

## Who can help?

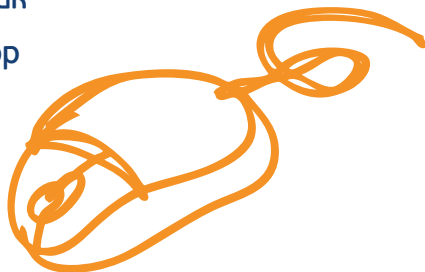
Your parents or carers will often feel protective over you, and may want you to simply stop. They may need you to help them to understand your self harm and how they can help you.

Ask for support from someone you trust, your favourite teacher, a supportive family member or friend.

Pick up a Younger Mind leaflet 'A Parent's Guide to Self Harm' from any one of our offices.

## Other useful websites / organisations

- [mind.org.uk](http://mind.org.uk)
- [selfharm.co.uk](http://selfharm.co.uk)
- [nshn.co.uk](http://nshn.co.uk)
- [youngminds.co.uk](http://youngminds.co.uk)
- [childline.org.uk](http://childline.org.uk)
- [nhsdirect.nhs.uk](http://nhsdirect.nhs.uk)
- Calm Harm app



We're Mind, the mental health charity. We're here to make sure anyone with a mental health problem has somewhere to turn for advice and support.

[www.nsmind.org.uk](http://www.nsmind.org.uk)

## A Young Person's Guide to

# Self Harm



 **mind**  
for better mental health

**North Staffs**

## Why do young people self harm?

There are a number of reasons why young people self harm, and these are often varied and complex. Here are just some reasons that young people have given:

- It reminds me that it is my body.
- I don't feel like there is anything else in my life that I can control.
- It stops me feeling like I'm about to explode.
- When I do something I shouldn't, or I have awful thoughts or feelings, self harm is my way of punishing myself.
- Self harm is my way of expressing my pain, when I can't find the words.
- People can't see the hurt I feel inside but they can see my scars.
- My self harm reminds me of the way I've felt in the past, it's comforting and familiar.
- It stops me thinking about the pain I feel inside.
- It reminds me that I'm alive!

It may help to remember that you are not alone. Recent studies (2013) show that 1 in 12 young people self harm.

## What may help you

- Set up a support system of people that you're comfortable to speak to.
- Put off harming yourself for 15 minutes, then another 15 minutes, don't think too far ahead - take it one step at a time.
- Wrap yourself in a blanket, some young people find this comforting.
- Hold an ice cube or a bag of frozen veg on your skin.
- Snap an elastic band against your wrist.
- Apply a henna tattoo takes great concentration with the ability to peel it off the next day.
- Exercise may help.
- Hit a pillow, mattress or use 'Play Doh', make a model and squish it.
- Rip paper into small pieces.
- Some young people find being around other people helpful.

## Understanding your triggers

- Are there any situations when you're more likely to hurt yourself?
- Do you feel the need to self harm during a certain time of the day?
- What moods trigger your self harm?

## How you can look after yourself

Your health and safety matters, it is really important that you look after yourself.

- Drugs or alcohol and self harm do not mix, you may injure yourself more than you intend to.
- If you have taken an overdose, you need to seek medical advice as quickly as possible.
- If you have burned yourself, cool the area by running cold water on the affected area for 15 minutes or as long as possible.
- If you cut yourself, use clean blades and try to make the cuts as shallow as possible. Never share blades.
- Buy antiseptic wipes and creams. A supply of plasters and clean dressings are also useful.
- If you feel nervous about going to A&E or seeing your doctor, take someone with you for support.
- Check that your tetanus jabs are up-to-date.

If you're unsure about what to do, contact NHS Direct for advice Tel: 111

Some young people feel under tremendous pressure to stop self harming. If your way of coping with life is to self harm, only you can decide when to stop.