

# Helping students in distress:

- *Recognize*
- *Support*
- *Connect*
- *Communicate*



**CAPS**  
UC SAN DIEGO

Jerry Phelps, Ph.D.

# Counseling and Psychological Services - CAPS

- Free and Confidential Counseling and Psychiatry
- Individual, Group, and Couples Counseling for Registered Students
- Offices located at 190 Galbraith Hall, all six colleges, the Women's Center, and Student Health Services

**caps**  
counseling and  
psychological services



**24/7 coverage**

weekends and after-hours consultation available

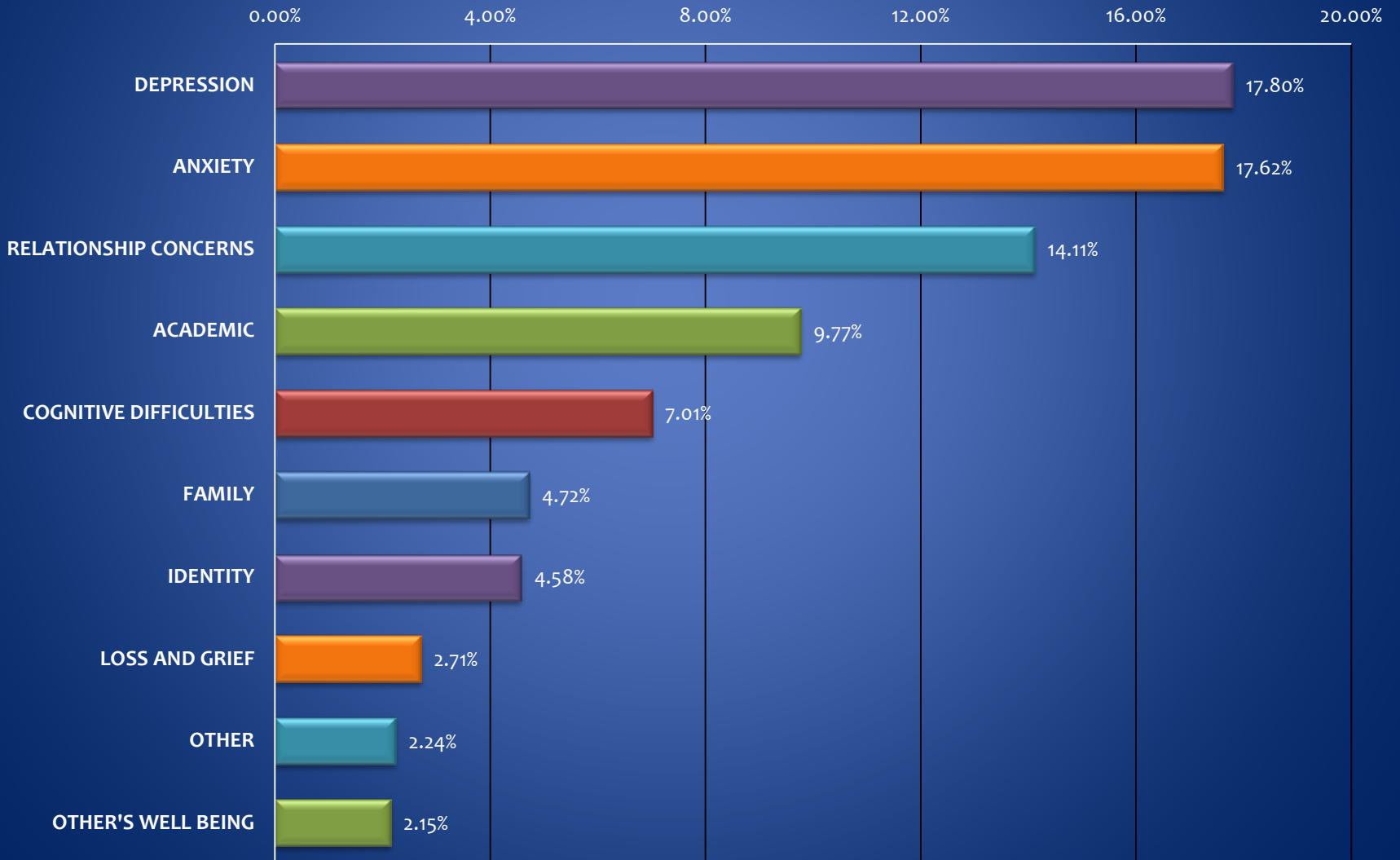
858-534-3755, Option #2

ucsd

# How to access services

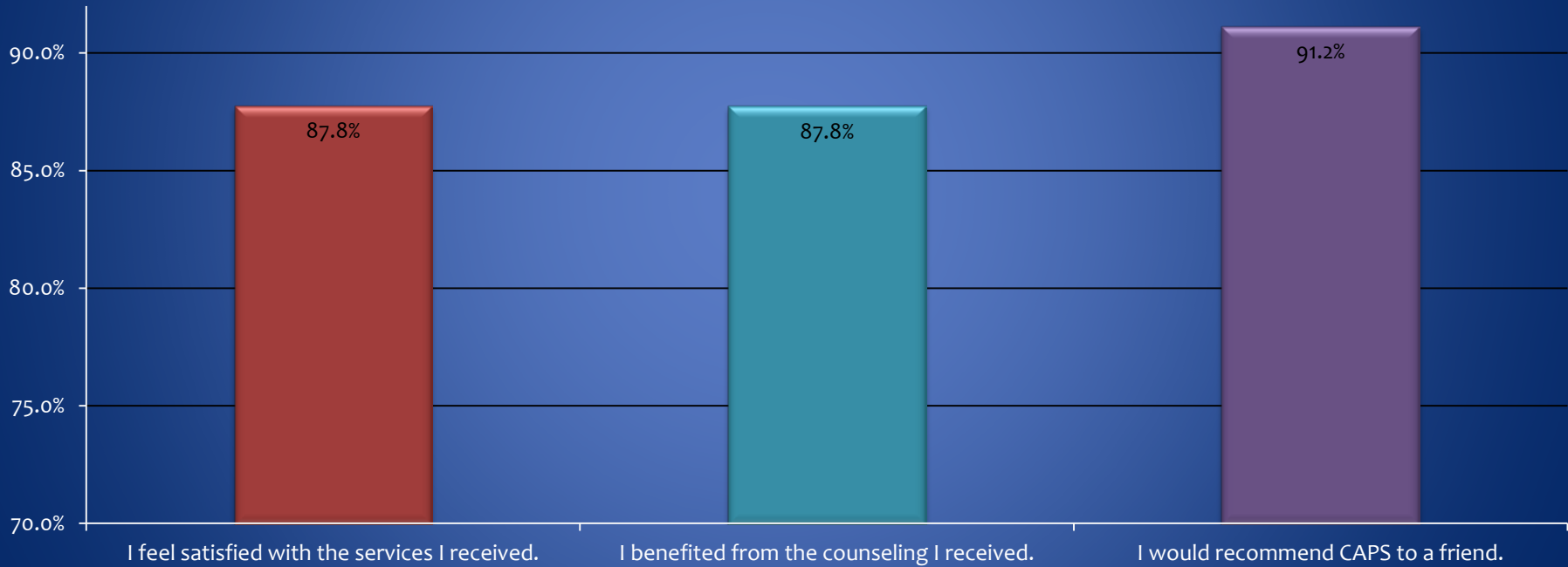
- Call 534-3755 to make an intake appointment
- Walk in for urgent matters
- Consultation for faculty & staff
- Call after hours line

# CAPS Top Presenting Concerns



# CAPS Outcome

## ASSESSMENT OF CAPS EXPERIENCE



Depression/Anxiety

Cold/Flu

Sleep

Death of Family/Friend

Sinus/ear infection

Attention Difficulties

Stress

Concern for Friend/Family

Relationship Difficulty



# Know the Facts about depression

- Nearly half of all college students have felt so depressed they couldn't function at least once during the school year.
- Clinical depression often first appears in adolescence.
- Suicide is the 2<sup>nd</sup> leading cause of death among 20-24 year olds.
  - More teenagers and young adults die from suicide than from all medical illnesses combined.
- The vast majority of those who die by suicide suffer from a treatable psychiatric illness and/or substance abuse problem.

**Suicide is a tragic, but preventable problem**

# Universities protect students

- University students have half the rate of suicide as same age peers.
- Why?
  - Access to free/low cost mental health services
  - Increased peer support
  - **Advising**
  - Restrictions of means (firearms and substance restrictions on campus).



