

# How to Ask for Help



Being a student is hard. The pressure you experience is real. While at Lakehead, there may be times that you feel overwhelmed and find it difficult to cope and you may feel alone.

You can persevere through failure, fear, and despair. Success starts with knowing yourself, including your natural strengths and your response to stress. Lakehead services are here to help you learn and grow both inside and outside the classroom.

**The guide below directs you to support options based on the intensity of your feelings. Knowing how and where to reach out for help at Lakehead is essential. You are not alone!**

## Stress

Stress is a survival mechanism; it is our body's reaction to a certain situation or event that we feel may be a threat to us. It is a normal part of academic life and can increase your focus and performance.

At university, you are being stretched by new and often competing demands. When you are stressed, you may experience changes in your emotions, body and/or thinking. You may need help to identify specific stress points and learn new skills to effectively manage your stress response.

### Reach out for resources and support:

- [Good2Talk](#) Call 1-866-925-5454 or text 686868
- [Lakehead Student Health and Wellness Counselling](#)
- [Talk Campus](#)
- [BounceBack](#)
- [Lakehead Support Services - Thunder Bay](#)
- [Lakehead Support Services - Orillia](#)

## Distress

Distress occurs when you are faced with stress points that you are struggling to cope with. These stress points could be a specific experience, life event or ongoing unpleasant feelings. When your normal coping strategies (e.g., rest, exercise, staying positive) are not working, your daily functioning might also be impacted. Examples include:

- Difficulty sleeping or sleeping too much
- Significant changes in appetite
- Not attending class, work, or difficulty completing normal self-care activities (e.g., preparing meals, showering)
- Increased substance use
- Decreased interest in your usual hobbies or interests
- Thoughts of self-harm

Depending on your level of distress, you may need to talk to a professional who can help you make changes in your life and improve or expand your coping strategies.

### Consider working with a counsellor or doctor:

- [Lakehead Student Health and Wellness Counselling](#)
- [Lakehead Student Health and Wellness Health Services](#)
- [Good2Talk](#) Call 1-866-925-5454 or text 686868
- [First Nations and Inuit Hope for Wellness Help Line:](#) Call 1-855-242-3310 or Online Chat

## Crisis

When your level of distress becomes severe and you cannot find any relief from overwhelming and negative feelings, you may experience thoughts of suicide. You may imagine death as an escape from the way you are feeling. You may be struggling to stay safe and have a plan to end your life or someone else's life.

When your level of distress becomes severe, and you feel you cannot cope or feel you are not in control, you may need support. The following are signs you need immediate help:

- Having thoughts about ending your life or trying to end your life
- Having thoughts of hurting others
- Making choices that put you or others in serious danger
- Experiencing sensations that are not real and/or beliefs that cannot possibly be true
- Becoming unable to care for yourself, and it is putting you at risk of serious harm

### Take immediate action:

- Crisis response services is a 24/7 crisis line staffed by Canadian Mental Health Association
  - Thunder Bay – 807-346-8282
  - Orillia – 705-728-5044
- National Suicide Prevention lifeline: 1-800-273-8255
- [Suicide Hotlines Around the World](#)
- [Trans Lifeline:](#) 1-877-330-6366
- Go to your local hospital's emergency room or call 911