

Responding to Substance Abuse

Signs that a student may have an alcohol problem

- Failure to fulfill major work, school, or home responsibilities.
- Specific school problems such as poor attendance, low grades, and/or recent disciplinary action.
- Drinking in situations that are physically dangerous, such as driving a car.
- Having recurring alcohol-related legal problems, such as being arrested for DUI or physically hurting someone else while drunk.
- Continued drinking despite having ongoing relationship problems that are caused or worsened by drinking.
- Mood changes such as temper flare-ups, irritability, and defensiveness.
- Physical or mental problems such as memory lapses, poor concentration, bloodshot eyes, lack of coordination, or slurred speech.

Signs that a student may have a drug problem

- Experiencing withdrawal symptoms (e.g., nausea, restlessness, insomnia, concentration problems, sweating, tremors, and/or anxiety) after reducing or stopping chronic drug use.
- Taking a drug in order to avoid withdrawal symptoms.
- Spending a lot of time getting, using, and recovering from the side effects of a drug.
- Abandoning previously enjoyed hobbies, sports, and socializing in order to use drugs.

- Neglecting school, work, or family responsibilities.
- Taking risks while high, such as starting fights or engaging in unprotected sex.
- Continuing to use despite physical problems (e.g., blackouts, flashbacks, infections, injuries) or psychological problems (e.g., mood swings, depression, anxiety, delusions, paranoia) the drug has caused.
- Legal troubles caused because of drug use such as arrests for disorderly conduct, driving under the influence, or stealing to support a drug habit.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

- Treat the situation as serious.
- Share your concern and encourage the student to seek help.
- Recognize that denial is a powerful aspect of substance problems and that it can involve conscious or unconscious lying and distorting the truth.
- Refer the student to the UNCP Counseling Center (521-6202).

Please consult with the Office of Student Conduct (521-4328) to document the situation and determine if the student disciplinary action is necessary.