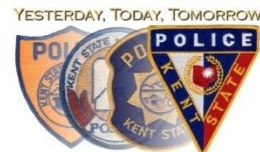


Recognizing and Responding to Unusual, Disruptive, or Threatening Behavior

Kent State University Police
Services Division

KENT STATE
UNIVERSITY



KENT STATE UNIVERSITY POLICE



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Why are we here?

What is our mission?

Kent State University Mission Statement

The mission of Kent State University is to discover, create, apply and share knowledge, as well as to foster ethical and humanitarian values in the service of Ohio and the global community. As an eight-campus educational system, Kent State offers a broad array of academic programs to engage students in diverse learning environments that educate them to think critically and to expand their intellectual horizons while attaining the knowledge and skills necessary for responsible citizenship and productive careers.

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University's Strategic Goals

- Student success
- Academic excellence and innovation
- Breakthrough research and creative endeavors
- Engaging with the world beyond our campuses
- Securing our financial future
- Recognize and develop our people

Related Progress Indicators

- Meeting enrollment targets
- Graduation rate
- Student retention rate
- Faculty/staff retention rate

Goals of this Presentation

- **Safety** through recognition and early intervention
- Retention (faculty, staff, students)
- Facilitate preparation of students and development of faculty/staff
- Reduce stress for you and others

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Who are we talking about?

Who are these disruptive
people?

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They have been:

- Students
- Faculty
- Staff
- Visitors

We'll start by discussing general characteristics of this generation of traditional students.

The Millennial Generation



The Millennial Generation

- Born from 1977 to 1995 or so
- Academically driven, competitive, concerned about academic success
- Have high expectations
- Feel pressured to succeed
- Confident
- Expect more complaints about unfairness
- Close to their parents

The Millennial Generation

- Team-oriented
- More seek counseling and come to campus with prescriptions for psychotropic medications
- Have been encouraged to talk over their problems with trusted and credentialed adults...will search out for a sympathetic ear
 - “cry for help”

What causes people to be disruptive or puts them in crisis?

- Mental disorders
 - wide range of diagnoses
- Depressed/suicidal individuals
 - though few think of harming others, this *is* one common trait among most active shooters
- Average people experiencing stress/loss
 - everyone has a different threshold for stress and different ability to cope

What causes people to be disruptive or puts them in crisis?

Since there are a variety of possible causes, and not *all* people who are stressed, depressed, or have a mental disorder will be disruptive or unusual, we focus first on the problematic behavior of the person to identify who we should be concerned about.

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What behaviors should we be
looking for?

