



CASE STUDY: EMOTIONAL SUPPORT FOR A STUDENT STUDYING ABROAD

When a student having self-harming thoughts called an International SOS Assistance Centre, the local teams jumped into action to help.

CHALLENGES

Schools and universities have a Duty of Care obligation to protect students from foreseeable risk when studying or traveling abroad through the institution. This includes supporting students' mental health, which can be exacerbated when away from home, their support systems and familiar customs or behaviours.

In delicate situations where the goal is to prevent a person from self-harm or to bolster emotional wellbeing, supporting the individual requires care and precision every step of the way. Unfortunately, we have found that many schools are unprepared to address mental health issues that may affect a student's education experience when abroad.

SOLUTIONS

Have staff and students' medical, safety and emotional needs addressed in a holistic way via a single assistance number. Short-term counselling support services specifically for travellers assist with emotional wellness, regardless of location.

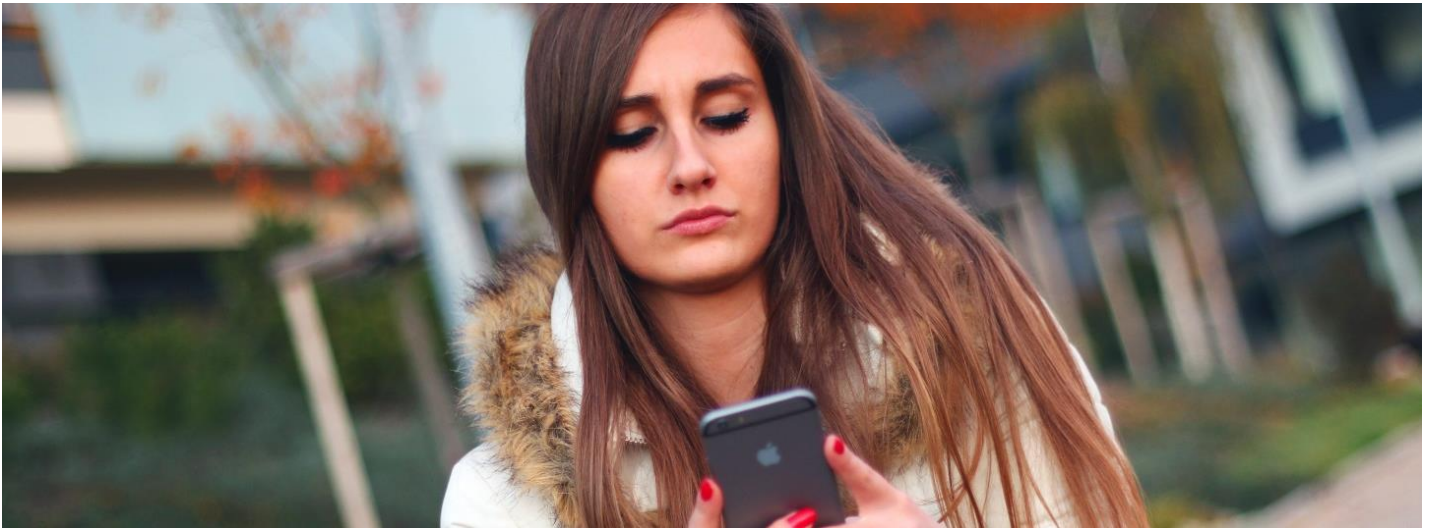
ANSWERING THE CALL

The International SOS Assistance Centre (AC) in America received a call from one of its student members studying abroad in Australia who was standing on a bridge with suicidal thoughts and intentions.

The conversation was immediately triaged by the first call desk coordinator and escalated to a nurse who had previously built a rapport with the student from an unrelated medical concern earlier in the trip. The nurse quickly re-established and nurtured trust with the individual in order to determine critical details, such as her location, and discourage her from taking any drastic steps.

While doing this, calls were simultaneously placed from the medical team in Philadelphia to the Sydney AC in Australia for support activating local emergency responders to the individual's location.

During the search, the Philadelphia AC nurse kept the student on the call, talking and safe. Shortly thereafter the local police was able to find the member and help ensure her safety.



PROVIDING CARE

Once the local authorities located the student, she was taken to a hospital where she was evaluated for risk of self-harm. During this time, International SOS referred the member to a partnering wellness provider for emotional support.

With the help received from both our medical team and emotional wellbeing partner, the student was able to successfully complete her study abroad program and return home as scheduled.

Support: Through a simple phone call to a trusted provider when in an unfamiliar place, the student was able to quickly activate a network of support. This included internal care via the medical team and emotional support providers as well as external support through the local police.

Considerations: Quickly understanding the client's condition, establishing trust and communicating effectively are all key factors to ensuring a positive outcome in a stressful and potentially dangerous situation.

Impact: The student was able to finish her study abroad, receiving full credit, and save costs on needing to fly home early.

BENEFITS OF EMOTIONAL SUPPORT

Exposure to new environments, minor medical conditions or simply being too far from loved ones can impact a staff member or student's emotional wellbeing. These events can trigger stress and anxiety, which can lead to distraction, everyday disruption or even something more serious.

In times of stress or anxiety, individuals need professional emotional support often at short notice. Timely support can make the difference between controlling a situation and an event spiralling out of control. Easy access to services through a single point of contact help individuals makes the right decisions at a critical time.

INTERNATIONAL SOS SERVICES

Our medical team and coordinators are trained to recognise potential red flags regarding both medical and emotional wellbeing. International SOS also has a partnership with Workplace Options (WPO) who specialise in handling emotional support cases.

Our comprehensive care ensures all of your staff and students' needs are met in one place.