

STRATEGIES FOR EFFECTIVE HELPING

FOCUS ON **S.E.E** – SAFE, EARLY, EFFECTIVE

Emergency Helping – General Strategies

****Emergency situations unfold quickly and often require immediate helping responses.**

(Also see specific Action Steps in Scenarios.)

Carefully assess the entire situation/circumstances before making any decisions or taking any action.

Consider both DIRECT and INDIRECT ways to intervene.

Direct: You take responsibility as the primary helper.

Indirect: You request that someone else take responsibility as the primary helper (e.g., the Police, Emergency Medical Trained or EMT personnel, Athletic Administrators, etc.)

Whatever response you choose, remember the following in an emergency/crisis:

- ◆ Calm the person
 - ◆ Gather information
 - ◆ Look at options
 - ◆ Provide support
 - ◆ Know appropriate referrals
 - ◆ Do not become enmeshed
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- Look for the best exit strategies (getting out of the situation) for those involved.
 - Be clear and direct with all of your requests.
 - Make **safe** choices; consider the level of risk in choosing an action for intervening.
 - Understand boundaries and limits - don't be a hero. Remember verbal fights can quickly turn into physical fights. *****It is often better to WALK AWAY.**
 - Intervene **early** – before a problem becomes a crisis or disaster.
 - Choose the most **effective** ways of helping for that particular situation. Be sure to not make the situation escalate.
 - Publicly state your commitment to helping. “I will do X.”
 - Engage other bystanders – You do “Y.”
 - Discuss consequences that the person cares about – Encourage VALUE BASED DECISIONS.
 - Assess personal exposure/liability when actions you know about are criminal.
 - **Call 9-1-1 if it is not safe or prudent for you to help directly.**

Non–Emergency Helping – General Strategies

****Non-emergency situations unfold more slowly and allow more careful planning of a helping response.**
(Also see specific Action Steps in Scenarios.)

Consider both **DIRECT** and **INDIRECT** ways to intervene.

Direct: You speak with the person directly.

Indirect: Talk to another person who you feel could be helpful or give guidance and direction – teammate, counselor, administrator, coach.

Note: If you do not act immediately, don't ignore the situation. Just because you don't act right then and there doesn't mean you can't do it later!

Whatever response you choose, remember the following:

- Consider *frequency, duration and intensity/severity* when evaluating a situation.
- Determine the barrier for the person if possible – motivation, ability or environment.
- Know your limits as a helper – engage others as necessary.
- Be sensitive, understanding and non-judgmental.
- Challenge misperceptions - Express your true feelings/beliefs.
- Identify the red flags; Anticipate problems.
- Determine the priority goal; Formulate a plan; Prepare/practice what you want to say.
- Interrupt/distract/delay a situation you think might be problematic – before it becomes an emergency!
- Set boundaries – do not make excuses for the person or otherwise enable them.
- Conduct conversations in a safe environment. Maintain **mutual respect** and **mutual purpose**.
- Remember the **Law of Delivery** – Who (person/s), What (content), When (timing), Where (location/privacy), Why (reasons) and How (tone).

Use The 5 Point Formula –

*Adapted from University of Massachusetts, Amherst Health Services,
Virginia Alcohol Safety Action Program and The BACCHUS Network*

- I Care** Let the person know you care about him/her and that because of the significance of the relationship you need to discuss something very important. Both starting and ending the discussion with an emphasis that you are doing this out of genuine concern, caring and respect for the person, sandwiches the difficult feedback between strong positives. Choose words you are comfortable with and fit your style.
- I See** Report/Review actual events with your friend, as you perceive them. Remember you are evaluating the behavior not the person. Try to limit your statements to observable, irrefutable facts. The more you have, the better.
- I Feel** Tell the person your own feelings using “I statements” to reveal your feelings.
- I Want** Tell the person what you would like to see happen.
- I Will** Specify what you will or will not do. Only set ultimatums if you can, and will, stick to them.