How to Refer a Person for Help

1. Identify yourself and your relationship with the person who may need help.
   a) Call the agency and ask to speak to the intake worker (if there is one).
   b) Identify the person and ask to speak to the intake worker.

2. Remember the nature of the situation. If the intake is not taken, you should look for help that is available.
   c) Remember the person or family is willing to take the action.
   d) How do you feel about seeking help from this person/agency?

3. Discuss the referral with the person or family. “I think __________ could help you deal with your situation.”
   e) Could help you deal with your situation.

4. Be aware of the agencies and resources available in your community. “What are the agencies and resources available in your community?”
   f) Be aware of the agencies and resources available in your community.

5. Follow-up with the person or family and the referral agency. “Let’s coordinate it together. Where can I come?”
   g) Let’s coordinate it together. Where can I come?

6. When will the agency do the follow-up interview? “When will the agency do the follow-up interview?”
   h) When will the agency do the follow-up interview?

7. Make sure the person or family and the referral agency connect and get together. “Who will they call on the referral?”
   i) Who will they call on the referral?

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Farm Family Stress: A Checklist and Guide For Making Referrals

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In partnership with UW-Extension, Cooperative Extension and Wisconsin Farm Center, DATCP

For more information about Managing through Difficult Times
go to:
www.uwex.edu/ces/ag/farmingindifficulttimes
or contact:
Wisconsin Farm Center, DATCP  800-942-2474
FARM FAMILY STRESS: A CHECKLIST

SIGNS OF FARM STRESS
The last few years have been difficult for farm families and many are experiencing financial and emotional stress as a result. There are several signs or symptoms when a farm family may be in need of help. These are signs that can be observed by friends, extended family members, neighbors, milk haulers, veterinarians, feed/seed dealers, clergy persons, school personnel or health and human service workers. These signs include:

- **Change in routines.** The farmer or farm family stops attending church, drops out of 4-H, Home-makers or other groups, or no longer stops in at the local coffee shop or feed mill.
- **Increase in illness.** Farmers or farm family members may experience more upper respiratory illnesses (colds, flu) or other chronic conditions (aches, pains, persistent cough).
- **Appearance of farmstead declines.** The farm family no longer takes pride in the way farm buildings and grounds appear or no longer has the time to do maintenance work.
- **Care of livestock declines.** Cattle may not be cared for in the usual way; they may lose condition, appear gaunt or show signs of neglect or physical abuse.
- **Increase in farm accidents.** The risk of farm accidents increases due to fatigue or loss of ability to concentrate; children may be at risk if there isn’t adequate child care.
- **Children show signs of stress.** Farm children may act out, decline in academic performance or be increasingly absent from school; they may also show signs of physical abuse or neglect.

SIGNS OF CHRONIC, PROLONGED STRESS
When farm families are under stress for long periods of time—chronic, prolonged stress—they may experience a number of signs and symptoms. Watch for the following effects in farm families you see on a day-to-day basis:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Physical</th>
<th>Emotional</th>
<th>Behavioral</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Headaches</td>
<td>Sadness</td>
<td>Irritability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Backaches</td>
<td>Depression</td>
<td>Backbiting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ulcers</td>
<td>Bitterness</td>
<td>Acting Out</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eating Irregularities</td>
<td>Anger</td>
<td>Withdrawal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sleep Disturbances</td>
<td>Anxiety</td>
<td>Passive-Aggressiveness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frequent Sickness</td>
<td>Loss of Spirit</td>
<td>Alcoholism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exhaustion</td>
<td>Loss of Humor</td>
<td>Violence</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cognitive</th>
<th>Self-Esteem</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Memory Loss</td>
<td>“I’m a failure.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of Concentration</td>
<td>“I blew it.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inability to Make Decisions</td>
<td>“Why can’t I …?”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SIGNS OF DEPRESSION OR SUICIDAL INTENT
The greater the number of signs or symptoms a farm family member is experiencing, the greater your concern should be. In addition, if farm family members are exhibiting the following signs of depression or suicidal intent, it is important that they get linked up with help as soon as possible. All cries for help should be taken seriously.

**Signs of Depression**
- Appearance: Sad face, slow movements, unkempt look
- Unhappy feelings: Feeling sad, hopeless, discouraged, listless
- Negative thoughts: “I’m a failure,” “I’m no good,” “No one cares”
- Reduced activity: “Doing anything is just too much of an effort”
- People problems: “I don’t want anyone to see me,” “I feel so lonely”
- Physical problems: Sleeping problems, decreased sexual interest, headaches
- Guilt and low self-esteem: “It’s all my fault,” “I should be punished”

**Signs of Suicidal Intent**
- Anxiety and/or depression: Severe, intense feelings of anxiety or depression; both may be present
- Withdrawal or isolation: Withdrawn, alone, lack of friends and supports
- Helpless and hopeless: Sense of complete powerlessness, a hopeless feeling
- Alcohol abuse: There is often a link between alcoholism and suicide
- Previous suicidal attempts: May be previous attempts of low to high lethality
- Suicidal plan: Frequent or constant thoughts with a specific plan in mind
- Cries for help: Making a will, giving possessions away, making statements such as “I’m calling it quits” or “Maybe my family would be better off without me”

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