

Tips for Referring a Student to York College Counseling Services

1. Speak directly to the student about your concerns, preferably in private. Individuals in distress are more receptive to a genuine expression of interest, care and concern.
2. Be specific about the behaviors observed/reported that have caused concern (e.g. not attending class, drinking to excess, crying a lot, withdrawing from friends, statements about suicide, etc.). Be clear about your concerns and let them know you care about their well-being.
3. Except in an emergency, the decision whether to accept a referral to counseling rests with the student. If they refuse the idea of counseling, it's usually best not to push. Allow them to consider the options and make a decision on their own.
4. Don't try to trick the individual into counseling. Attempting to deceive them will only diminish trust in you and the counseling process.
5. Many people have negative preconceptions about counseling based upon stereotypes. Attempt to educate the student on the process of counseling:
 - Counseling is free, voluntary and can be terminated at any time.
 - Counseling is confidential. Nothing can be shared about the person, including their attendance.
 - Sessions are scheduled based on the situation and last approx. 45 min. at a time.
 - Counselors work hard to understand students, see things from their point of view, and then collaboratively help them find solutions.
 - If an appointment is made with a counselor and things don't work out, they can ask to meet with a different professional with whom they might feel more comfortable.
6. Assist the student in making an appointment at Counseling Services by giving them the phone number to call. If the student is overly upset or you're worried they may not follow through, suggest making an appointment at the time you express concerns. If on campus, offer to walk over to the office with them.
7. Due to some people's views of attending counseling as a sign of weakness, frame the decision to seek help as a mature choice that suggests they aren't running away from problems but actually deciding to face them.
8. If you have referred someone to Counseling Services, additional support can be helpful. Counseling is often most difficult at the very beginning of the process and your encouragement may help the student over this initial hurdle. Please remember that, because of confidentiality constraints, counselors are unable to talk with you about the student unless the student chooses to sign a consent form allowing communication between their counselor and yourself. We do, however, appreciate receiving information about the student that you feel would be important for the counselor to know.