

RELATING TO RESIDENTS

Residence Life jobs are critical to the University community and can impact tremendously the experience(s) students have. Your job is 24:7 and often you are asked to provide assistance, advice, etc. when you are busy with your own life and own tasks, etc.

Remember to be empathetic when a resident asks for your assistance – it probably was difficult for them to ask for help.

If residents make requests of you and you're not feeling well or not in a good mood, take a deep breath and practice using some positive self-talk before you answer them (i.e., tell yourself "it probably was difficult for this person to ask for my help, so I'll try to help them", "everybody needs help sometimes").

What are your responsibilities as a Residence Life Staff Person?

- Help ensure healthy community living
- Assist residents in problem-solving
- Resolve other residential issues

As an RA you will encounter all sorts of problems: roommate conflicts (cleanliness, disrespect, illegal activities, vandalism, etc.), relationship issues, depression, homesickness, and maybe even suicide. Each conflict has its own issues and concerns, which makes each situation unique as well as challenging.

Why RA's might dislike confrontation or don't want to get involved:

- You want to be friends with residents on your floor.
- You want to be the 'cool' RA.
- You will look like you can't control your floor and are doing a poor job.

Things to remember when dealing with students who are behaving disrespectfully to you:

- Tell the student they are being disrespectful to you. They might not know.
- Don't take their words/actions personally.
- Don't feel devalued.
- Know that your job is imperative to a healthy living community.

Tips to dealing with verbal confrontation:

- "If you don't [calm down, stop yelling, listen to me], I won't be able to help you".
- Watch body language.
- Lower your tone of voice to de-escalate a situation.