



香港教育大學

The Education University
of Hong Kong



SAO Counselling Services

Counselling Services

**Working with University Staff
to Support Students**

**Counselling Services
Student Affairs Office
The Education University of Hong Kong**

Academic and administrative staff are in the best position to identify and raise concerns over any students who appear to be in distress, due to the close contact between them. Your personal concern and assistance will undoubtedly be helpful to many students at the University. Let us work jointly to provide care and support to our students.



I. Psychological Counselling








Counselling services at the Student Affairs Office helps students to make the desired changes and decisions in their lives. Psychological counselling goes beyond problem-solving, it provides support for students and helps them to discover more about themselves and their potentials. Our counsellors are professionally trained and experienced. Through counselling, students are helped to:

- understand their concerns from a new perspective;
- gain greater insight into themselves and their inner feelings;
- explore new directions and new solutions to their difficulties;
- experiment with new and different ways of relating with others.

II. Signs of Emotional Distress

Many students studying at the University may experience significant changes in their lives during their time here. Common issues faced by students include but are not limited to emotional disturbance, relationship difficulties, academic concerns and personal development issues. Some common signs of emotional distress are:






- Stated Need for Help
- Marked Changes in Mood or Behaviour: mood and actions which are inconsistent with the person's normal behaviour may indicate that he/she is experiencing psychological distress.
- Anxiety and Depression: both of these negative emotional states can impair a person's normal functioning, especially when these states become prolonged or severe.
- Disruptive Sleeping Patterns: excessive or lack of sleep.
- Disruptive Eating Patterns: excessive dieting, binge eating or inappropriate weight control behaviour.

-  Drug or Alcohol Misuse.
-  Psychosomatic Symptoms: frequent headaches, nausea, diarrhea, or other physical pains which have no apparent biological cause.
-  Underachievement or Excessive Absences.
-  Sudden Changes in Social Relationships: withdrawn or attention seeking behaviour.
-  Harm to Others: disorderly or dangerous behavior to self or others.
-  Difficulty in Communicating or Apparent Distortions of Reality: seeing or hearing things which others cannot see or hear; odd ideas or bizarre behaviours.
-  Suicidal Ideations: if a student talks about the details of how, when, or where he/she may commit suicide, immediate intervention is required.

**The above are examples, and not an exhaustive list.*

III. Need for a Referral

Support from academic and administrative staff is surely important to students who are going through tough times. In the following situations, however, you may consider referring a student to our Counselling Team where he/she can receive professional help and support from one of our counsellors:

-  A student presents a problem or requests information which is outside your area of expertise.
-  Certain personal conditions, such as your position, gender or experience, make you feel that you are not the right person to help the student in this situation.
-  A student is reluctant to discuss a problem with you.
-  A student is developing an unhealthy dependence on you for support.
-  A problem persists despite efforts spent.

IV Making a Referral

If you believe that a student would benefit from being referred to Counselling Service, it is usually the best to speak directly to him/her to show your concern and suggest him/her contact us for an appointment.

- Let the student know that your recommendation to seek professional counselling is based on your observation of the student's recent behaviour. Your encouragement can make a real difference to a student who is unsure about whether they need or will benefit from psychological counselling.
- Point out that a situation does not need to reach crisis level in order for counselling sessions to be beneficial.
- If the student is receptive to the idea, you can suggest him/her make an appointment with a SAO counsellor (in person, by email or phone). Alternatively, you can make a referral or book an appointment for the student.
- If a student is reluctant to seek counselling, give the student time to think it over, explore his/her worries and try to convince him/her to re-consider at a later stage.

IV Making a Referral

Counselling Service Liaison Person

For better communication and collaboration with faculties, we have counsellors as liaison person for each faculty on counselling related issues. Faculty members are encouraged to contact their counselling service liaison person for consultation on student cases or referral of students for counselling.

Faculty/Office	Liaison Person	Email [@eduhk.hk]	Ext.
Faculty of Education and Human Development (FEHD)	Amy Wong	wwingsze	6768
Faculty of Humanities (FHM)	Pauline Lee	pwplee	6405
Faculty of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences (FLASS)	Irene Chan	irenechan	6406
Graduate School (GS)	Sharon Cheng	ckawing	6403
Other Offices/Units	Counselling Services	saocs	6245

To make a referral, with student's consent:

- Simply complete a Counselling Service Referral Form and send it to your Counselling Service Liaison Person / Counselling Services. The form can be downloaded from the SAO website.
- A counsellor will contact the student to schedule an appointment and notify you after the student has attended the first counselling session.

V. Confidentiality

- It is important for staff to understand that our counselling sessions are completely confidential in nature which is a contract between a counsellor and the user so to gain trust from the students.
- The information about our users and contents of counselling sessions cannot be released without the student's consent, except in special circumstances of possible danger to the life or safety of a person or as required by law.
- If a staff member is interested in a student's progress in counselling, we suggest talking to the student directly for more information. Students are not bound by the same promises of confidentiality that professional counsellors are obliged to keep.

VI. Other Support Resources

Counselling Services and Other Resources in the Community

There is a wide range of counselling and support services in public and private sectors in the community. Please visit SAO website or contact Counselling Team at 2948 6245 for information on these sources of help outside the campus. We also provide consultation to staff members who are not sure how to handle a difficult situation with a student.

