

What is self-harm?

There are lots of different forms of self-harming.

It is any behaviour such as self cutting, swallowing objects or taking an overdose where the intent is to deliberately cause harm to themselves.

After self harming a person can feel better and more able to cope, creating a vicious circle.

Why do people self-harm?

All sorts of upsetting events can trigger self harm. Examples are family arguments, break up of relationships, exam failure or bullying at school. Young people with low self esteem can be particularly at risk from self harm. It can be the thing people turn to when they feel they have no other option.

How can family and friends help?

Whether someone tells you directly, or you suspect someone is hurting themselves, it can be difficult to know what to say and how best to approach the situation. If unsure, seek advice from one of the contacts listed below.

What helps?

Here are some of the things to keep in mind:

- Try to be non-judgemental
- Let them know you are there for them
- Remind them of their positive qualities
- Let them be in control of their decisions.

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ways to support those who self-harm

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Everyone is individual—there is no specific type of person who self-harms. The journey is unique as is the road to recovery.

What doesn't help?

Sometimes, even with the best will in the world, attempts to support someone can backfire. Pitfalls to watch out for are:

- Trying to force change
- Ignoring or overly focusing on injuries
- Labelling self-harm as "attention seeking".

Helpful strategies

Replacing self-harm with other safer coping strategies can be a positive and more helpful way of dealing with difficult things in life.

- Keeping a diary
- Be around people
- Exercise
- Relaxation techniques.

Useful contacts

Harmless : harmless.org.uk

The Mix : themix.org.uk/mental-health/self-harm

Samaritans : Samaritans.org

Self-injury support :

Selfinjurysupport.org.uk

Young minds : youngminds.org.uk

Nhs.uk

Feelings associated with self-harm

- Anger and frustration
- Sadness and fear
- Need to control
- Shame
- Numb and disconnected
- Self hatred—wanting to punish ones self.

Getting Help

At home - parents, brother/sister or another trusted member of family.

In school - learning mentor, school counsellor, teacher, TA or another member of staff.

GP - talk to the GP about difficulties and they can make appropriate referrals.

Did you know?

We have created a number of these leaflets to help with a variety of issues. The full list of topics is on the back of this leaflet.

If you drop us an email we will send them to you.

Taking care of yourself

Supporting someone who is self-harming can be emotionally draining. It is important you take into consideration your own well being.

Have clear boundaries about how much support you can offer.

Taking care of yourself will enable you to stay involved longer.



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What can I do to support someone who is, or might be self harming?

- LISTEN—You might be the only person they talk to.
- Do not panic - this person needs you to be strong
- Telling them they should stop self harming is not helpful, as they usually know that self harm is harmful. Self harm is a coping mechanism (a way of dealing with emotional pain)
- Instead talk to them and encourage (but do not force) them to identify how they feel and why they might be feeling a particular way. Focus on how they feel,, as this will help them
- Offer some practical advice or direct them to sources of practical advice (see below)
- Ask the person if their anything you or school can do that might help?
- If someone discloses self harm, or you are concerned about their wellbeing or safety, record your concern and report it to the nest (and via MyConcern– for staff)
- Ensure the young person know that you must pass on information that suggest that they may be at risk of harm, and explain what you will do.
- Follow up with them again and be there if needed. Report it again if you are still concerned about them.

Useful websites

Harmless : harmless.org.uk

Samaritans : Samaritans.org

Self-injury support : Selfinjurysupport.org.uk

Young minds : 08088025544/ youngminds.org.uk

Mind : www.mind.org.uk

National Self harm network : type NSHN into the search bar

Banardos : www.barnados.org.uk

Minded : www.minded.org.uk

Leaflets available

- Loss ● Anger ● Anxiety ● Sleep ● Bullying ● Managing Behaviour ● Coping with parents breaking up (leaflets for parents as well)
- Self-harming ● Attendance ● Dyslexia ● Dyscalculia ● ASD
- ADHD ● Depression ● Workload ● Work stress ● Confidence

If you would like to receive a copy of any of these 10 Ways To leaflets, please email wellbeing@purbeck.dorset.sch.uk and we will send them to you