Examples of Unusual Behavior

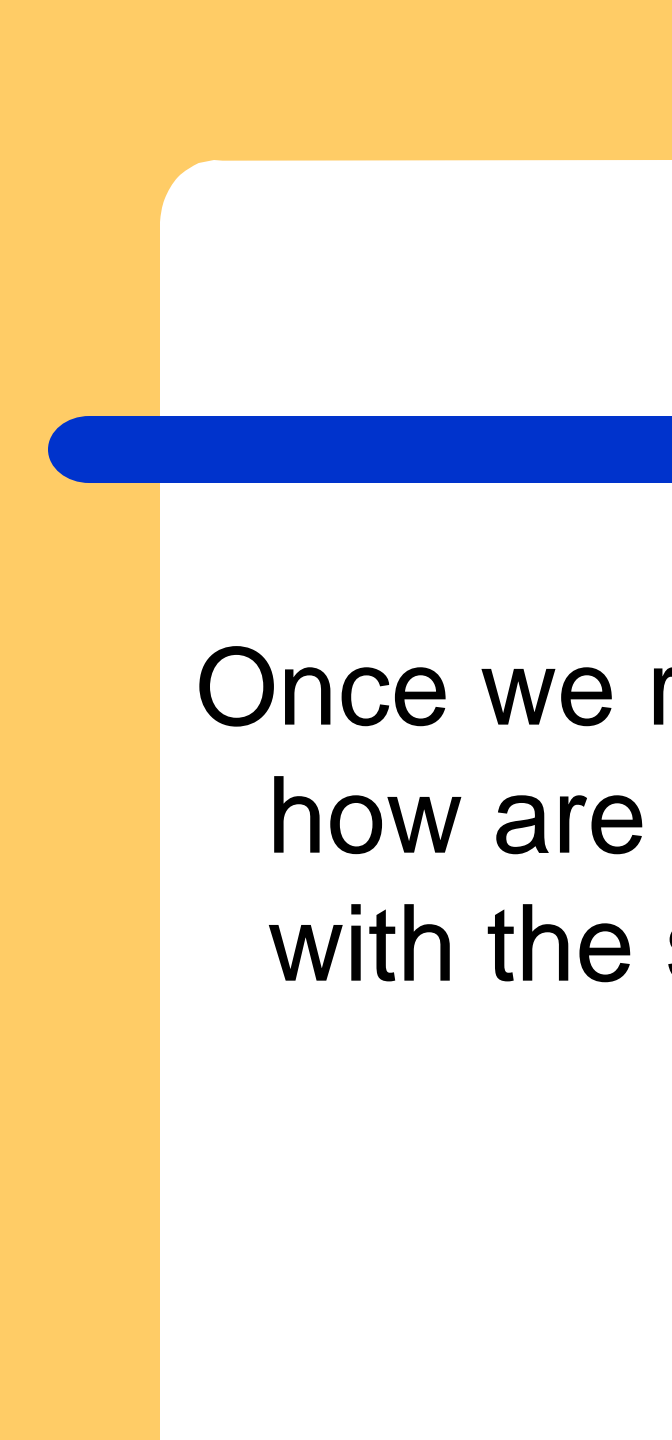
- Quick to anger
- Deterioration in hygiene and grooming
- Unusual dress
- Destruction of property
- Apparent break with reality or paranoia
- Speech/writing incoherent

Examples of Unusual Behavior

- Odd e-mails, letters or voice-mails
- Obsession with or fixation on another person
 - Stalking or following another person around
- Poor care of residence hall room/office
- Not leaving residence hall room for days
- Wearing dark/mirrored sunglasses in class
- Absent from class

Examples of Unusual Behavior

- Excessive drinking/drug use
- General disruption
 - making lots of noise, moving around, distracting others
- Cutting self
- Thoughts of harming self or others

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Once we recognize a problem,
how are we supposed to deal
with the situation?

What makes a good police officer?

- Understanding role
- Humility
- Courage
- Empathy
- Patience

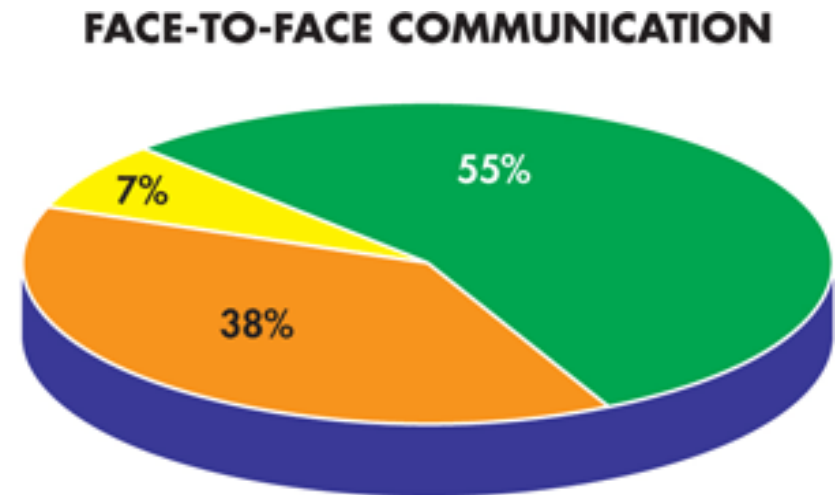
What makes a good police officer?

- We rely on our observational skills
- We are students of human behavior
 - Recognizing and understanding the behavior of others
 - Recognizing and understanding our own patterns of behavior

These qualities if developed and practiced can be very helpful to faculty and staff members.

