

Signs That your Friend May Need Help...

<ul style="list-style-type: none">✚ Chronic procrastination✚ Missing classes✚ Decreases in academic performance✚ Socially withdrawn✚ Sleep changes; need for more sleep or need for less✚ Appetite changes✚ Deteriorating hygiene and overall self-care✚ Irritability; frequent arguments and conflicts✚ Binge drinking or drug use	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✚ Self-Injurious Behavior✚ Excessive worry, anxiety, fear, or panic✚ Feelings of hopelessness, worthlessness, and/or thoughts of suicide✚ Recent Losses✚ Low Energy✚ Frequent physical symptoms (headaches, stomach aches, muscle pain)✚ Risky Sexual Activity✚ Mood Swings
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Things You Can Do...

Listen actively fully and offer your support. Take time out and make sure you can be attentive on what your friend is saying. Encourage them to talk. Clarify what they are saying. Be compassionate and validate their feelings and experiences. Keep your own feelings and advice in check.

Brainstorm ideas and possible solutions. Play out possible alternatives and weigh the pros and cons of each. Help your friend make a decision that works best for them and offer your support.

Encourage your friend to seek out resources and talk to other friends and family. Help them expand upon their support network.

Pay attention. Do not ignore it. Approach your friend and without judgment, let your friend know that you are concerned about their well-being. Expressing your concern demonstrates that you care!

Express your feelings with "I" statements. Focusing on specific behaviors is often a good approach: "I'm concerned about your drinking lately." "I'm worried about how sad you seem." "I want to be able to offer you my support."

Educate yourself about resources available to your friend. Counselors, psychologists, other healthcare providers can help. They can also help you find ways to help your friend.

Don't take it on alone. You may not feel qualified to help your friend with their problems. Learn about resources on campus such as counseling, health services, mentoring, and/or spiritual guidance.

Establish trust. Protect your friend's confidentiality and keep what is said between the two of you unless your friend or others are in danger.

Stay in touch. Keep in regular contact with your friend and encourage them to talk to you or other friends so that they establish a strong support network.

What if My Friend Wants to Try Counseling?

East Central College offers free and confidential counseling services for current students. Counseling is considered brief and solution focused. Counseling is available during daytime business hours. If a student has an emergency after hours, they can contact the crisis lines at the bottom of this page or dial 911.

If your friend is interested in counseling they can contact us 636-584-6580 to make an appointment. If this is your friend's first time coming to Counseling Services, they will need to schedule an initial intake assessment. The intake typically lasts for an hour and allows the counselor to gather information about your friend's presenting concerns.

What if My Friend Is In Crisis?

If you are with a friend in crisis, it is always recommended that you and/or another student walk your friend over to our office. If you are unable to do so and have concerns about your friend's safety, you can call Counseling Services, Security, or 911 for additional assistance. No appointments are necessary for students dealing with a psychological crisis or emergency!

Remember that you do not need to take on your friend's problems all by yourself. There are resources available to help on campus. Please reach out to Counseling Services if you feel your friend could use additional support!

Crisis Lines:

Behavioral Health Response: 1-800-811-4760

Missouri Mental Health Crisis Line: 1-888-279-8188

Pathways Crisis Line: 1-800-833-3915

National Suicide Hotline: 1-800-273-TALK

When in doubt, DIAL 911!

East Central College

Counseling and Advising Department

Administration Building

636-584-6580