Student mental health and the law: A resource for institutions of higher education

Date: 2008 (For resources, this is the publication date. For programs, this is the date posted.)

Information
Type: Guidelines/Recommendations
Author: The Jed Foundation
Publisher: The Jed Foundation

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Student mental health and the law [1]

Developed by The Jed Foundation, Student Mental Health and the Law: A Resource for Institutions of Higher Education addresses issues of law and liability that can be challenging as colleges develop policies for and work with students who are distressed or suicidal. Student Mental Health and the Law provides clarification of FERPA, disability law and other legal issues colleges face, and includes “good practice” guidelines for addressing campus mental health and working with students in distress. Good practice guidelines include:

- Encouraging campus-wide communication
- Developing an emergency contact notification
- Developing a case management team
- Developing leave of absence (LOA) protocols
- Avoiding “zero-tolerance” policies for self-harm
- Understanding the complexities of mandating assessment and treatment
- Establishing individualized re-entry requirements
- Encouraging students to be proactive about their mental health
- Offering insurance with mental health coverage
- Promoting appropriate boundaries
- Developing a memorandum of understanding (MOU)
- Proactively addressing potential conflicts
- Reaching out to affected students
- Establishing and following appropriate policies and protocols

Objectives:
Users of Student Mental Health and the Law should have:
1. Increased understanding of applicable laws and professional guidelines related to student mental health;
2. Increased knowledge of good practice recommendations related to student mental health.