Crisis Management Tools

Krista Anderson, Systemwide Title IX Coordinator

Fall 2022

Agenda

1. Challenges & Barriers to Accessing Support
2. Crisis Mgt Tools & Examples
3. What Comes Next? Reporting to the TIXC and BIT’s
4. Documentation & Record Keeping
Crisis/Threat Continuum

**LEVEL OF CONCERN**

**LOW**
- 1st time seeing a concern
- Makes you or others uncomfortable but nothing specific
- No direct threats made

**MODERATE**
- Not the first time seeing a concern
- Continuation (persistence) of low-level behaviors
- Threat implied or issued in a vague manner
- Threat through verbal or electronic medium
- Quick change in disposition or behavior

**HIGH**
- Any serious/severe incidents
- Multiple incidents in short time frame
- Multiple concerns (pervasive) or escalating from the “low” to “moderate” continuum
- Access to or potential to access weapons
- Clear direct and specific threat and/or plan

**EXAMPLES OF BEHAVIORS**

**LOW**
- Excessive eye rolling
- Constant interruptions
- Disruptive to others
- Crying, sad, angry
- Insults, derogatory language
- Apathy, lack of energy
- Delayed responses
- Distracted or difficulty concentrating
- Impulsive
- Interference in your or other’s learning or work duties
- Seeking “revenge”
- “You’ll be sorry” or “You’ll pay for this”

**MODERATE**
- “You are incompetent & stupid”
- “I don’t care if I live anymore”
- “No one will miss me”
- Feelings of hopelessness
- Repeated insults or derogatory language toward others
- Threatening or posturing in intimidating manner
- Violent statements
- Weapon present, or intentionally exposed
- Physically violent

**HIGH**

Adapted from Student Emergency Services & the Behavior Concerns & COVID Advice Line (BCCAL), UT Austin

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Challenges & Barriers to Accessing Support
Diversity & Intersectionality: Challenges & Barriers


Crisis Management Tools
Pre-Crisis Tools

- Expectations of various roles
- Protocols for meetings, referrals, and emergencies
- Phone tree, essential contacts at the ready
- Resource handouts at the ready
- Tissue, water, snacks at the ready

Pre-Crisis Tools (Cont.)

- Awareness of warning signs
- Strategies for de-escalation & communication “in the moment”
- Role-playing & practice
- Install an emergency “panic” button
- Set-up a close patrol before a meeting
- Office safety walkthrough assessment with campus police
Initial Assessment of the Situation: Quick Triage

- Current emotional status?
- Current stressors?
- Level of concern/crisis?
- Current options?
- What must be taken care of NOW?
- What can be dealt with LATER?

Crisis/Threat Continuum

LEVEL OF CONCERN

LOW
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MEDIUM
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Time Out
Limitations of your role

Strategies – In the Moment
Active Listening

- **Goal**: Provide the person a sense of feeling heard and understood
- **Listener’s Mindset**: Open-minded, objective, & impartial
- Pay full attention to the person
- Nodding, affirmative non-verbals
- **Not** interrupting; using silence
- Open-Ended Phrases
- Clarifying checks & validations:
  - Validating & emotional acknowledgements
  - Reflecting (mirroring/paraphrasing)
  - Summarizing
  - Restating

Active Listening: Examples

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Example Prompts</th>
<th>Example Prompts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Validating</td>
<td>“That sounds difficult.”</td>
<td>“It’s okay to feel upset.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional Acknowledgments</td>
<td>“You seem disappointed right now.”</td>
<td>“Having to consider different options can be stressful to navigate.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflecting</td>
<td>“What I’m hearing is…”</td>
<td>“Sounds like you are saying…”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summarizing or Restating</td>
<td>“Let me summarize to check my understanding [Repeat back]... Did I get that right?”</td>
<td>“[Repeat/rephrase what the other person said]...Is this what you mean?”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open-Ended Phrases</td>
<td>“Tell me more about...” “Explain/describe...”</td>
<td>“What do you mean when you say...?” “Help me understand...”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Affirmative Comm</td>
<td>“Yes” “I see.”</td>
<td>“Go on.” “Right.”</td>
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</table>
Motivational Interviewing:
De-escalation Tool

- **Goal**: Provides an avenue for someone to take action for changing behavior
- Conduct-specific focus
- The person is interested in the need for change
- Organize a plan & actionable pathway for change
- Facilitator uses Active Listening skills:
  - Validating & emotional acknowledgements
  - Reflecting (mirroring/paraphrasing)
  - Summarizing
  - Restating
- Avoid conflicts and stay solution-focused