Active Listening and Communication

- Body language and tone of voice
 - 55% what people see
 - Modeling and Mirroring
 - Posture
 - Normal eye contact
 - Distance
 - 38% tone of voice
 - Only 7% actual message



Active Listening and Communication

- Listening rather than talking – let them vent
 - Attending
 - Lets people know you're listening
 - Nodding of the head, “uh-huh,” “I see”
- Validation and Empathy
 - Let the person know you understand they are feeling upset
 - “I” statements
 - “I” can see how this would make you feel...
 - “I” can see that you're upset...
- Repeat what you are told
 - Paraphrasing and summarizing
 - Will show that you are listening

Active Listening and Communication

- Don't be dismissive with quick advice
 - Provide short term solutions until a long term plan can be established
- Involve them with the plan
 - Ask them what outcome they are looking for
 - Avoid sounding like you are dictating the plan
 - Don't promise that you will not tell others; you may have to

Active Listening and Communication

- BE IN CONTROL
 - Don't take comments personally
 - Don't argue, keep your ego in check
 - Balance of emotion and reason
 - You are merely conduit between them and policy
 - Be calm, reassuring, and professional
 - Your attitude will set the tone and help calm the situation
 - Talk lower and slower

Active Listening and Communication

- If in front of others, attempt to address in private
 - Move to another area
 - Talk after class
 - Allow them to save face
 - If behavior is very disruptive, you may not be able to address it in private

Active Listening and Communication

- Setting limits
 - Be straightforward about what types of behavior are acceptable/unacceptable
 - Be clear on possible sanctions for unacceptable behavior or non-cooperation
 - This step alone will often end the behavior
 - If behavior continues, follow through with sanctions

