

## Types of School Counseling Emergencies

### Critical

- **Definition**- A student demonstrates or reports imminent risk of harm or death to self or others
- **Characteristics**- risk or threat of suicide, statements (or indicative behaviors) of intent to harm others, situations in which a vulnerable person (child, disabled adult, elderly) is at risk of being victimized, or perceived impairment by mental illness or substance use potentially leading to harm of self or others
- **Response**- Alert direct supervisor, and/or staff school resource officer. May need to call 911 or emergency services. (Remain with the individual until help arrives)

### Urgent

- **Definition**- A student experiencing acute psychological distress or concerning behaviors not to the level of an emergency
- **Characteristics**- thoughts of suicide without plan or intent, disclosure of recent abuse/neglect, intense anger towards others without the risk of harm, substance abuse or dependence, intense anxiety, panic symptoms, depression, illogical and impulsive behavior, deterioration in hygiene, bizarre/illogical thinking without the risk of serious and foreseeable harm.
- **Response**- Initiate SAFER-R Model (Stabalize, Acknowledge, Facilitate understanding/normalize, Encourage effective coping, Recovery or Referral for continued care).

### Important

- **Definition**- A person struggling with fundamental needs, thus impacting their normal functioning, but not to the degree of needing immediate attention for safety.
- **Characteristics**- self-referral, changes in typically behavior patterns (eating, sleeping, mood)
- **Response**- Individual counseling, out-patient counseling services, referral to other health care providers and/or other local and state resources as needed

#### References:

The John Marshall Law School. (2017, July 24). *JMLS Counseling Center Urgent and Emergent Issues Policy*. Retrieved from <https://jmls.uic.edu/policy/pdf/counseling-center-emergent-urgent-issues-policy.pdf>

University of Rochester Medical Center, NYS Maternal & Infant Health Center of Excellence. (2017). *Identifying, Prioritizing and Addressing Client Needs: Strategies for Home Visitors*. Rochester: University of Rochester Medical Center.