



My friend has a problem how can I help?

## What is self-harm?

Self harm is where someone does something deliberately to hurt themselves. This could be a minor injury such as hair pulling, repeated scab picking, head banging or more serious, sometimes even life threatening injury which may include cutting parts of the body, burning, hitting, swallowing harmful substances or over dosing of medication.

## Why do young people self-harm?

Self-harm is often a way to cope with painful and confused feelings for example:

- Feeling sad, worried or angry
- Not feeling very good or confident about themselves
- Being hurt by others: physically, sexually or emotionally
- Feeling under a lot of pressure at school or at home
- Be a way of fitting in with a group of friends and needing to be accepted
- Losing someone close, such as dying or leaving

When difficult or stressful things happen in a person's life, it can trigger self-harm. Upsetting events that may lead to self-harm include:

- Arguments with family and friends, break-up of a relationship, failing or thinking you are going to fail exams, being bullied

These things can build up until the young person feels that they cannot cope any more. Self-harm can be a coping mechanism or can also a way to show other people that something is wrong in their lives.

## What triggers it?

The person may self-harm themselves once or twice at a particularly difficult time in their life and never do it again. But self-harming can become a an ongoing way of coping with current problems and may occur regularly on a monthly, weekly or daily basis. Deliberate self-harm can bring an immediate sense of relief but is only a temporary solution. It can also cause permanent damage to the body.

**What can I do to help me and my friend?** You can really help by just being there, listening and giving support in the following ways:

- Be open and honest. **If you are worried about your friends' safety you should always tell an adult.** Let your friend know that you are going to do this and it is because you care about them and their safety.
- Encourage your friend to get help.
- Allowing them to talk about how they feel is the most important thing you can do for them. Just feeling that someone is listening and that they are being heard can really help.

## Where can I find support?

**At home:** parents/carers, brother/sister or another trusted family member.

**In school:** school counsellor, school nurse, teacher, pastoral/support staff, teaching assistant or any other trusted member of staff.

**GP:** you can always talk to your GP about the difficulties you are experiencing

### Local Support Services in Sutton

#### JUMP START

One-to-one counselling sessions for young people aged 11-25 in Sutton. The sessions focus on feelings, beliefs and experiences with the support of a skilled listener. Professionals can refer children ages 11 – 17. **Young people aged 14–25 are able to self-refer.**

**Tel:** 020 8680 8899 **email:** [info@jumpstartsutton.org](mailto:info@jumpstartsutton.org) [www.talkofftherecord.org](http://www.talkofftherecord.org)

**Skyline** is a free and friendly online counselling service for young people in Sutton. A safe online space to help young people talk about difficult things they might be facing.

[www.skylinesupport.org](http://www.skylinesupport.org)

### School Nurses Confidential Drop in Service Summer 2017: from 24th July—29th August

**07500783914 – a contact number for young people to phone for support  
before deciding whether to drop in.**

Confidential drop in service for young people who want support and advice to help them cope with feelings of anxiety, distress and other emotional difficulties over the summer holidays.

**No appointment needed.**

**Tuesdays: Nonsuch High School; 10am - 3pm**

**Wednesdays: Thomas Wall Children's Centre; 1 - 4pm**

**Thursdays: Europa Gallery Civic Centre; 10am - 4pm**