**Purpose Example Prompts**

<table>
<thead>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Draw out ideas</strong></td>
<td>“What are your thoughts/feelings about the situation?”</td>
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<td></td>
<td>“What was your thought process at the time?”</td>
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<td>“Who has been affected by your conduct?”</td>
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<td>“How did your actions impact others?”</td>
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<td></td>
<td>“What do you think about ____?”</td>
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<td><strong>Be open to all types of responses</strong></td>
<td>“How would you like to proceed?”</td>
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<td></td>
<td>“What are some applicable takeaways that you can learn and grow from this experience?”</td>
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<td></td>
<td>“The decision to accept or not accept certain terms or remedies is up to you.”</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“What do you think might be getting in the way of you doing things differently in the future?”</td>
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Motivational Interviewing: Other Considerations

- Be mindful of the person’s desire, ability, reasons, and/or needs to change one’s own behavior, mindset, or attitude on the subject matter.
- Tailor facilitation prompts or responses based on the person’s interest to changing one’s own behavior.
- Acknowledge the person’s concerns, emotions, and needs.

Motivational Interviewing: Refocusing Conversations

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| If the person doesn’t respond to the relevant prompts... | • Rephrase the prompt again.  
• Acknowledge the shift: “It seems like the discussion is evolving to ____ , but we started off exploring ____.” |
| If the person makes an argument about a different topic... | • Acknowledge the concern & attempt to finish the initial discussion first: “I want to talk about that, but let’s first finish addressing ____?” |
| If the person attempts to change the subject... | • It might be to vent or release some tension.  
• Prompt the person to discuss what’s on their mind.  
• Then, use active listening to acknowledge the person’s current concerns, emotions, and/or needs.  
• Try to link the person’s concerns with the initial discussion topic. |
Strategies – In the Moment

**LOW LEVEL**

De-escalation strategies:
- Active listening & motivational interviewing techniques
- Acknowledge the behavior, and the impact of the behavior
- Redirect with an alternative directive
- Project a posture and/or affect that you want mirrored

**MODERATE LEVEL**

De-escalation strategies:
- Take a break
- Project a posture and/or affect that you want mirrored
- Stop engaging or communicating ("silence" technique)
- Repeat your priority directive and consequences ("broken record" technique)

**HIGH LEVEL**

Safety strategies:
- Press the emergency "panic" button
- Use "code words" to communicate with staff discretely
- Call 911
- Lockdown the office suite and/or offices
- Evacuate the building

EXAMPLES OF BEHAVIORS

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Micro-Expressions: Receptive Signals

- Eyebrow Flashes
- Head Tilt
- Smiling
- Head Nodding

- Mirroring Body Language
- Inward Lean
- Verbal Nudges
- Focused Listening & Silence
Micro-Expressions: Closed Signals

- Elongated Stare
- Eye Squinting
- Furrowed Eyebrows
- Pursed Lips
- Body Scan
- Eye Roll

Practice Scenarios
**Scenario 1:**
You send a student/employee an email with information regarding official university business. Then, you receive an email response within 5 minutes of sending, and the person says "this is f*cking ridiculous...i cant belive u spend uur tim harasssing ppl like this".

How would you potentially respond? (Select all that may apply.)

**A.** Refer the person's behavior to the Student Conduct Office (if student), Human Resources (if employee) for a possible disciplinary referral or a welfare (BIT) referral, as appropriate.

**B.** Respond via email with professional tone, explaining the person’s options for responding to the email, providing resources and "what to expect", and offering to answer questions.

**C.** Call the person to check-in and attempt to deescalate through dialogue, listening, and adjusting strategy depending on the person's responses.

**D.** None of the above

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**Scenario 2:**
You are meeting with a student/employee, and while you are asking a question, they interrupt you and starts answering. You ask another question; they jump in again. They are sitting on the edge of the chair, knee bouncing.

How would you potentially respond? (Select all that may apply.)

**A.** Stay silent and listen to the person's responses, and continue with the interview prompts as usual.

**B.** End the meeting, and reschedule for another day.

**C.** Ask if they are feeling nervous, and provide coping strategies for alleviating anxiety.

**D.** Continue with the interview, but check-in with the person intermittently, acknowledge the nervous behaviors, and see if they would like to take a break.

