



Parent Support Booklet

Self-Harm

Determination

Honesty

Readiness

Respect

Spark

Why do some people self-harm?

The reasons why people self-harm vary and there isn't one set answer to the question "why do people self-harm?"

However, the most common causes in children are:

- ⇒ Struggling with mental health problems such as depression, anxiety, stress, and grief.
- ⇒ Having problems in their personal life, for example, relationship struggles or family problems (such as arguing with yourselves).
- ⇒ Trying to control their life - the only way to control it is to control the pain
- ⇒ Punishing themselves e.g. abusive people can make them feel worthless and, in that mindset, they may feel they deserve it.
- ⇒ Low self-esteem and body dysmorphia - seeing 'perfect' bodies in the media can not only lead to self-harm but also depression and eating disorders
- ⇒ Mental pain or physical pain - chronic pain can lead some people to self-harm as it feels better to control some of the pain
- ⇒ As a cry for help

After self-harming they may feel a short-term sense of release, but the cause of the distress is unlikely to have gone away. Self-harm can also bring up very difficult emotions and could make your child feel worse.

Even though there are always reasons underneath someone hurting themselves, it is important to know that self-harm does carry risks. Once they have started to depend on self-harm, it can take a long time to stop the habit.

How to tell if someone you know may be self-harming:

It can be hard to know if someone may be self-harming as often it can be very secretive. However, there can be warning signs such as :

- ⇒ Quiet or reserved behaviour
- ⇒ A change in a person's appetite, for example eating more or less than often.
- ⇒ Stopping doing things they normally enjoy doing and do on a regular basis
- ⇒ Feeling very nauseous and tired lots of the time due to physical strain.
- ⇒ Covering up arms, legs and wrists (sometimes other body parts) when they normally wouldn't, for instance, wearing long sleeved clothes in warm weather.
- ⇒ Holding onto sleeves to prevent their wrists and arms being seen
- ⇒ Taking risks they wouldn't normally which could lead to injury .
- ⇒ Being covered in scratches and blaming it on other things such as a cat scratch

It is important to remember that this list is not exclusive and that ,because someone you know does a few of these things, it doesn't always mean that they are self-harming but if you are worried and feel that something might be going on, you should always attempt to speak to them or seek advice from a mental health professional or your GP.

What is self-harm?

Self-harm is where a person intentionally causes themselves pain.

- ◆ Cutting
- ◆ Scratching
- ◆ Etching/tattooing self
- ◆ Burning
- ◆ Hitting/banging head
- ◆ Hair pulling, inc eyelashes
- ◆ Biting

This doesn't always have to be physical pain; self-harm can be mental as well. People might not actually notice that they self-harm, for example, if somebody suffers from anxiety, they may scratch their arms or hands when anxious or worried. Although this isn't as serious as other forms of self-harm it is still important to address these problems.

What to do if you think someone you know is self-harming

If you are worried about the health or wellbeing of your child who is self-harming then we would advise you contact the school to see if there is any additional support we can put in place for your child. If the person self-harming needs medical treatment for their injuries, do make sure they get it. Don't be afraid or embarrassed to go to your GP or hospital. They are there to help you gain support for your child, it is not their job to judge you.

You can also take your child to your local hospital A&E or medical centre if you are worried and let them know your concern. They have designated mental health professionals that can offer advice. If you are concerned that there may be risk to life then call 999.

Strategies for helping to reduce or avoiding practising self-harm

Sometimes, when your child practices self-harm you may feel like there is no way to help and that they will feel like this forever but that is not true. There are ways you can help, such as :

- ⇒ If they find themselves feeling like they want to self-harm encourage them to talk to you freely with no judgement or questions. Just listen! Ensuring they have a safe space to talk is very important.
- ⇒ Remove things that they could use to harm themselves.
- ⇒ Distancing them from things that may make them feel the need to self-harm such as social media.
- ⇒ Rewarding them for not self-harming for a certain number of days.
- ⇒ Encouraging them to write down their feelings - no-one needs to read them.
- ⇒ Distraction is key when trying to stop - reading, watching a film or television, doing something that makes them happy. This will distract them from harming themselves.

If they are really struggling to stop harming, having an outlet such as squeezing a piece of ice can help or pinning an elastic band on wrist. Although this isn't ideal, it is a lot safer than alternatives.

