

## PROTOCOL FOR STUDENTS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

The experience of domestic violence – whether it is physical, sexual, verbal or psychological abuse – is an extremely difficult and personally challenging time. The student possibly feels very alone and frightened. She or he has come to you because there is some level of trust. You can help the student to feel not so alone, as well as provide some guidance on what to do next. If a student does not approach you with the information, but you suspect that there is domestic violence or similar trauma, you can address the situation by requesting to meet with the student for a few minutes either before or after class.

The most important thing for you to do is be a caring person who listens and asks a few normal, simple questions that might be asked by any one who is willing to help a person in need. Questions such as:

- ❖ What's the matter?
- ❖ I noticed you seem to be very sad. Can you tell me what is happening?
- ❖ Are you okay?
- ❖ It looks like you've been losing weight...have you?
- ❖ Are you sleeping okay?
- ❖ How may I help you?
- ❖ Please tell me what's going on.

### **DO:**

- Listen. Careful listening sends an important message:
  - I take you seriously.
  - I care about you (my students).
  - I want to help.
- Talk with her/him after class, if possible. Ask if she/he can meet with you for a few minutes when class is over.
- If needed, be a little late for your next class. Tell the distressed student that you have only a few minutes and want to express your concern.
- Refer the student to the Advising & Counseling Center (3526).
- Refer the student to Family Crisis Center, 325-3549 (office) or 564-9192 (Hotline 24 hrs.). Family Crisis Center is a Domestic Violence agency.
- Call Public Safety (3333) if there is a threat to the student while on campus.

**BE SURE TO COMPLETE A BEHAVIOR INTERVENTION REPORT FORM ONLINE AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.**

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## PROTOCOL FOR STUDENTS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE (Continued)

### **DON'T:**

- Offer them a ride or a place to stay
- Say, "Don't worry", "Crying won't help", or "It will be better tomorrow", etc.
- Be afraid to ask whether the student is suicidal if you think that is a possibility.
- Minimize the situation or the depth of his/her feelings (e.g., "Oh, it will be much better tomorrow.").
- Over-commit yourself and, therefore, not be able to deliver on what you promise.
- Ignore your limitations (instead, seek assistance).
- Agree to be bound by confidentiality.

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