

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. Please ask a member of staff if you would like to see a copy or please contact the Equality and Diversity Manager at [lois.keith@cdd.ac.uk](mailto:lois.keith@cdd.ac.uk).

If you have any mental health concerns and would like to talk to a member of staff or self-refer to a counsellor, please contact:

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

Photography: Benedict Johnson

# Do you know someone who is experiencing mental distress?

## Guidance for Students



Conservatoire for Dance and Drama

# About mental health

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This leaflet is designed to help you understand the signs that indicate mental distress and learn about where you can find the right support for yourself or for a friend.

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## What does mental health mean?

The term 'mental health' describes a sense of well being, the capacity to live in a resourceful and fulfilling way and the resilience to deal with the obstacles and challenges that life presents. Mental distress or a mental health difficulty is where a person is distracted from ordinary daily living by upsetting and disturbing thoughts and feelings.

## Student life and mental health

Moving into Higher Education marks the beginning of one of the most challenging periods of your adolescence or young adult life. Moving away from home and family, managing a budget and facing the transition to a new city or country are all stressful experiences and you will probably be facing these at a time when the support of your family and old friends is not so easily available.

To have gained a place at a Conservatoire school, you are likely to be highly motivated and talented, but you might need support to help you to participate fully in a training that can place great demands on your physical and emotional energy.

# Getting help and support

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## Some early signs of mental distress:

- Disturbed sleep;
- Increased use of drugs or alcohol;
- Significant changes in appearance
- Loss of appetite;
- The inability to concentrate;
- Thoughts or talk of self harm;
- Mood changes.

If you have concerns about yourself or a friend, the first step is to talk to the member of staff who has experience in this area or to some-one you trust.

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## What's the next step?

- Unfold this leaflet to find a flow chart that will help you to understand some of the signs that signify mental distress and what to do about finding support.
  - Look at the label on the back cover of this leaflet to see who you should contact for support.
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## We can help by:

- Encouraging you to talk through the problem and by treating everything you tell us as confidential.
- Giving you the information you need to self refer to the school counsellor or to other members of staff who have expertise in mental health.
- Supporting you in getting specialist help from outside agencies, for example, a GP, psychiatrist, local mental health services or a nutritionist.