

ANNEXURE - A

Practical Tips for Staff - Help Students feel Safe to Talk (The role of staff is not to be therapists, but to be first-line supporters.)

- 1. Model Healthy Behaviours Yourself:** Make sure you take care of your own physical and emotional well-being. Show balance, take breaks, and talk about positive coping strategies.
- 2. Be Visible and Approachable:** Keep office doors open during drop-in hours, walk around informally, and share small personal stories to appear relatable.
- 3. Be an Active Listener and Use Empathetic Language:** Listen without rushing to fix the difficulty. Use supportive language and impactful words that reduce stigma.
- 4. Notice Warning Signs:** Look for changes in attendance, mood, or behaviour. Check in gently and privately.
- 5. Learn and Share Referral Pathways:** Know the counsellors, helplines, and referral systems and share with them the sources from which they can get help.
- 6. Protect Confidentiality, but know your duty of care:** Reassure students about privacy, but involve professionals if safety is at risk.
- 7. Create Inclusive and Affirming Spaces:** Respect names/pronouns, celebrate diversity, and call out bullying or discrimination.
- 8. Check in during High-Risk Periods:** Provide extra support during exams, results, or big transitions like first-year entry.
- 9. Show Small, Consistent care:** Greet students by name, acknowledge effort, and send encouraging notes or messages.
- 10. Encourage and Empower:** Empower your students and others to seek help for distress and mental health support.