The RESPONSE flowchart serves as a guide when you become concerned that a child or youth may possibly be expressing mental health difficulties. The 5Rs, **Recognise**, **Reach**, **Refer**, **Render** and **Reflect**, highlight the possible actions that you can take.

**RESPONSE flowchart**

- **RECOGNISE** the warning signs in the child/youth
  - Look out for any significant change(s) (e.g. transition, loss) in the life of the child/youth
  - See if the warning signs are present in combination, or in more extreme or long-lasting form

- **REACH** out to the child/youth
  - Talk with the child/youth and/or the parents/caregiver
  - Listen actively
  - Offer support

- **Does the child/youth require additional support?**

  - **NO** Monitor the situation and continue with the support for the child/youth
  - **YES**

- **REFER** the child/youth to the school counsellor
  - Provide information to the school counsellor
  - Respect confidentiality by not sharing details of the situation with anyone who does not need to know

- **RENDER** support to the child/youth
  - Promote a safe and supportive environment
  - Maintain communication with the child/youth
  - Continue to observe the child/youth

- **REFLECT** on your own needs
  - Practise self-care
  - Seek help if you feel overwhelmed
**WARNING Signs**

The common warning signs may indicate a student’s need for additional support or professional advice. To help you remember, they are listed as the 8As or ‘8 Alerts’. If these signs are present in combination, or in more extreme or long-lasting form, it might be an indicator that the student is experiencing significant social or emotional distress with potential for long term consequences.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abrupt Changes</th>
<th>Academic Disengagement</th>
<th>Anguished Behaviour</th>
<th>Avoidant Behaviour</th>
<th>Anti-social Behaviour</th>
<th>Negative Affect</th>
<th>Neglect of Appearance</th>
<th>Substance Abuse</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Behaviour, moods and/or personality</td>
<td>- Unexplained and repeated absence or truancy</td>
<td>- Ideas and themes of death, suicide or self-harm (statements that life is not worth living)</td>
<td>- Becoming withdrawn</td>
<td>- Unaccountable rage, anger and/or aggression</td>
<td>- Mood swings</td>
<td>- Unkempt appearance</td>
<td>- Excessive smoking and/or drinking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Sleeping and/or eating habits</td>
<td>- Inattentiveness or unusually disruptive behaviour</td>
<td>- Feelings of hopelessness, helplessness and worthlessness, and/or perceived loss of control</td>
<td>- Avoiding others</td>
<td>- Overly irritable or hostile</td>
<td>- Occasional emotional outbursts</td>
<td>- Poor hygiene</td>
<td>- Drug abuse</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>