempt to conduct an evaluation. The Mobile Crisis Team can be contacted at 518-549-6500 7 days a week.
- d) Notify the Vice President for Student Affairs, who will notify the Directors of Counseling and Psychological Services and Student Health Services so that any necessary follow-up may be made. For example, the Director of Counseling and Psychological Services will work with the Center staff in the event that the student who has attempted suicide might be an ongoing client of Counseling and Psychological Services.

Note: Decisions about the University's notification of parents or family members will be made by the Vice President for Student Affairs based on:

- (1) information provided by the student about who to contact in case of emergencies, and;
- (2) the recommendations of the appropriate licensed health care practitioners as well as other professionals knowledgeable about the student and/or the circumstances.

2. After a suicide attempt, the student should be referred for appropriate follow-up mental health services. While this is often done by the CDPC Crisis Unit, a student who is not assessed or given referrals through the Crisis Unit may need to be scheduled for an assessment at Counseling and Psychological Services. Counseling Center clinicians will, on the basis of the assessment, make treatment/referral recommendations that are in the best interest of the student.
3. Any member of the University community who is aware of a suicide attempt is strongly advised to call Counseling and Psychological Services (518-442-5800) for assessment of ongoing risk, assistance with follow-up treatment planning for the student and planning of appropriate interventions for those in the campus community close to the student.
4. To provide for adequate support of the student, with the student's consent, the Counseling and Psychological Services clinician who assesses the student may do the following:
 - a) Facilitate contact with the student's parent, guardian or spouse to discuss a medical withdrawal or future treatment, if appropriate;
 - b) Consult with staff members from the Department of Residential Life if the student is living in University housing;
 - c) Consult with offices within the Divisions of Student Affairs, Academic Affairs, or other offices to coordinate future support services.
5. If appropriate, the Vice President for Student Affairs will inform:
 - a) The President and Vice Presidents for executive notification;
 - b) The Office of Intercultural Student Engagement, International Student and Scholar Services, Disability Resource Center, Educational Opportunity Program, or other offices as appropriate, so that further support can be provided.
 - c) The Academic Dean's Office (undergraduate and/or graduate) if special academic arrangements need to be made.

NOTE: Students living in the residence halls exhibiting behaviors in this category will be referred to Counseling and Psychological Services for an evaluation within the CAPS Connect Program (See Appendix C).

Threats Of Harm To Self Or Others

All threats of harm must be taken seriously whether the threat is assault, homicide or suicide. It is essential that professional consultation be sought as soon as possible. No one should evaluate a threat on his or her own. Remember, when a person's life is in danger, safety takes priority over privacy.

Please note that at times threats are vague or ambiguous and/or may be aimed at a future event or time. These threats should also be taken seriously and consultation should be sought as soon as possible.

Guidelines

1. Counseling and Psychological Services should be contacted for a consultation to assess the lethality of the threat and to coordinate a plan for intervention. Call 518-442-5800 Monday through Friday from 9:00 AM to 4:30 PM during the academic year and Monday through Friday from 8:00 AM to 3:30 PM during intersessions and summer months.
2. At other times, emergency mental health consultation is available through the Capital District Psychiatric Center Crisis Unit or Albany County Mobile Crisis Team at 518-549-6500. They will evaluate and dispatch a team to provide an on site assessment, as needed. The same telephone number (518-549-6500) will access the emergency mental health services of the Capital District Psychiatric Center Crisis Unit. The Crisis Unit is open 24 hours a day 7 days a week and available to all Albany community members.
3. In all circumstances of clear and imminent danger call the University Police Department (**911**) for an immediate response.
4. Always remember that, when **in doubt, consult with a professional.**

<p>NOTE: Students living in the residence halls exhibiting behaviors in this category will be referred to Counseling and Psychological Services for an evaluation within the CAPS Connect Program (See Appendix C).</p>
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Arrest Or Incarceration

When a student is arrested, such an event can precipitate a mental health crisis. Moreover, among the student's friends and acquaintances, such a stressor may initiate a need for larger-scale crisis intervention.

Guidelines

1. Any member of the campus community who receives information about a student arrest should communicate this to the University Police Department (Please note that an arrest is considered public information.). When the University Police make an arrest or are informed of an arrest they will notify the Vice President for Student Affairs, for coordination of the University's response.
2. If appropriate, the Vice President for Student Affairs or his designee will contact/inform the following:
 - a) The student, to determine his/her need for support and/or legal counsel;
 - b) The President and Vice Presidents for executive notification;
 - c) The Office of Communications and Marketing for public information;
 - d) The appropriate offices within the University if a student is a multicultural, international, disabled, or Educational Opportunity Program (EOP) student;
 - e) The Department of Residential Life if a student lives in university housing, as rumor control may be necessary;
 - f) The Director of Community Standards, in the event that there is corresponding university action;
 - g) Parents, guardians, or spouses as appropriate, so that they may provide assistance;
 - h) The Office of Financial Aid, so that the campus employer may be informed if the student is not returning to campus immediately.
3. If other students are affected by the arrest, the Vice President for Student Affairs or his designee will coordinate information and support by utilizing such resources as Counseling and Psychological Services, the Department of Residential Life, and other offices within the Division of Student Affairs.