Below are some hotlines and useful information for emergencies.

Resources on Campus

EO Emergency Line	2948 8000
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University Health Centre	2948 6262
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External Resources

Emergency Service

Alice Ho Miu Ling Nethersole Hospital (A&E)	2689 2000
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Tai Po Police Station	2660 3200
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Police & Ambulance Service	999
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24 Hours Hotlines (Counselling & Crisis Intervention)

Suicide Prevention Service	2382 0000
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The Samaritans Befrienders Hong Kong	2389 2222
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The Samaritans (Multi-Lingual Service)	2896 0000
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Family Crisis Support Centre, Caritas- HK	18288
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Other Hotlines

Social Services:

Social Welfare Department Hotline Service

(Mon to Fri, 9:00 – 17:00

Sat 9:00 – 13:00

24 hours interactive voice message)

2343 2255

Mental Health Resources:

Mental Health Association of Hong Kong

(Mon to Fri, 14:00 – 22:00)

2772 0047

Telephone Counselling for Young Persons:

The Hong Kong Federation of Youth Groups

U Line (for students in universities)

Youth Line (for people aged between 6 to 24)

(Mon to Sat, 14:00 - 02:00)

2777 0309

2777 8899

Telephone Counselling:

YWCA Hotline

(Mon to Fri, 19:00 – 22:00)






2711 6622

Appendix I. Supporting Students with Suicide Risk

Some students might experience intense emotional disturbance which may increase the risk of committing suicide. The following section outlines some important signs which may help identify a suicide risk early on, as well as suggestions on how to handle the situation before professional help becomes available. We hope that by working together we can provide adequate support to our students and help them overcome their crises.

A. Important signs that a person may be suicidal are:

- Threatening to hurt or kill themselves
- Talking or writing about death or suicide: expressing a wish to die and putting an end to their suffering
- Looking for ways to kill themselves: seeking access to pills, weapons, or other means
- Hopelessness
- Feeling trapped: like there is no way out of a situation
- Appearing depressed or sad most of the time (untreated depression is the number one cause of suicide)
- Dramatic changes in mood
- Rage, anger, seeking revenge
- Anxiety, agitation, sleep problems
- Acting recklessly or engaging in risky activities, seemingly without thinking
- Increasing alcohol or drug use





-  Withdrawn from friends, family or society
-  Expressing no reason for living, no sense of purpose in life
-  Losing interest in most activities
-  No longer including themselves in plans for the future
-  Giving away possessions

** Some may show one or many of these signs and others may show signs not on this list.*

B. Three most important risk factors of suicide:

1. Current plan
2. Previous attempts
3. Availability of self-harm resources

C. If you think a student may be at risk of committing suicide:

-  Always take expression of suicidal ideas seriously
-  Listen with genuine care
-  Explore his/her social support networks, such as family, friends, groups, church, etc.
-  Encourage to seek professional help, e.g. medical treatment, counselling, psychological intervention

Appendix I. Supporting Students with Suicide Risk

D. Points to note in helping a suicidal student

- Don't get physically involved if a student is threatening himself or others
- Don't attempt to handle the situation by yourself alone, try to get help from others nearby
- Don't leave the student alone and make sure he/she is accompanied by somebody
- Don't promise to keep suicidal conversations and other signs of suicide risk confidential as the student needs professional help and support
- Seek immediate help as appropriate
 - call the EO emergency line (2948 8000)
 - call the police (the nearest police station to our campus is Tai Po Police Station: 2660 3200; Emergency: 999)
 - accompany the student to a hospital A&E department (the nearest public hospital to our campus is the Alice Ho Miu Ling Nethersole Hospital: 2689 2000)
 - take the student to see a doctor / consult the EdUHK Health Centre (2948 6262)
 - contact Counselling Services of SAO (2948 6245)

**Helping a student with suicide risk can be very difficult. Please take care of yourself and seek support from others.*

Reference: Mental Health First Aid Manual (Hong Kong 3rd Edition) by the Mental Health Association of Hong Kong, 2015.

Appendix III.

Making an appointment with a Counsellor

Location	A-1/F-01S (Tai Po Campus)
Telephone	2948 6245
Email	saocs@eduhk.hk
Office Hours	Monday to Friday 8:30 am to 12:30 pm; 1:30 pm – 5:20 pm
Online Booking System	https://pappl.eduhk.hk/CSBS/



Drop-in Sessions:

Location : A-1/F-01S (Tai Po Campus)

Tuesday and Thursday, 8:30 am to 12:30 pm; 1:30 pm to 5:20 pm

Students can talk to the duty counsellor immediately during these drop-in sessions, on a first-come, first-served basis.

EdUHK 24-Hour Counselling Hotline : 82081155

The hotline is exclusively for the students of the EdUHK, especially when they are in need of counselling support outside office hours. It operates 7 days a week including holidays. The University entrusts professional counsellors of Christian Family Service Centre to answer students' call and provide immediate emotional support to students. Counsellors of the Student Affairs Office will provide further assistance to students when in need.



We Care We Support!