

## Asking For Help



Sometimes no matter how hard you try to stop you just can't. Self-harming can sometimes mean that there are problems that need sorting out. Talking to a family member, friends or others can help.

When people find out someone is self-harming they may react in many ways. They may feel hurt and shocked. It is helpful to explain how you feel and ask them just to listen.

No-one has the right to judge you about how you feel. If you feel that your harming is out of control or a threat to your life, then you need to seek help as quickly as possible.

### Useful websites and contact numbers

- [www.selfharm.co.uk](http://www.selfharm.co.uk)
- [www.mind.org.uk](http://www.mind.org.uk)
  
- Childline: **0800 1111**
- Samaritans: **08457 909090**
- Crisis support (under 18): **0800 652 2864**
- Crisis support (over 18): **0800 652 2863**



## For More Information:



If you would like more information, please visit our website.

If you have been affected by any of the issues described in this leaflet you can talk to a Counsellor or a Youth Worker at a Streetwise drop-in.

**Advice is FREE and CONFIDENTIAL.**

Produced by: Streetwise Young People's Project:  
Young People's Information, Advice, Counselling,  
Sexual Health and Support Service for 11-25 year olds.

## Streetwise

YOUNG PEOPLE'S PROJECT

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# The Streetwise guide to Self Harm



Streetwise  
YOUNG PEOPLE'S PROJECT

# What Is Self Harm



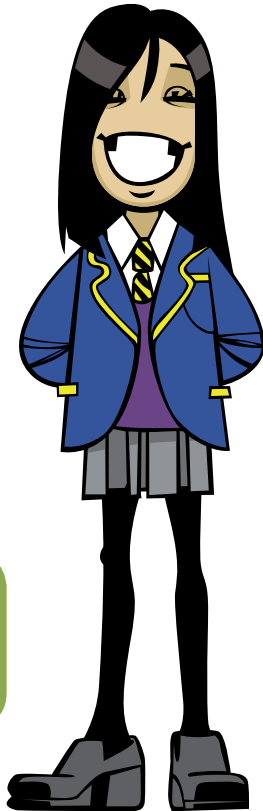
**Self harm is any action you take that causes hurt or harm to your physical self (even if you are not aware that's what you do).**

Sometimes the emotions, pain and frustration we feel inside are too much for us to manage.

For some people this can build up to a numb feeling or feeling out of control. Harming gives us a way to release these feelings or converts those feelings into something more manageable.

This can be anything from cutting and burning your body, biting your nails excessively, pulling out your hair or taking an overdose of tablets. It can also be having sex with many people, making yourself sick or starving yourself, getting drunk all of the time or heavy drug use, and many other things.

Self-harm can affect anyone. It is a lot more common than people think. Many people hurt themselves secretly for a long time before finding the courage to tell someone.



# Self Harm Is Not



→ **A sign of a deep mental disturbance or madness!**

→ **A failed suicide attempt.**

→ **A sign that someone is a danger to someone else.**

→ **Attention seeking behaviour.**

→ **About someone enjoying pain or not feeling pain.**

→ **Something to feel guilty about.**



# Helping Yourself



If you are thinking about stopping self-harming it may be useful to think about what the triggers are and the feelings you have when you do it. Some people don't know why they do it and this can be scary. There are so many reasons for self-harming and it can be very personal.

Self harm can be a way of coping and it may be useful to find other ways to help you cope when you feel distressed or overwhelmed.

Here are some ways to help get you started...

- Talking to a friend or counsellor, even reaching out to a helpline.
- Writing letters, poems or keeping a journal of how you feel.
- Art activities such as drawing, painting, collages and photography.
- Listening to music and dancing can help you to express yourself.
- Exercising by doing running, walking, dancing or even using a punch bag.
- Relaxing in a hot bath or reading.
- Physical releases like tearing up or ripping something, throwing ice into a bath or even breaking up sticks.
- Creating a sharp sensation, squeezing ice hard or flicking an elastic band on your wrist. Rubbing menthol vapour under your nose.