# Bazelon Center for Mental Health Law

The goal of campus policies should be:

to maximize the likelihood that students who need mental health treatment receive it to ensure that their problems do not reach crisis proportions before services become available

To that end University communities need to:

- De-stigmatize mental illness
- Encourage students to seek help
- Remove barriers to treatment
- Ensure that students will not be penalized when they ask for help

# Assisting the Distressed Student

1. Recognize Distress
2. Offer Support
3. Connect to Resources
4. Communicate

## HOW TO HELP A STUDENT IN DISTRESS

- RECOGNIZE**
  - Familiarize yourself with signs of distress.
- OFFER SUPPORT**
  - Ask questions and listen.
  - Show concern, interest and understanding.
  - Ask about self harm, if you're concerned.
- CONNECT TO RESOURCES**
  - Refer the student to CAPS.
  - In an emergency, call UCSD Campus police (958) 534-HELP (4357).
- COMMUNICATE**
  - To consult with an urgent care psychologist about your concerns, call CAPS.
  - Inform the Principal Administrator.
  - Notify your supervisor.

**SIGNS OF DISTRESS:**

**SAFETY RISKS**

- Physical violence
- High risk / dangerous behavior
- Suicidal thoughts or behavior
- Communicating threats
- Increased alcohol and/or substance use

**CHANGE IN BEHAVIOR**

- Sad, anxious, empty mood or mood swings
- Hopelessness, guilt, worthlessness
- Loss of interest or pleasure in activities
- Withdrawal and isolation
- Financial recklessness
- High levels of irritability or anger
- Unusual apathy

**CHANGE IN PERFORMANCE**

- Inability to concentrate or make decisions
- Missed or coming late for classes or work
- Excessive procrastination
- Disorganized

**PHYSICAL SYMPTOMS**

- Fatigue, lack of energy or sleep disturbance
- Change in personal hygiene
- Change in appetite, weight loss or gain
- Agitation, restlessness
- Delusions and paranoia

**OTHER RESOURCES:**

Campus Police: (858) 534-HELP or 911 from a campus phone

Office of Student Disabilities (OSD): (858) 534-4362

Office for the Prevention of Harassment & Discrimination (OPHD): (858) 534-8208


Office of the Ombuds: (858) 534-0777

Sexual Assault & Violence Prevention Resource Center (SARC): (858) 534-5793

Student Health Services (SHS): (858) 534-3300

San Diego County Mental Health (24/7): (800) 479-3339

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1 (800) 273-TALK



### FACULTY & STAFF 911 GUIDE

SEE SOMETHING? SAY SOMETHING.  
Concerned about what you have witnessed in a student's behavior or class work?  
Call for assistance or a consultation.

TELEPHONE NUMBERS AT A GLANCE  
(all numbers in 858 area code)

**EMERGENCY – Life threatening situation:**

- From a campus phone: Dial 911
- From a cell phone, call UCSD Campus Police: 534-HELP (4357)

**PRINCIPAL ADMINISTRATORS (PA):**

Revelle	534-5493	Marshall	534-4330	Roosevelt	534-2237
Muir	534-5587	Warren	534-1720	Sixth	822-5953

Office of Graduate Studies (OGS) 534-3871  
School of Medicine (SOM) 534-3700  
Skaggs School of Pharmacy & Pharmaceutical Sciences 822-5581

**ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:**

Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS)	534-3755
Student Health Services (SHS)	534-3300
Student Policies and Judicial Affairs (SPJA)	534-6225
Student Sexual Assault Resource Center (SARC)	534-5793
Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD)	534-4362
International Center	534-3730
Office of the Ombuds	534-0777
Office of Sexual Harassment Prevention & Policy (OSHPP)	534-8298
Women's Center	822-1577
Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender Resource Center	534-3456
Cross-Cultural Center	534-9689

If in doubt, call the UCSD Police Department  
534-HELP (4357)

ASSISTING STUDENTS OF CONCERN

**DISRUPTIVE STUDENT**

A student whose conduct is clearly and immovably reckless, disorderly, dangerous, or threatening including self-harmful behavior

**GETTING HELP**

If you are concerned for your others' safety due to a student's disruptive and/or threatening behavior  
Call 911 or the Campus Police

**THEN REPORT TO:**

For Undergrads:  
The College Dean of Student Affairs (PA)  
The Department Undergraduate Student Affairs Coordinator