There are Apps which can help with distraction from self-harm and suicidal thoughts– see the back pages for further information.

Social media

In the past decade, social media has its part to play in almost 'glorifying' self-harm and only brushing the surface. The underlying sadness and destructiveness of the mental illness leads to it seeming an easy way to get attention. However, the media doesn't discuss the dangers and future problems it can cause. Please remember that the media gives a glorified view of self-harm and that self-harm is a destructive and dangerous condition that affects many people.

How can you aid your child in stopping self-harming?

Be a person for them to talk to

Talking about how they are feeling with you may help them to gain relief from their thoughts. This person may not necessarily be you as long as they are talking to a trusted adult or family member.

It's understandable if they are worried that no one will understand them, or that people might judge them. But express to them not to worry, there are lots of trained people who do understand and really care, including staff at their school. That's because they speak to thousands of young people who are going through this too. Nothing they can say will shock them, and they are there to listen and support you and them if they would rather speak to someone away from home.

Get professional support

Professional support can make a massive difference. It's ok to ask for help with your child when you and them need it. We all need help sometimes, it doesn't make you or them weak - in fact reaching out takes bravery and strength.

Your GP can refer your child to Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) so they can complete an assessment and get the treatment that is right for them. They might offer counselling or talking therapy, where they can talk with trained mental health professionals about what they are feeling and ways you can both cope.

Keep a journal

Encourage them to take a few minutes every day to write down how they are feeling, good or bad. This can be a helpful way to let out their emotions. It can also help you to recognise when they are distressed and what is bothering them. It helps to see if there are any patterns in what triggers them or causes them to feel bad.

If they don't like writing, try doodling or drawing. Remember this is just a way to express themselves, there's no right or wrong way to do this.



If they want to, they can share their journal to their trusted adult or mental health professionals who is supporting them to help them understand what they are going through.

Small changes that can boost their mood

- ⇒ Consider how they use of social media and how it is affecting their mood. Only follow accounts that make them feel positive and safe.
- ⇒ Make sure they are getting enough sleep and stay hydrated – this can reduce their stress levels.
- ⇒ Encourage them to take time out when they need to.
- ⇒ Get them to think of three things they are grateful for each day.
- ⇒ Get them to be as kind to themselves as they can be to– get them to think about the advice and support they would give someone else if they were struggling.
- ⇒ Practise meditation or mindfulness – do it together! Some people find this really helps them to feel calm and grounded, especially when they're going through a distressing time.

Find ways to keep them safe

It's really important to keep them as safe as possible and reduce the risk of serious self-injury. Even though you want them to stop self-harming, you might not feel able to get them to stop straight away.

Here are some things to try as a distraction techniques:

go for a walk or do some gentle exercise focus on breathing Elastic band on wrist

Get them to text a friend to help you take your mind off things

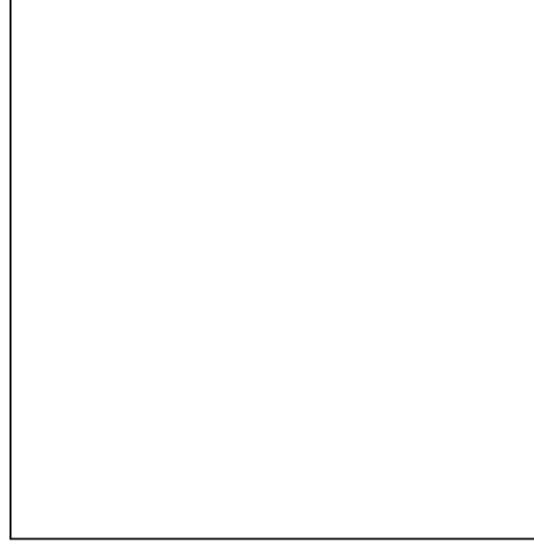
play music and sing or dance along hold an ice cube get them to write down their thoughts