Disruptive Behavior

Although disruptive behavior may be associated with a mental health or medical condition, it is best to focus on a student's behavior and its consequences. This ensures that the individuals due process rights are protected.

Guidelines

1. The Director of Community Standards (518-442-5501) should be consulted regarding the appropriateness of judicial action. He/she will provide assistance in evaluating the behavior within the context of Community Rights and Responsibilities (see Appendix D). The Director may take some ameliorative action, for example, meeting with the student to discuss a change in behavior and possible consequences should disruptive behavior continue.
2. Except in cases of imminent danger, Counseling and Psychological Services 518-(442-5800) should be contacted for consultation to help identify the possible presence of psychological, behavioral or substance abuse problems that may be contributing to the disruptive actions. Counseling and Psychological Services staff will facilitate intervention and support.
3. The University Police Department (911) should be notified when a student's behavior is damaging to property or is a threat to the safety of self or other individuals. The University Police will then take appropriate action. In some instances this might include notifying the appropriate local police force for assistance.
4. The Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs should be notified by the University Police so that a coordinated response may be made regarding the student and those affected by his/her behavior. The Vice President for Student Affairs or his designee will contact the following offices:
 - a) Offices of the Academic Dean, Residential Life, and other offices as appropriate to determine the extent of damage and disruption and to assist in identifying members of the University community affected by the disruptive behavior.
 - b) Offices within the Division of Student Affairs to obtain consultation if the student is a multicultural, international, or disabled student.

Other Crises

It is not possible to predict all types of crises. In the event of a crisis that is not listed in this manual, the following general guidelines may be helpful.

Guidelines

1. **Contact the University Police at 911.** University Police, open 24 hours a day 365 days a year, will provide assistance and/or make appropriate referrals.
2. Contact Counseling and Psychological Services for consultation at 518-442-5800 Monday through Friday 9:00 AM to 4:30 PM and Monday through Friday from 8:00 AM to 3:30 PM during intersessions and summer months. A psychologist will respond promptly to provide consultation or other psychological services, arrange for assistance and/or make appropriate referrals.
3. Contact the Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs at 518 956-8140 for additional assistance and support as needed.
4. Provide whatever support you can, using the guidelines outlined in this document.

Appendices

- Appendix A: Crisis Response Team Telephone and E-mail List
- Appendix B: Potential Responders Telephone List
- Appendix C: CAPS Connect Description
- Appendix D: Medical Withdrawal Policy
- Appendix E: Community Rights and Responsibilities

Appendix A: University At Albany Crisis Response Team

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Appendix C: CAPS Connect Program for University Residence Hall Students

*A Project of Counseling and Psychological Services
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What is “CAPS Connect”?

“CAPS Connect” is the acronym for a program of consultation and resource evaluation *required* for students who live in residence who display suicidal intent, defined as either a public suicide threat, tangible evidence that the student is making plans or preparing for suicide, or manifestations of serious self-inflicted injury.

What are the objectives of the CAPS Connect Program?

The CAPS Connect Program provides...

- An assessment of present suicidality
- An evaluation of a student’s willingness and ability to refrain from threatened and actual self-injurious behaviors
- Consultation regarding needed psychiatric, psychological, and educational services
- A procedure that intends to minimize the disruption of normal functioning for roommates and suitemates in the residence community

The CAPS Connect Program augments existing...

- Crisis intervention services
- Psychological treatment resources for students
- Consultation with Residential Life staff and students

Why does the University need CAPS Connect?

Typically, students who threaten or engage in self-injurious behaviors do so either as a form of self-management, as a mechanism for influencing others, and/or to leave an unwanted circumstance or setting. Work with college students who threaten or gesture suicide indicates that contrary to popular and conventional beliefs, often self-harm is less the product of desperation and more an issue of control. Suicide rate data indicate that a *completed* suicide occurs for every 12,000 students per year. Other research has demonstrated that 40 to 65 percent of those who eventually *succeed* in killing themselves had given clear warning of their intent in the form of having made a prior serious suicide attempt that failed, thus making demonstration of “prior suicidal intent” one of the most potent predictors of eventual suicide. Sadly, experience with college students who threaten or gesture suicide has shown that, left on their own, an enormous number will never pursue, and sometimes reject outright, offers of help. Again, often instead of seeing suicide as itself a problem, they use it as a viable (albeit misguided) solution to experienced problems. The University wishes to take such steps as are reasonably available to address situations that are possibly life threatening.

How does the CAPS Connect program work?