For Grad and Professional Schools:  
The Office of Graduate Studies (PA)  
The School of Medicine (PA)  
The Skaggs School of Pharmacy (PA)

**CONSULTATION OR EMERGENCY COUNSELING**

Call a PA, SPJA, CAPS, OGD, SHS or the Ombuds

**DISTRESSED STUDENT**

A student with a cluster of persistent behaviors who seems unduly anxious, sad, irritable, withdrawn, confused, lacking motivation and/or concentration, seeks constant attention or demonstrates bizarre, erratic behavior, or expresses suicidal thoughts

**GETTING HELP**

Consultation and Referrals  
Call CAPS, OGD, SHS, Ombuds or a PA

**Administrative/Judicial Affairs:**  
Call a College Dean of Student Affairs, or the PA for the OGS, SOM, the Skaggs School of Pharmacy, SPJA

**Academic Status**  
Call and consult:  
College Dean of Student Affairs  
College Academic Advising  
Dept. Undergraduate Student Affairs Coordinator  
Graduate Department Chair  
Graduate Advisor

**IN CASE OF ILLNESS OR INJURY**

Emergency medical situation: 911  
Non-urgent: OSB

If a student is causing a disruption but does not pose a threat:

- Ensure your safety in the environment. Use a calm, non-confrontational approach
- Involuntarily restrain the situation
- Set limits by explaining how the behavior is inappropriate
- If behavior continues, ask the student to stop and warn them that official action may be taken.
- If the disruptive behavior persists, notify the student that disciplinary action may be taken. Ask the student to leave. Inform them that refusal to leave may be a separate violation subject to discipline.
- If you believe there is a safety risk, contact campus police. Immediately report the incident to the appropriate PA listed above.



**RECOGNIZE DISTRESS**

# Indicators of Distress

## Academic/ Co-curricular

- Sudden grade changes
- Absences
- Concerns from Faculty
- Significant decline in performance

## Psychosocial

- Isolation/loneliness
- Withdrawing from others
- Dramatic mood change
- Personality Change
- Hopelessness
- Loss of interest in pleasurable activities

## Safety Risk

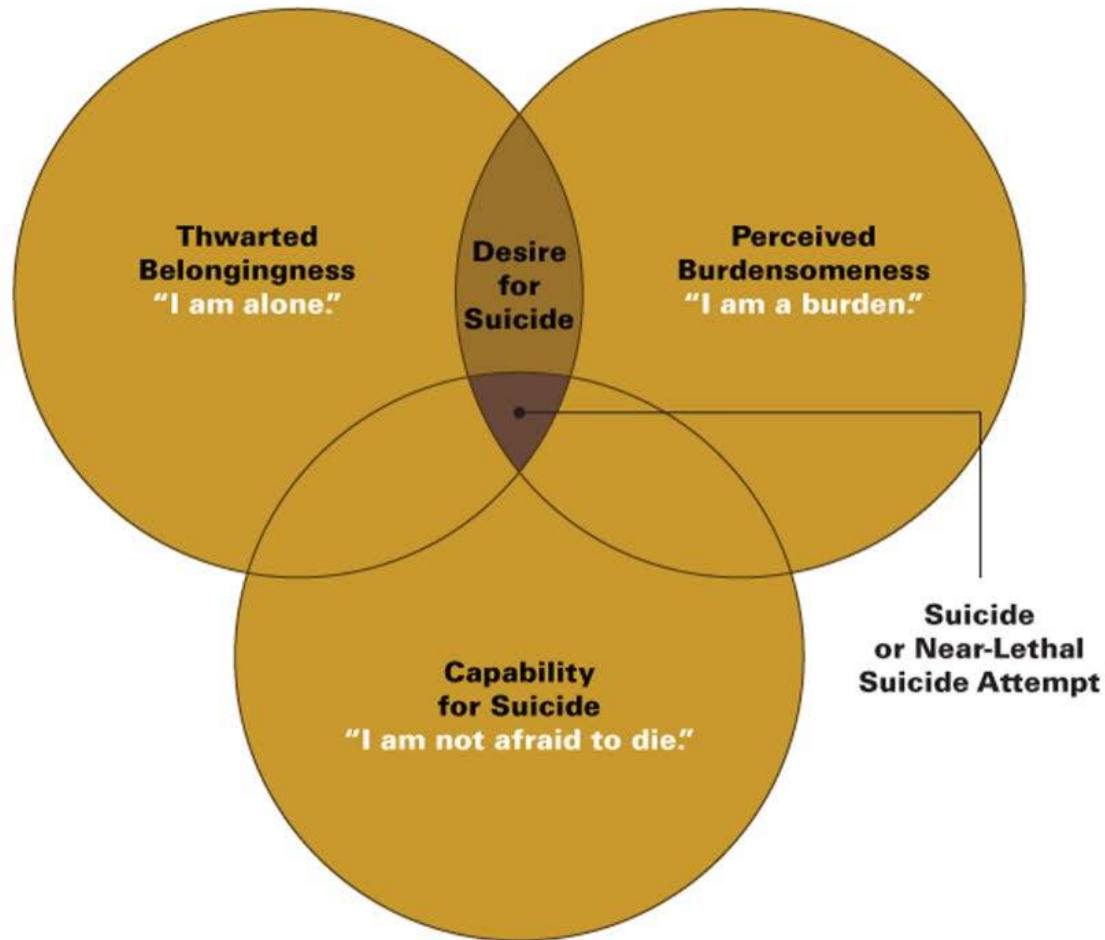
- Threatening self-harm
- Highly disruptive
- Talking about death while acting agitated or anxious
- Seeking weapons or means to self harm