hit a cushion or pillow tear up a magazine or newspaper make a self-soothe box

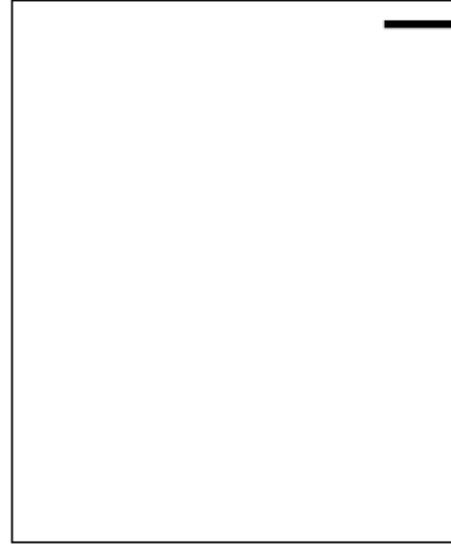


Problem Solving

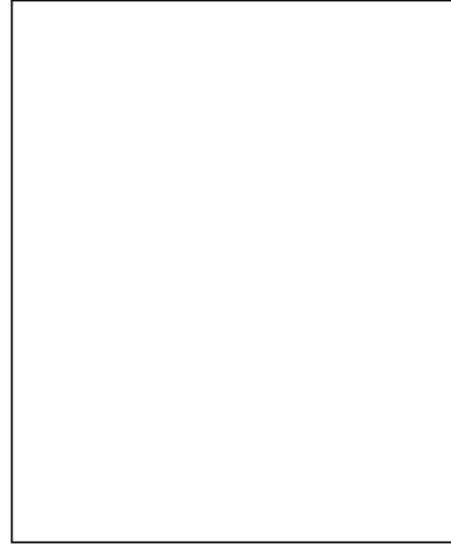
What happened?



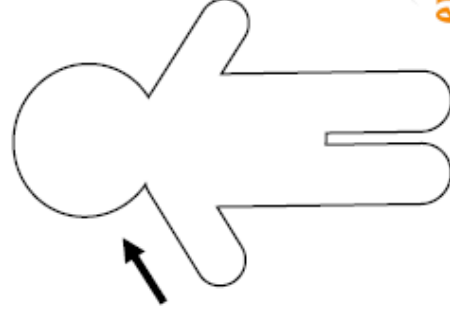
What did you do?



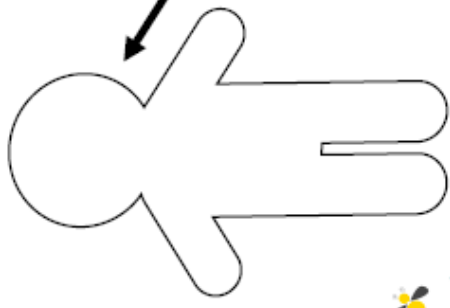
What was the consequence?



How did it make you feel?

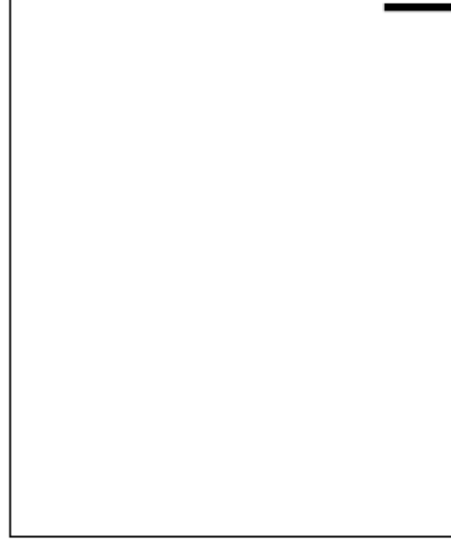


How would you feel then?

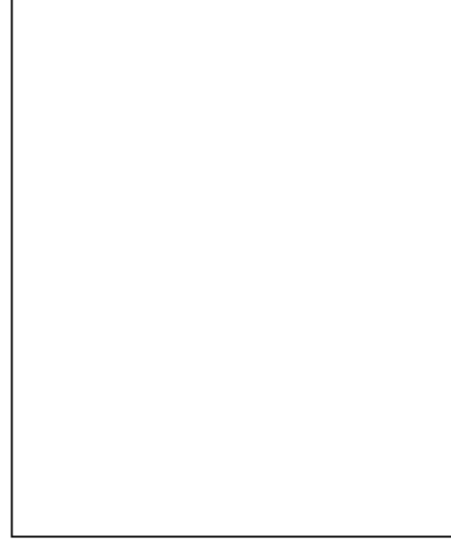


Work through the questions
and see which way is best.
Remember next time you
have a problem to choose
the better way.