In the CAPS Connect program, University residence hall students who evidence suicidal intent (as defined above) are mandated by the Director of Residential Life to participate in a single 2 hour-long session of assessment and evaluation with a Counseling and Psychological Services psychologist (with the option of a follow-up session, if needed). As indicated earlier, the CAPS Connect program is *not* designed to replace existing crisis intervention services. *Nor* is it intended to undertake the psychological treatment of suicidal students. Rather, its purpose is to help students identify the crisis, treatment, and educational services that are available on campus and in the larger community and begin to access needed assistance so that they may remain viable campus residents. Further, it is designed to minimize the disruptive effects that suicide-like behaviors have on roommates and suitemates in the residence community. Sometimes the best option for a troubled student is to medically withdraw and, in these cases, CAPS Connect psychologists can provide assistance with this process.

The initial consultation session must occur within one week of the student's notification by the Director of Residential Life of mandatory assessment. Failure to pursue or complete the assessment will be conveyed by the CAPS Connect psychologist to the Director of Residential Life and may, in turn, result in a conduct referral. CAPS Connect psychologists will inform the Director of Residential Life, or designee, of the student's scheduled appointment and whether or not the student successfully completed the program of assessment. "Successful completion" is defined in the final section below. There is no absolute limit on the number of times a student is required to take part in a two-hour CAPS Connect assessment. The Director of Residential Life will be notified, however, of a student's failure to keep a scheduled appointment (including rescheduling an existing appointment) as this *may* indicate a need for crisis intervention.

In addition, because of the impact that a troubled student may have on the residence community the Director of Residential Life will request that the Area Coordinator meet with the roommates/suitemates of the troubled student and offer assistance as appropriate.

How do students "get to" the CAPS Connect program?

Residence hall staff, required to file a report on manifestations of suicidal intent, will initiate the process through the Director of Residential Life. The critical event that triggers a referral is when a student "crosses the line" from having passive thoughts of suicide (e.g., "Maybe I'd be better off dead", "Would people care if I died?") to taking concrete action on their thoughts by publicly threatening suicide (e.g., telling someone verbally, or in writing, that they may kill themselves), making overt plans and preparations for self-harm (e.g., purchasing a firearm or stockpiling pills), or actually deliberately injuring themselves in an *apparent* suicide gesture (e.g., serious cutting, overdosing on pills).

While the obvious distal objective is to prevent student suicide and maintain a residence environment that is conducive to the academic success of all students, the proximate or most immediate objective is to evaluate the referred student's willingness and ability to refrain from self-injurious behaviors. AN additional objective is to assist them in identifying and gaining access to *a network of specific others* who might provide needed services and assistance. Students who successfully complete the CAPS Connect program receive a *collaboratively* developed "CARE Plan" that identifies specific sources of assistance tailored to their particular needs.

How are Parents and/or Family involved?

Among the responses available to the University to address suicidal behavior of students is to notify the parents of these students regarding the University's concerns. As a rule, the Director of Residential Life will notify the parent(s) of mandated students of a student's required participation in the CAPS Connect program. However, after consultation with the Vice President for Student Affairs (or designee), the Director may defer or waive parental notification if such contact is determined not to be in the best interest of the student. (*In these instances, a psychologist may be consulted regarding parental notification.*) The Director of Residential Life will provide parents with an explanation of the circumstances surrounding the referral and a description of the program. Participating students are encouraged to involve parents as sources of support and assistance.

What is likely to happen during a CAPS Connect consultation session?

The objectives and components for the two-hour consultation session are as follows:

- Students will be provided with a written informed consent stipulating the limits of confidentiality and the specific information to be released
- An orientation to the CAPS Connect program and review of Residential Life policy regarding self-injurious behaviors
- A review of the circumstances surrounding the recent development of suicidal ideation and intent
- Assessment of present/immediate danger (i.e., evidence of on-going suicidal intent and the means "on hand") and undertaking appropriate steps to safeguard students who are determined to remain "in crisis"
- Assessment of the student's willingness and ability to look for alternatives to threatened or actual self-injurious behaviors as manifested in the collaborative development of a safety plan identified as a "CARE Plan"
- Collaborative development of a "CARE Plan", identifying general and specific potential sources of psychiatric, psychological, and academic assistance tailored to the student's particular needs
- Referral for additional needed services such as, for example, alcohol assessment or treatment, couples counseling, academic support services, psychiatric assessment
- *In usual circumstances*, written notification to parents and/or other emergency contacts and existing treatment providers of the student's "safety net" plan

The CAPS Connect program does not provide for the implementation of the student's "safety net plan" or for any monitoring function. ***Once this plan is put in place, implementation is the responsibility of the individual student, his or her family, and mental health treatment providers.***

Student Who Refuse to Participate or Do Not Complete the CAPS Connect Program

Active participation in all phases of the program, including collaborating on the development of a “CARE Plan”, is required for successful completion. Students who are referred to CAPS Connect by the Director of Residential Life, or designee, but who refuse to participate or who do not complete the program, will be referred to the Community Standards office by the Department of Residential Life for disruptive behavior. Each case will be reviewed by the Director of Community Standards on a case-by-case basis. Sanctions will range from University Disciplinary Probation to Removal from Residence to Suspension. Successful completion of the CAPS Connect program does not preempt a conduct referral for related disruptive behaviors (e.g., underage use of alcohol, or unlawful possession of illegal or controlled substances, used to inflict self-harm).