**E.** Provide campus and community resources to the person, and make referral directly to the applicable office(s), if appropriate.
Scenario 3:
During a meeting with a student/employee, they share that "nobody would notice if I didn't show up tomorrow," and is feeling "lost" and "confused." They have also talked about having depression.

How would you potentially respond? (Select all that may apply.)

- A. Ask if they are thinking about suicide.
- B. Wrap-up the meeting, and offer to walk the person to the Counseling Center (if student) or Employee Assistance Program (if employee) for a walk-in appointment.
- C. Call the Dean of Students (if student) or Human Resources (if employee) for a welfare (BIT) referral or case manager referral.
- D. Call the person’s emergency contact.
- E. Call 911

Scenario 4:
During a meeting with a student/employee, after you ask a question, they raise their voice at you and start to answer defensively. Then, the person stands up toward you while continuing to talk loudly.

How would you potentially respond? (Select all that may apply.)

- A. Press the emergency "panic" button discretely.
- B. Excuse yourself from the meeting, walk out, and get the office manager or coworker for assistance.
- C. In a calm, steady tone, verbally direct the person to sit down and motion with our hand toward the person's chair. You remain seated. Repeat the directive, as needed.
- D. Answer C, but stand to make better eye contact with the person.
- E. None of the above
Scenario 5: This student/employee has a known history of intimidation and disrespect. During a phone call, the person says you are "dumb," "sexist," and "bias in this process." The person says they are reporting you to OCR, EEOC, and UT System, and they will be filing a lawsuit against you.

How do you potentially respond? (Select all that may apply.)

A. End the phone call immediately.
B. Repeat the original purpose and/or the substantive information that needs to be delivered via the phone call.
C. Document the dialogue of the phone call, your responses, and any exact quotes of statements you can recall.
D. Notify your supervisor of the phone call, and then Legal Affairs.
E. None of the above

Support & Resources for YOU

Your Supervisor and/or Human Resources (HR)  Employee Assistance Program (EAP)  Behavior Intervention Team (BIT)  Dean of Students Office

Campus Police & Victim Services  Ombuds Office  Legal Affairs  Off Campus Medical and/or Mental Health Providers
Title IX/BIT Reporting

Reporting Information to the Title IX Coordinator

Title IX Coordinator should receive information about:

- Information or disclosures of sexual violence, sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence, stalking, or other sexual misconduct cases
- Signs of possible ‘abusive’ relationship
- Power and control behaviors, predatory behaviors relating to sexual violence, sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence, stalking cases
- Threats of violence/harm, homicidal threats relating to IPV
Reporting Information to the BIT

BIT should receive information about:
- Information or disclosures of **wellness issues or basic needs not met**
- **Personal impacts**: Decline in academics or mental health, financial instability, unsafe housing
- **Self-harm, suicidal ideation, or suicide attempts**
- **Disruptions, interruptions, or “acting out”** in learning or working environments
- Signs of possible ‘**abusive**’ relationship
- **Power and control** behaviors, **predatory behaviors** relating to sexual violence, sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence, stalking cases
- **Threats of violence/harm, homicidal threats**

Documentation & Record Keeping: TIX & BIT’s

When disclosing information under FERPA’s “health or safety emergency” exception, document the following:
- What is the **significant threat** to the health or safety of a student or other individual(s) that formed the **basis of the discloser**?
- To **whom, when, what, and how** the information was disclosed?
- What is the **legitimate educational interest** in the behavior of the student?

- Intake & Initial Triage
- Case Management Timelines, Decisions & Interventions
- Contact & Communications
- Data Systems for Electronic & Hard Copy Records
• Utilize the Title IX Office, Behavior Intervention Teams (BIT’s), and threat assessment tools to mitigate institutional risks and address campus safety
• Establish & maintain a communication plan to key partners
• Know WHO is making the key decisions
• Be consistent with communication & decision-making
• Refer to case precedent (e.g. similar fact or elements)
• Follow your policy and process
• Document accordingly

Bottom Line for Institutions

Q & A
# Contact Information

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<th>Sean Flammer</th>
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<td>Assistant General Counsel</td>
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<td>Office of General Counsel UT System (Austin, TX)</td>
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<td>Phone: 512-664-9050</td>
<td>Phone: 512-579-5106</td>
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<td>Email: <a href="mailto:kranderson@utsystem.edu">kranderson@utsystem.edu</a></td>
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