What could you have done instead?



What would the consequence be now?



POSITIVE AFFIRMATIONS

Fill in the gaps with some positive affirmations

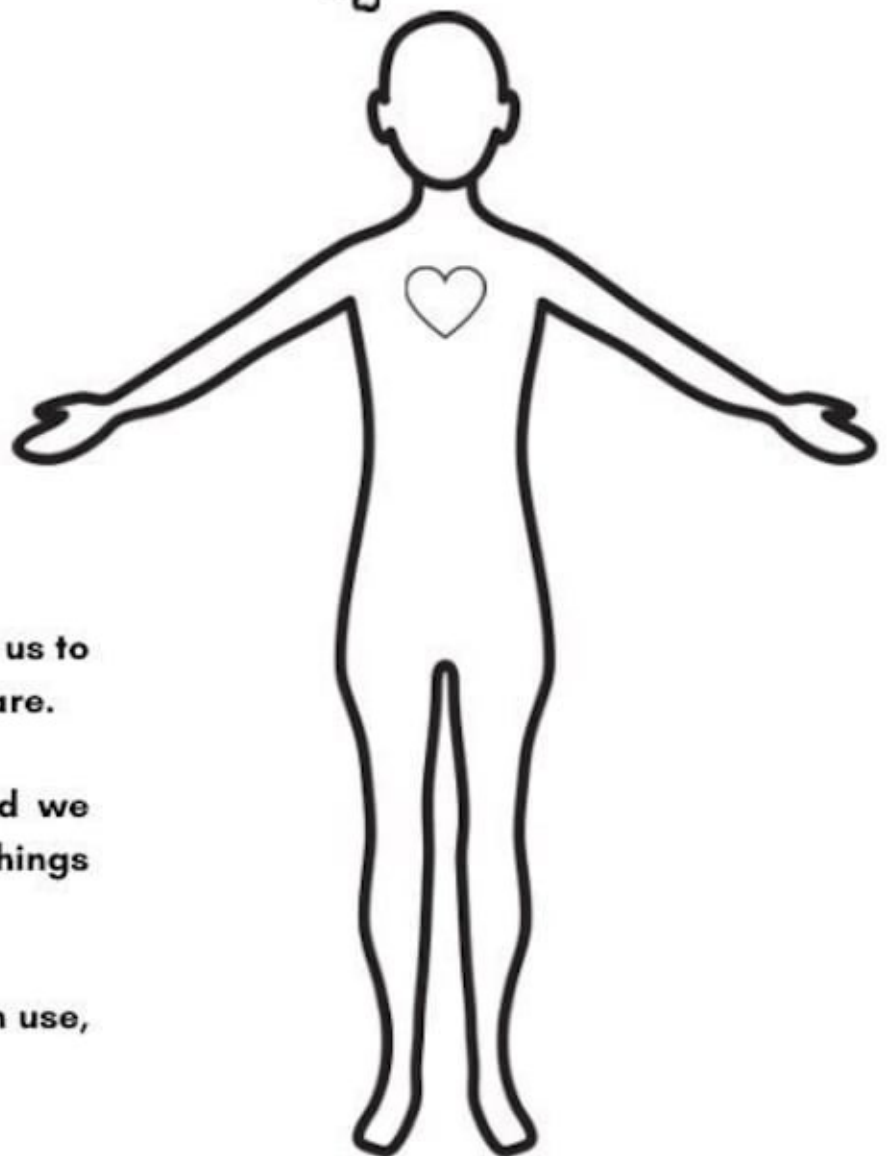
I am _____

I am _____

I am _____

I am _____

I am _____



Positive affirmations can help us to remember how BRILLIANT we are.

When we feel worried or sad we sometimes forget all the things that make us SUPER.

These are some words we can use, but feel free to use your own:

Loyal Kind Amazing Caring Funny
Generous Intelligent Strong
Patient Loved Hardworking A great friend A good listener

Helplines and phone support

YoungMinds Crisis Messenger



Provides free, 24/7 crisis support across the UK if you are experiencing a mental health crisis

If you need urgent help text YM to **85258**

All texts are answered by trained volunteers, with support from experienced clinical supervisors

Texts are free from EE, O2, Vodafone, 3, Virgin Mobile, BT Mobile, GiffGaff, Tesco Mobile and Telecom Plus.