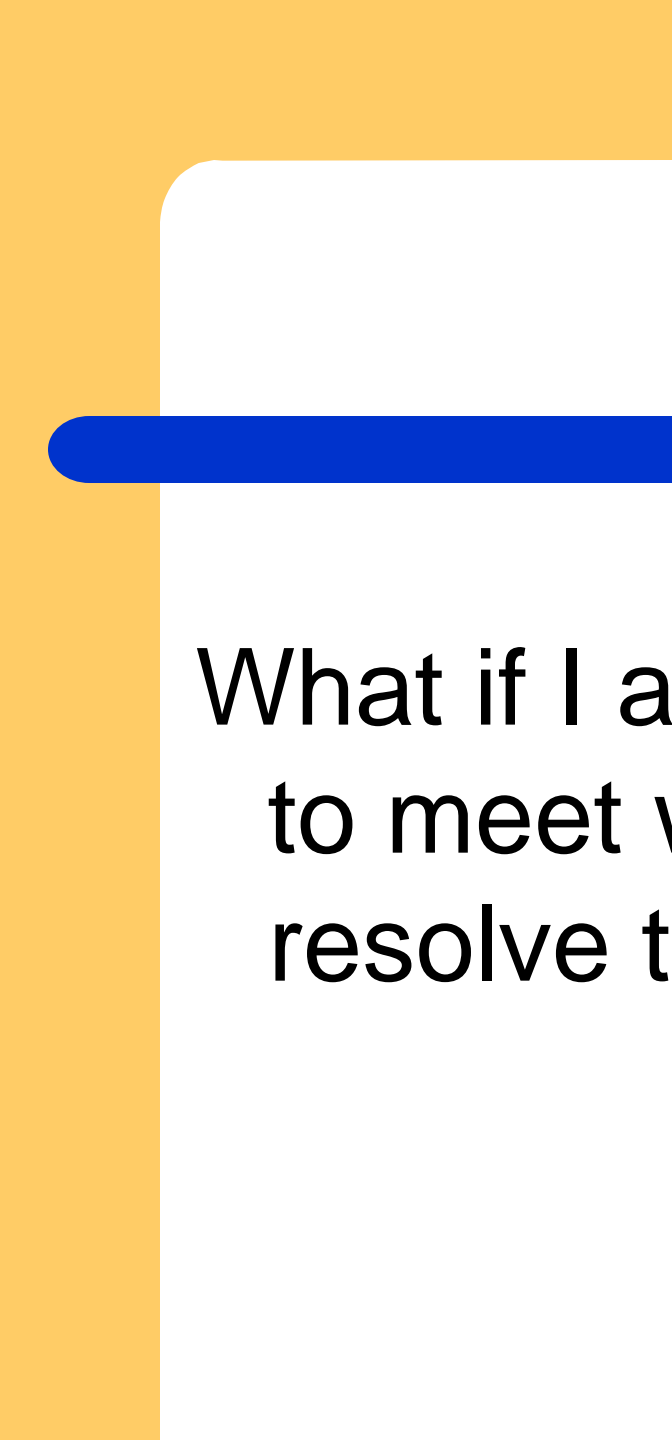
Classroom/Workplace Disruption

1. Tell the person to stop and notify of the possible sanctions for further disruptions
2. If behavior persists, instruct the person to leave the classroom, office, etc...
 - If possible, identify the person
3. If person refuses to leave
 - Contact KSU Police

Classroom/Workplace Disruption

4. If the behavior becomes threatening
 - Dismiss the class/leave
 - Contact KSU Police

5. Contact your chairperson, supervisor and/or dean to coordinate and facilitate resolving the issue and to prevent possible future disruptions

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What if I am the person that has
to meet with this individual to
resolve the issue?

Preparing to Meet with a Difficult Person

- Think about how you want to phrase things beforehand
- Stand/sit at a distance
 - reactionary gap
- Place an object between you if one is available
- Keep hands up
- Have an escape route planned and be in position
- Don't be too shy to ask for help

Better sooner than later!

Preparing to Meet with a Difficult Person

- Phone or cell phone easily accessible
- Let others know you are having the meeting
- Know your limitations
 - Get a qualified person to handle the situation
 - Utilize other university resources
 - If it's a personality conflict, sometimes someone else can tell them the same thing and get better results

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How can mental preparation help?

Your Safety and the Safety of Others

- Safety is a mind set
- Outline ahead of time what you consider to be appropriate classroom or office behavior
- Think about potential problems before they occur

Your Safety and the Safety of Others

- Use “what-if’s” to mentally rehearse
 - What if someone left a threatening message on your voice mail?
 - What if someone angrily confronted you during class or in the office?
 - What if someone tells you they are suicidal?
 - What if you think you hear gunshots down the hall?

Your Safety and the Safety of Others

- Trust your instincts
- Be aware of your surroundings
 - What floor am I on?
 - Are there windows?
 - Where are the exits?
 - Which way do the doors open?
 - Do the doors lock?

Your Safety and the Safety of Others

- **Get to know your students, co-workers, and peers**
- Speak up if you notice odd behavior
 - Care Team, Human Resources Review Team, Judicial Affairs
 - The police can only follow-up on incidents if they are made aware of them

Who should you contact for assistance?

- Kent State University Police Services
 - Police vs. Law Enforcement
 - We'll discuss/determine our level of involvement
 - Referral to other services
 - several resources and counseling centers on campus and in the county
 - Experienced and trained supervisors and officers
 - Crisis Intervention Team Officers (CIT)

Who should you contact for assistance?

- (330) 672-2212
 - 24/7 police non-emergency line
 - goes directly to a police dispatcher
- 911 in an emergency!!!!
 - call police first, *then* notify supervisor
 - call from a land line will go directly to KSU Police
 - call from a cell phone may go to another police agency, but as soon as you give location, they will immediately transfer you to us

Summary

- Police can help when you think someone is acting strange, even if it's not a criminal matter
- It is not our goal to get people in crisis in trouble – ideally, we want to maintain campus safety while helping the individuals reach their goals and be productive students/faculty/staff

Summary

- It is your duty in support of the University's mission as a faculty/staff member to recognize odd behavior and intervene when someone is in crisis
- It is on the individual level that disruptive, odd or threatening behavior is detected – it often doesn't come to our attention until you report it

Summary

- There are many resources within and around the university that can be used to deal with problem individuals and people in crisis – we will help you figure out where to turn
- There are some very simple steps and precautions you can take to prepare for the more common situations and to help prevent or mitigate tragedy in the unlikely event of violence in the classroom/workplace

Presenter Contact Information

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