

# **Information and Support for Staff Members Noticing Signs of Mental Health Issues in Students**

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# Agenda

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Facts and figures

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Mental crisis

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The H-I-L-F-E strategy

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Advising and training courses

The BELLA strategy

## Facts and figures (1)

- One in six students has mental health issues (Barmer Arztreport 2018).
- The most common mental illness among university students is depression.
- 57% of respondents stated that the Covid-19 pandemic was having negative or very negative effects on their mental and emotional well-being or that they were expecting the pandemic to have such negative effects (study conducted by the University of Würzburg).
- According to the Deutsches Studierendenwerk association, the reasons for this are, among other things, feelings of isolation and a lack of physical activity. As well as a lack of recreational activities, no spontaneous interactions with classmates, financial problems plus anxiety, stress and insecurity.

## Facts and figures (2)

The Studi.Co study: the Covid-19 pandemic from the point of view of university students (2527 respondents)

Approx. 10% of respondents stated that they had a chronic health condition. Respondents were asked if they had mental health issues – 13.3% stated that they did.

## Share of students with health impairments according to the Sozialerhebung (SE) surveys no. 20 and 21

Students	SE survey no. 20 (2013) Germany	SE survey no. 21 (2017) Germany
Without health impairments	86%	77%
With health impairments	14%	23%
...that do not result in academic challenges	7%	12%
...that result in academic challenges	7%	11%
(Very) minor challenges	3%	2%
Moderate, (very) severe challenges	4%	9%

11% (2012: 7%) of respondents stated that they had one or more health impairments that resulted in academic challenges (share up 57% compared to 2012).

9% of all students stated that the academic challenges they were facing as a result of their health impairments were severe or very severe (2017).

Figures based on information provided by students in the 2012 and 2016 summer semesters.  
Source: Middendorf, E. et al. (2013) and (2017)

# Facts and figures (4)

Types of health impairment that result in academic challenges for students best 2 (2018) and best 1 (2012) studies	best 1	best 2
Mental health issues	45%	53%
Chronic somatic health condition	20%	20%
Multiple impairments (other) Two or more impairments result in equally difficult academic challenges, excluding cases where mental health issues and chronic somatic health conditions result in equally difficult academic challenges. If a student has two or more health impairments, the impairment that results in the most difficult academic challenges is the one that is considered.	3%	5%
Mental health issues <u>and</u> chronic somatic health condition	10%	2%
Motor impairment	4%	4%
Hearing impairment/deafness, speech impairment	3%	3%
Visual impairment/blindness	5%	3%
Specific learning disorder	6%	4%
Other impairment or serious health condition	5%	6%

**Students with mental health issues are the largest group among students with health impairments that result in academic challenges. Share is growing (up 13% compared to 2012).**

## Facts and figures (5)

‘beeinträchtigt  
studieren -  
best2’ study  
2018

- Depression 80%
- Anxiety disorder 39%
- Eating disorder 16%
- Personality disorder 12%
- The share of students with mental health issues who already had those issues when they started university is up. 2012: 69% (best1); 2018: 83% (best 2)

## Examples

- Sometimes you notice behaviours in students that are concerning.
- Mental blackouts during exams, tears during advising sessions, difficulties getting work done?
- Or students call and tell you that they are thinking about committing suicide.  
(Mental crisis), German Society for Suicide Prevention (DGS)

<https://www.suizidprophylaxe.de/suizidalitaet1/allgemeine-informationen/>



**‘An event or situation which is perceived as an unbearable difficulty and which exceeds the coping strategies that the person in crisis has or that are currently available to him or her’**

e.g. automatic disenrolment for exceeding the standard length of programme, failing an exam for the sixth time

