

Bristol Old Vic  
Theatre School

Central  
School  
of Ballet

LAMDA



London Contemporary  
Dance School

national centre  
for circus arts

Northern School of  
Contemporary Dance

Rambert School  
of Ballet & Contemporary Dance

RADA

More information can be found in the Conservatoire's Guidelines on Supporting Students with Mental Health Difficulties. This document is available on the Conservatoire Staff Website. For a print copy of the Guidelines or to obtain them in a different format, please contact the Equality and Diversity Manager at [lois.keith@cdd.ac.uk](mailto:lois.keith@cdd.ac.uk).

If you have concerns about the mental health of a student and would like to talk to someone please contact:

Acknowledgements: HEFCE, [www.studentmentalhealth.org.uk](http://www.studentmentalhealth.org.uk)

Photography: Bertil Nilsson

# Staff guidance on supporting students showing signs of mental distress



Conservatoire for Dance and Drama

# Spotting the signs

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Students who are showing signs of mental distress do not always express their problems directly or ask for help even where there are clear signs that they are having difficulties.

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This leaflet is designed to provide you with the information you may need to identify at-risk students:

- Has the student told you there is a problem?
- Have there been any significant changes in appearance – weight loss or gain, decline in personal hygiene, noticeable signs of self harm?
- Has their mood changed - do they lack energy, very up and down, clearly unhappy or unable to concentrate?

- Is there any evidence of increased use of drugs or alcohol?
- Has the standard of their work or performances changed?
- Have their friends expressed concern?

**If the answer to any of these questions is 'yes' and you have concerns, you will need to consider the best way to proceed. You will also need to ensure that you find a way to respect student confidentiality.**

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# Supporting students

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Supporting students who show signs of mental distress:

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- Don't avoid the situation or pretend that nothing is wrong.
  - Think about it in advance and approach the student in a sympathetic way.
  - Listen to the student – it may require only empathetic listening.
  - Don't try to offer help that is beyond your role and be clear about your boundaries. There is a difference between being generally supportive and offering specific, specialist support.
  - Make sure you know who you should refer them to within your school.
  - If you need to talk to someone, ask the student for their permission. It is very important to build a relationship of trust.
  - If the student does not give permission, it may still be possible to talk to a member of staff about the issue without disclosing names or breaching confidentiality.
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Unfold this leaflet to see a flow chart on school procedure for supporting students with mental health difficulties.

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