## Physical

- Change in weight
- Lack of sleep
- Neglect of appearance
- Frequent complaints of physical symptoms – headaches, stomach aches



# JOINER'S THEORY OF SUICIDE





# Know the Signs

<http://www.directingchange.org/know-the-signs/>

<http://www.directingchange.org/hey-im-allan/>

# Seek immediate help For Disruptive Students



Call 911  
or  
the Campus Police





**OFFER SUPPORT**

# Offer Support

## Start the Conversation

- Reach out and connect
- Meet in private
- Ask how they are doing

## Listen, Express Concern, Validate

- Let them know you are worried
- Let them know you care
- Make it safe to talk

## Trust your Gut

- Refer or consult
- Asking someone “You seem very upset, are you thinking about harming yourself” will not put thoughts of suicide in his or her mind.



**CONNECT TO RESOURCES**

# Where to refer

## HIGH LEVEL EMERGENCY

- Campus Police for immediate assistance
- Dial 911 (on campus) or (858) 534-HELP (from off campus)
- Report this incident to your Principal Administrator

## MODERATE LEVEL EMERGENCY

- Contact CAPS Urgent Care Psychologist for same-day assistance (M-F, 8:00am-4:30pm) at (858) 534-3755
- Or, direct to nearest Emergency Room Hospital
- Consult with Principal Administrator

## LOW LEVEL EMERGENCY

- Ascertain student needs and refer appropriately
- CAPS, SHS, SARC, OSD, College Dean of Student Affairs, OGS
- CAPS Urgent Care Psychologist for consultation
- Consider informing the Principal Administrator



# Making a referral to CAPS

- Be frank with the student about your limits (time, expertise, reluctance of the student to discuss his/her situation with you).
- Let the student know that you think he/she should get assistance from another source.
- Express hope that they can find help for their problem.
- Share information about recommended services and what to expect if he/she follows through on the referral.
- Set up follow-up appointment with student.

## What to Say

- I've noticed you've been feeling down, look upset, said personal problems are interfering with classes
- I'm worried about you
- I recommend you see a CAPS counselor
- Services are free and confidential
- Will you make an appointment?

## What not to say

- You're not thinking about suicide, are you?
- Don't worry, I won't tell anyone



**COMMUNICATE**

# Communicate

Step 1

- Speak directly with student

Step 2

- Consult supervisor

Step 3

- Notify the Principal Administrator



When to report to the Principal Administrator

**SEE SOMETHING, SAY SOMETHING**

# Principal Administrator (PA) role

- The Deans are responsible for the health and safety of their respective college community.
- Inform, consult with or refer to the College Deans
- Deans are the point person for information about distressed and disruptive students



# You can support the well-being of UCSD students

- **Recognize Distress:** Look for problematic symptoms and behaviors
- **Offer Support:** Talk with students in distress
- **Connect to Resources:** Refer students to resources
- **Communicate:** Consult with appropriate staff