## Changes you might notice in students

Are often late or  
absent from class

Display obtrusive  
or disruptive  
behaviour

Withdraw from, or  
break off contact  
with, others

Leave several  
times during class

Avoid eye contact

# Changes you might notice in students:

Beispiele für beobachtbares Verhalten bei Studierenden	Mögliche Ursachen
Distanzlos, „störend“	Manie, ADHS
Unkonzentriert, unaufmerksam, verträumt	ADHS, Drogenkonsum
Aggressiv-bedrohlich	Manie, Schizophrenie, Persönlichkeitsstörung
Denken inkohärent und unlogisch, wahnhaft	Schizophrenie und andere Psychosen
Ängstlich, herabgestimmt, hoffnungslos	Depression
Misstrauisch, ängstlich, wahnhaft	Schizophrenie, Persönlichkeitsstörung
Emotional, Probleme mit der eigenen Identität, selbstverletzend	Persönlichkeitsstörung
Deutlich untergewichtig	Essstörung
Zurückziehend, Kontaktabbruch	Depression, Angststörung
Extreme Prokrastination	Depression, Drogenkonsum
Unwohlsein in Gruppen, Vermeidung von Referaten etc.	Soziale Phobie
Zwangsgedanken, -handlungen und -impulse	Zwangsstörung
Ständig zu spät kommen oder nicht teilnehmen	Depression
Veranstaltung mehrmals verlassen	Panikstörung
Blickkontakt vermeiden oder kein Blick aufnehmen	Soziale Phobie

## The H-I-L-F-E strategy

Do I need to act? Yes, you do if the unusual behaviours are present often, constantly or regularly!!!

A good strategy to use is the **H-I-L-F-E strategy**

Don't look away (*Hinsehen*)

Take the initiative (*Initiative ergreifen*)

Take a leadership role (*Leitungsfunktion wahrnehmen*)

Leadership responsibility (*Führungsverantwortung*):  
encourage-expect

Call in experts (*Expertinnen und Experten hinzuziehen*)

## Take the initiative

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Have the courage to actively bring up problems.

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Speak to the student in private and share your concrete observations, avoid interpreting or analysing.

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Try to speak in 'I' statements (e.g. 'I was wondering why you have been absent so much lately.' rather than 'You seem to have stopped coming to class altogether.').

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Suggest sitting down for a chat: or else prolonged suffering.

# Leadership responsibility and leadership role



Learn, try to understand the situation.



You don't have to have solutions, try to understand the problem.



Ask open-ended, non-judgemental and concrete questions.



Recap what you have understood.



Try to identify the issue.



Try to find solutions together.



Make clear what you can and can't do.



What are ways of helping the student? Who can help?



Call in experts

## **KIS Disability Resource Centre**

Mensanebengebäude (building adjoining the canteen on Hubland Campus)

Am Hubland

97070 Würzburg

Phone: +49 931 31-84052

Email: [kis@uni-wuerzburg.de](mailto:kis@uni-wuerzburg.de)

<https://www.uni-wuerzburg.de/chancengleichheit/kis/startseite/>



## Services provided by the KIS Disability Resource Centre to students with mental health issues



- Personalised advising to help students build a realistic semester plan and navigate day-to-day university life
- Crisis intervention (e.g. contacting doctors and hospitals)
- Help managing day-to-day university life
- Help for students returning to university after a long-term sickness absence
- Reasonable accommodations



# Do you need information and advice about studying at university with a disability, health condition or mental illness?

## Assistance and advice

for students with depression, dyslexia, digestive diseases, multiple sclerosis, ADHD etc.

## Topics include:

- Reasonable accommodations (extra time on exams, separate room etc.)
- Planning your programme of study
- Student finances

## More information for students with disabilities:

<https://www.uni-wuerzburg.de/chancengleichheit/kis/startseite/>



Per Mail: [kis@uni-wuerzburg.de](mailto:kis@uni-wuerzburg.de)



Telefon: +49 931 31-84052

Head of the KIS: Sandra Mölter

Advisors: Sandra Mölter and Nele Halleemann



Die telefonische Erreichbarkeit ist den Sprechstunden der Internetseite zu entnehmen: <http://www.kis.uni-wuerzburg.de/>



Am Hubland, Mensanebengebäude (Z5)

# Assistance and advice provided by the KIS

- To be able to deal with mental health issues in an appropriate manner, we need to **know what causes them, what characterises them and how they can be treated.**
- We need to understand the complexities and implications of an illness to be able to prevent it and respond to it in an appropriate manner.
- So seek advising and attend training courses.
- **What the KIS offers staff members:**



## Personalised advising for staff members

Topics covered:

- How impairments affect the university experience, exams and job prospects of students
- Appropriate ways to interact with students with impairments
- Everything you need to know about reasonable accommodations for students (for courses, exams etc.)

