

When the urge to self harm has gone, and you feel OK, try to identify what the trigger to feeling bad was and what it was that helped you to cope with it. Make a plan for the next time you feel in a bad place so you can do the things that make you feel OK instead of self-harming.

Being able to get in touch with someone quickly can be a big help.

If I harm myself and need treatment - where can I go?

You can go to your local A&E. You have the right to be treated with respect by the doctors and nurses there. At the one in Derby you can get access to a health professional who knows about self-harm.

What can I do if I know someone who self-harms?

It can be very upsetting to be close to someone who self-harms - but there are things you can do. The most important is to listen to them without being critical.

There are numbers you can ring to talk to someone about this at the end of this leaflet.

You may feel like they are harming themselves to "get back" at someone or to manipulate a situation but this is not common. And even if they are, they still need help to cope with feelings in a different way. The following things are good to do;

- Talk to them when they feel like self-harming. Be empathetic. Control any feelings of anger or fear. Support them and talk to them calmly and in a way that shows how much you care for them.
- Find out about getting help - maybe go with them to see someone, such as their GP.
- Help them to think about their self-harm as something a bit like a physical health issue; if there is something physically wrong most people see it just as something to be sorted out - this is the same.
- Be their friend but not their therapist

- Expect it to take a while to sort out; it takes time, a lot of effort and bravery to struggle with this.
- Make sure you talk to someone close to you, so you get some support.

Telephone Help

For children and young people

- **ChildLine**
Free national helpline for young people, free confidential advice on all sorts of problems - **0800 1111**
- **Samaritans**
Telephone and email support for anyone who is worried, upset, or suicidal - **08457 90 90 90**

For parents / carers

- **Young Minds**
0808 8025544
- **Parentline +**
0808 8002222



Self harm What you need to know



Taking pride in caring

This leaflet is for anyone who wants to know more about self-harm, but especially anyone who is harming themselves, or feels that they might. We hope it will also be helpful for their friends and families.

It tells you about the different ways in which people may harm themselves and why they do it.

It also tells you what help is available for people who self-harm, what they can do to help themselves, and what those close to them can do to help.

What is self harm?

Self-harm happens when someone hurts or harms themselves. They may:

- take an overdose;
- cut themselves;
- punch themselves, or bang their head
- swallow things or stick things in their body;
- burn themselves.

Who does it?

Anyone really. About 1 in 10 young people will self-harm at some point.

Research probably under-estimates how common self-harm is.

Research has shown that many people who harm themselves are struggling with real emotional distress or difficult situations.



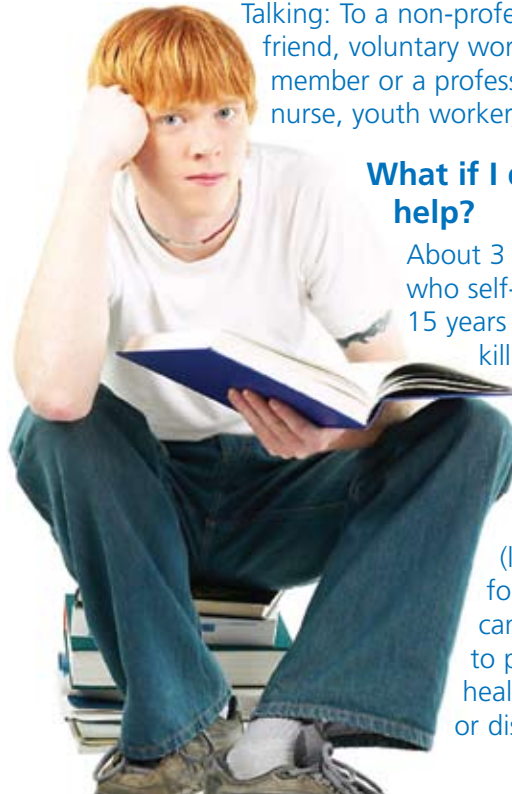
Common problems for people who self-harm include:

- Gay, lesbian and bisexual people are more likely to self-harm than others. (We think that may be because of the stress these groups of people may experience as a result of prejudice.)
- Abuse or neglect;
- feeling depressed or feeling bad about yourself;
- relationship problems;
- being unemployed, or having difficulties at work or school / college;
- feeling hopeless, isolated and alone.

Most people who self-harm are not mentally ill. But everyone who self-harms should be taken seriously and offered help. Everyone deserves to feel better about themselves and have the opportunity to deal with their problems in a way that doesn't harm them.

What help is there?

Talking: To a non-professional (close friend, voluntary worker, family member or a professional (school nurse, youth worker, teacher)



What if I don't get help?

About 3 in 100 people who self-harm over 15 years will actually kill themselves - perhaps without intending to. Some forms of self harm (like cutting for instance) can also lead to permanent health problems or disability.

Self-harm can be very damaging physically and psychologically in the long term.

When it feels bad - How can I help myself?

When the feelings of needing to self harm come on - they will go away after a while. If you can cope without self-harming for a time, the feeling will get easier to bear.

Try these instead of self harming:

- Talk to someone. Telephone helplines are listed at the end of this leaflet.
- Distract yourself by going out or dancing to energising music; run or walk briskly to somewhere where you feel OK and positive.
- Find another way to express your feelings; just drawing red lines on your skin could work for you for example.
- Be kind to yourself - replace negative self talk about yourself with positive mantra's like "I'm good, I'm strong, I'm OK".
- You could keep a diary about it all. But make sure you write down good things about yourself too because that will help

you keep balanced about how you think about yourself

