

SAC QUICKtips: PLANNING AND CONDUCTING THE STUDENT INTERVIEW

The student interview's purpose is focused on collecting data from the student's perspective about the areas of concern in order to form a more complete picture of what is happening. The interview should take the form of a conversation rather than a Q and A session.

1. Identify the goals or targets for the interview.
2. Remember that the goal is to learn more and engage the student in trust rather than to be confrontational.
3. Identify the primary concerns prior to the interview with the student.
4. Designate a safe space for conducting the interview.
5. Determine how you will explain the purpose of the interview to the student.
6. Thank the student for meeting with you.
7. If working with a Student Assistance team, explain the purpose of the team, confidentiality of the team, and what information the student shares that will be shared with the team.
8. If taking notes, tell the student he or she can look at the notes when you are finished.
9. Identify any challenges you believe you will face in conducting the interview.
10. Identify the questions you will use in asking the student about the concerns and what the student wants to work on.
11. Use effective listening skills so that the student feels heard be the adult.
12. Use encouraging comments with the student.
13. Avoid using the question, 'why'. Rather use a phrase such as 'tell me more'.
14. Try to learn about the student's goals, strengths and connections to the school.
15. Be willing to deviate from the list of questions in order to learn more when appropriate.
16. Identify any additional concerns that surfaced in the interview that may need additional professional screening (inside and outside of the school) and how you prepare to address those.

Resources on prevention.org – Professional Resources – Student Assistance Center:
Motivational Exploration, Student Concern Prioritization, Problem Map