

## International College Students

### **Risk Factors**

- Previous suicide attempt(s)<sup>3</sup>
- Mental health issues<sup>4</sup>
- Language barriers and interpersonal challenges<sup>1</sup>
- Adjustment issues<sup>1</sup>
- Lack of awareness accessing mental health services<sup>2</sup>
- Family difficulties (e.g., family illness, death of a loved one, divorce of parents) (Burak, 1987; as cited in Mori, 2000)<sup>1</sup>
- Difficulty with academic tasks (e.g., comprehending lectures, taking notes, participating in class discussions, completing reading/writing assignments) (Cadioux & Wehrly, 1986; as cited in Mori, 2000)<sup>1</sup>
- Financial difficulties (Cadioux & Wehrly, 1986; as cited in Mori, 2000)<sup>1</sup>
- Experiences with prejudice<sup>3</sup>
- History of physical and/or sexual abuse<sup>4</sup>
- A recent loss<sup>3</sup>

### **Warning Signs**

- Focused on death, dying, and suicide<sup>3</sup>
- Talking, writing, or hinting about suicide<sup>3</sup>
- Giving away possessions<sup>3</sup>
- Withdrawal from usual activities<sup>4</sup>
- Dramatic mood changes<sup>4</sup>
- Anxiety<sup>4</sup>
- Perceived burdensomeness<sup>4</sup>
- Hopelessness and/or feeling trapped<sup>4</sup>
- Exhibiting changes in behavior, such as:
  - school performance
  - eating
  - appearance
  - sleeping patterns
- Excessive/increased use of substances (e.g., alcohol and/or drugs)<sup>4</sup>
- Recklessness/excessive risk-taking behavior<sup>4</sup>
- Perfectionism (e.g., excessive concern about mistakes and/or actions, harshly self-critical)<sup>5</sup>

### **Resources**

#### **Henderson Student Counseling**

Student Counseling helps students:

- make sense of what is going on



- make meaningful changes
- find ways to better handle stress
- identify sources of support
- discover solutions
- if necessary, see the psychiatrist and (if needed) obtain a prescription for medication

**Phone: (954) 424-6911** Available 24 hours per day for consultation

**Location:** University Park Plaza (east of the bookstore)

**Website:** <http://www.hendersonmhc.org/studentcounseling>

### **The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline**

24-hour toll-free hotline available to anyone experiencing emotional distress/suicidal thoughts or is concerned about another person's welfare.

**Toll-Free: 1-800-273-TALK (8255) English**

**1-888-628-9454 Spanish**

### **University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire (Counseling Services Website)**

Provides international students with information on coping and culture shock.

**Website:** <http://www.uwec.edu/counsel/pubs/shock.htm>

### **References**

1. Mori, S. (2000). Addressing the mental health concerns of international students. *Journal of Counseling and Development*, 78, 137-144.
2. Frey, L.L., & Roysircar, G. (2006). South Asian and East Asian International students' perceived prejudice, acculturation, and frequency of help resource utilization. *Journal of Multicultural Counseling and Development*, 34, 208-222.
3. Pace University Counseling Center (2009). Get in the Know: Suicide Prevention for International College Students. Retrieved from [http://www.pace.edu/counseling-center/sites/pace.edu.counseling-center/files/International\\_Suicide.pdf](http://www.pace.edu/counseling-center/sites/pace.edu.counseling-center/files/International_Suicide.pdf)
4. American Association of Suicidology (2010). The Risk Factors for Suicide. Retrieved from <http://www.suicidology.org/web/guest/stats-and-tools/fact-sheets>
5. O'Connor, R. C. (2007). The relations between perfectionism and suicidality: A systematic review. *Suicide and Life-Threatening Behavior*, 37, 698-714.

