THE STUDENT WHO IS VERBALLY AGGRESSIVE

Students usually become verbally abusive when in frustrating situations which they see as being beyond their control. Anger and frustration become displaced from those situations to you. Typically the anger is not directed at you personally. These students often feel they will be rejected and, therefore, reject you before you reject them. They often realize the drama and intimidation behind their anger and are aware of their impact.

**WHAT TO DO:**

* Acknowledge their anger.
* Rephrase what they are saying and identify their emotions.
* Allow them to ventilate, get the feelings out, and tell you what is upsetting to them.
* Tell them you are not willing to accept their verbally abuse behavior.
* Help the person problem solve and deal with the real issues when they become calmer.
* Defuse & de-escalate the situation by remaining calm, speaking in a calm tone of voice, and modeling appropriate behavior to the student.

**WHAT NOT TO DO:**

* Don’t meet alone with the student.
* Don’t get into an argument or shouting match.
* Don’t become hostile or punitive yourself.
* Don’t press for an explanation or reasons for their behavior.
* Don’t look away in order to not deal with the situation and ignore the student.
* Don’t stay in a situation in which you feel unsafe.
* Don’t ignore a gut reaction that you are in danger.

\*\**When in doubt, if any personal information the student tells you raises red flags, consult with* the Student Advocacy and Accountability team. <https://webapps.mccneb.edu/bcat/>