Samaritans



If you're in distress and need support, you can ring Samaritans for free at any time of the day or night.

Freephone (UK and Republic of Ireland):

116 123 (24 hours)

Email: jo@samaritans.org

Childline



If you're under 19 you can confidentially call, email, or chat online about any problem big or small

**Freephone 24h
helpline: 0800 1111**

[Sign up for a childline account](#) on the website to be able to message a counsellor anytime without using your email address

Chat 1:1 with an [online advisor](#)

The Mix



If you're under 25 you can talk to The Mix for free on the phone, by email or on their webchat. You can also use their phone counselling service, or get more information on support services you might need.

**Freephone: 0808 808 4994
(13:00-23:00 daily)**

SupportLine



Offers confidential emotional telephone support in the UK for men, women, children and young adults.

Helpline: 01708 765200

Email: info@supportline.org.uk

SHOUT UK



Text SHOUT to 85258 for free 24/7 crisis support.

Shout is the UK's first 24/7 text service, free on all major mobile networks, for anyone in crisis anytime, anywhere. It's a place to go if you're struggling to cope and you need immediate help. Linked to the Heads Together Campaign.

HOPELINE UK



Run by Papyrus – the charity for prevention of young suicide

For children and young people under the age of 35 who are experiencing thoughts of suicide

For anyone concerned that a young person could be thinking about suicide

If you are having thoughts of suicide or are concerned for a young person who might be you can contact HOPELINEUK for confidential support and practical advice.

Call: 0800 068 4141

Text: 07860039967

Email: pat@papyrus-uk.org

Opening hours:

9am – 10pm weekdays, 2pm – 10pm weekends, 2pm

– 10pm bank holidays

MARPLE HALL SCHOOL WELLBEING SUPPORT

Check Your Battery
How are you feeling?



MENTAL
health
CHECK IN:

The Great	_____
Good	_____
OK	_____
Alright-ish	_____
Struggling	_____
Empty	_____

There are lots of ways to get help for your wellbeing at school and to get involved in wellbeing activities. Our wellbeing strategy is all about building the tools to **look after ourselves, look after each other and to seek help when we need it.**

There is lots more information on the website, around the school, on the Pastoral Hub, in tutor periods and from members of staff. If you have any questions please contact your **form tutor, Pastoral Manager, Head of Year, the Wellbeing team, any member of staff** of email wellbeing@marplehall.stockport.sch.uk you can also follow our wellbeing on Instagram @mhswellbeing

Apps-

Calm Harm App

This has advise stratagies and help on self harm

It is available to download in Your App store

Or play store.



Stem 4 -

Stem4 is a charity that supports positive mental health in teenagers. Mental health information, apps and education. Founders of Youth Mental Health Day

www.stem4.org.uk



Kooth—Online counselling service

Counselling services online

Your online mental wellbeing community
Free, safe and anonymous support

www.Kooth.com



**Stop beating
yourself up. You
are a work in
progress, which
means you get
there a little at a
time, not all at
once.**

Support for parents of children with mental health concerns

YoungMinds Crisis Messenger



Call our Parents Helpline for detailed advice, emotional support and signposting about a child or young person up to the age of 25.

You can call us for free on 0808 802 5544 from 9:30am - 4pm, Monday - Friday.

- **Our Parents Helpline is available in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.**
- **You'll get through to a trained adviser who will listen and talk through your concerns in complete confidence.**
- **Your adviser will help you to understand your child's behaviour and give you practical advice on what to do next.**

If you need further help, they'll arrange for one of our independent, experienced professionals to call you for a 50-minute telephone consultation within seven days

Turning Point



They offer a variety of different levels of support for parents/carers and the child.

Please visit the website on -

www.turning-point.co.uk

Fill in the contact form for more assistance.

Facebook



There are lots of support groups that have been set up by professionals to help assist parents/carers with their children's mental health. These are a great source of support for you as a parent/carer.

Suggested groups—

Parenting Mental Health

Parenting helping their teen daughters' mental health

CAMHS and Mental Health Services Support Group for Parents.



Parenting Mental Health is a registered charity that supports, connects and educates parents of young people with mental health issues.

www.parentingmentalhealth.org