

# ***“Let’s Talk”***

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

### **What is “Let’s Talk”?**

“Let’s Talk” is a program that provides easy access to informal confidential consultations with counselors from Student Counseling Services. Counselors hold virtual walk-in hours on:

Mondays 2-3 pm: <https://illinoisstate-s2.zoom.us/j/97562644959>

Thursdays 1-2 pm: <https://illinoisstate-s2.zoom.us/j/99843884365>

There is no appointment or fee necessary. If you click on the link and are in the waiting room, the counselor may be finishing a meeting with another student. The counselor will be with you in just a few minutes.

### **What happens at a visit to “Let’s Talk”?**

Appointments are first-come, first-served. Usually there is not much of a wait. The counselor will listen closely to your concerns and provide support, perspective, and suggestions for resources.

### **How is “Let’s Talk” different from ISU’s Student Counseling Services (SCS)?**

Counselors at SCS provide ongoing counseling, which usually consists of bi-weekly, 45-minute appointments. “Let’s Talk” is not formal counseling – it is a drop-in service where students can have an informal consultation with a counselor from time to time.

### **Who should visit “Let’s Talk”?**

This service is open to all ISU undergraduate and graduate students. “Let’s Talk” is the best fit for the following people:

1. students who are not sure about counseling and wonder what it's like to talk with a counselor;
2. students who are not interested in ongoing counseling but would like the perspective of a counselor;
3. students who have a specific problem and would like someone with whom to talk it through;
4. students who have a concern about a friend and want some thoughts about what to do.

### **I think I have a problem that would benefit from counseling, but I don't know anything about counseling. Would going to “Let’s Talk” help me figure out what to do?**

Absolutely. The counselor will talk through your issue with you and help you determine the best way to get help. If you feel comfortable with the counselor, it's sometimes possible to meet with him or her at SCS in an ongoing way.

### **I called SCS and spoke with the front desk person. She offered me an appointment 7 business days from now. Can I stop by “Let’s Talk” in the meantime?**

SCS offers same-day crisis walk-in appointments for students who believe they are experiencing life-threatening circumstances, current or recent traumatic crises, and serious mental illness. If no appointments were available when you tried to schedule with SCS, a new set of appointments will be available TOMORROW. Students are encouraged to return to the online scheduling portal TOMORROW or call the SCS main office TOMORROW after 8:00 am CT to schedule a triage.

**I attended a triage appointment at SCS. The counselor recommended a referral to a therapist in the community. Can I go to “Let’s Talk” instead?**

Since regular counseling visits are not available at “Let’s Talk”, following up with the referral is a good idea. Unfortunately, SCS cannot provide ongoing counseling to every student who requests it.

**I’m currently seeing a counselor at SCS, and I would like to talk to someone sooner than my next appointment. Can I go to “Let’s Talk”?**

If your next appointment is not soon enough, it's best to contact your counselor directly to see if they can see you sooner. If you are experiencing life-threatening circumstances, current or recent traumatic crises, and serious mental illness, you can call or walk in to SCS to be seen by a counselor. If this is after hours, you may also call PATH at 309-827-4005.

**I’m currently seeing a counselor at SCS, and I'm not happy with how things are going. Can I go to “Let’s Talk” instead?**

The best thing to do in this situation is to talk directly with your counselor. Counselors are eager to get your feedback, positive or negative. Oftentimes an open conversation about your concern helps smooth out any wrinkles. If, after talking with your counselor, you prefer to transfer to someone else, just ask your counselor directly, either in person or by e-mail. Students also have the option of calling the SCS main office to express a desire to see a different counselor.

**What else do I need to know?**

Although “Let’s Talk” counselors are professionals, “Let’s Talk” is not a substitute for psychotherapy or formal counseling and does not constitute mental health treatment. “Let’s Talk” counselors provide informal consultations to help students with specific problems and to introduce them to what it's like to speak with a counselor. Your “Let’s Talk” counselor can help you determine whether formal counseling at SCS would be useful for you and, if appropriate, assist you in scheduling an appointment.

**“Let’s Talk” visits are confidential. Are there any limits to confidentiality?**

Conversations with “Let’s Talk” counselors are confidential, with a few very rare exceptions. Counselors may need to share information in an emergency when there is an immediate threat of harm to self or others. Counselors are required by law to report when a minor, elderly person, or someone otherwise incapacitated and unable to act on his/her own behalf is being abused. “Let’s Talk” counselors keep brief written notes of their contacts with students, and in the event that there is an emergency or a student is referred to SCS, other staff may see these notes. Finally, these notes can be released in the unlikely event of a court order. “Let’s Talk” visits are *never* noted on a student's official university record.

We do not want anything to be a barrier to students accessing help. If you have further questions about confidentiality, we encourage you to discuss them with a “Let’s Talk” counselor.