## Training course

**Mental health issues in students ('Psychische Erkrankungen bei Studierenden'; this course is offered, for example, as part of the 'Inklusive Hochschullehre' certificate offered by the University of Augsburg)**

**<https://www.uni-augsburg.de/de/organisation/einrichtungen/qa/profilehre/themenzertifikat-inklusive-hochschullehre/>**

### **Topics covered**

- Unusual behaviours - what is normal? What is pathological?
- Introduction to the fundamentals of mental illness (e.g. depression)
- Development of fundamental strategies for dealing with acute mental crises
- Introduction to the H-I-L-F-E strategy for helping students who you think may have mental health issues

**Using case examples, the course will acquaint participants with different mental illnesses.**

- Participants will learn to recognise early warning signs of mental health issues and how mental health issues affect the university experience of students
- Learn to respect their own limits
- Learn who to turn to for external support, reflect on their own attitudes

# Sonneck's BELLA strategy

Build relationships  
(*Beziehung aufbauen*)

Grasp the situation  
(*Erfassen der Situation*)

Alleviate the symptoms  
(*Linderung der Symptome*)

Bring in others to help  
(*Leute einbeziehen*)

Find starting points for the problem solving process  
(*Ansatzpunkte zur Problembewältigung*)



# **Selected providers of help in an acute crisis**



# The 'Krisennetzwerk Unterfranken' crisis care network



Referrals to  
outpatient crisis  
care treatment

0800 655 3000,  
available 24/7/365

Crisis care  
services rendered  
at the location of  
the person in crisis

Referrals to  
inpatient treatment



# The 'Krisendienst Würzburg' crisis care service for people in an acute/suicidal crisis

Kardinal-Döpfner-Platz 1

97070 Würzburg

Phone: +49 931 571717

Email: [info@fachstelle-suizidberatung.de](mailto:info@fachstelle-suizidberatung.de)

Web: <https://www.fachstelle-suizidberatung.de/>

Office hours: Monday to Friday 14:00 - 18:00 and by arrangement





## The 'Telefonseelsorge' crisis helpline

Phone: 0800-1110111 and 0800-1110222

Email: [info@telefonseelsorge-wuerzburg.de](mailto:info@telefonseelsorge-wuerzburg.de)

Web: <https://www.telefonseelsorge-wuerzburg.de/>

**Available 24/7 (including weekends and public holidays)!!!**

*Available to*

- talk to in a crisis situation
- talk to in a difficult emotional situation
- listen, offer advice and show empathy
- signpost you to other sources of help



**University Hospital  
Department of Psychiatry, Psychosomatics and  
Psychotherapy**



Margarete-Höppel-Platz 1  
97080 Würzburg  
Poliklinik

Phone: +49 931 201-77800

Web: <https://www.ukw.de/psychiatrie/startseite/>



## **Zentrum für Seelische Gesundheit at the König-Ludwig-Haus hospital**



Brettreichstraße 11

97074 Würzburg

Phone: +49 931 803-0

Email: [info@koenig-ludwig-haus.de](mailto:info@koenig-ludwig-haus.de)

Web: <https://zentrum-fuer-seelische-gesundheit.bezirk-unterfranken.de/>



## **Psychotherapeutic counselling service of the Studentenwerk Würzburg (available for one-on-one counselling)**

Am Studentenhaus, 97072 Würzburg

Phone: +49 931 8005-101

Email: [pbs@studentenwerk-wuerzburg.de](mailto:pbs@studentenwerk-wuerzburg.de)

Office: door on the right-hand side, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor, room B 232

Office hours: Monday to Thursday 8:00 - 12:00

Web: <https://www.studentenwerk-wuerzburg.de/en/consultancy/psychotherapeutic-counselling.html>



Many thanks  
for your attention!



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