

Self Harm

Parent/Carer Workshop
8th February 2023





WARNING

**DURING THIS WORKSHOP, WE WILL
DISCUSS SELF HARM AND SUICIDE**

In Hertfordshire....

Over the last 40 years, there has been a large increase in the number of young people who engage in self harming behaviour.

In Hertfordshire, February 2021, 42 schools participated in the Young Person's Health and Wellbeing Survey. The data showed that:

- 72% of students said that they had never self harmed.
- 14% of students said they would prefer not to say.
- 14% students said that they had self harmed (17% female, 9% male and 47% other).



Where's the
map?



Where's the
map?

Does anybody have a map?

Anybody maybe happen to know how the hell to do
this?

I don't know if you can tell

But this is me just pretending to know

So where's the map?

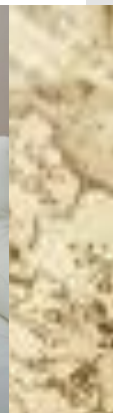
I need a clue

'Cause the scary truth is

I'm flying blind

And I'm making this up as I go

Where's the
map?



Where's the
map?



What are we
seeing

Perfectionism

Wanting to please
everyone

Feeling out of
control

No spare time



Myth busting

Self harm is not attention seeking behaviour.

Self harm is not a mental illness. It is a coping mechanism for feeling distress.

People who self harm do feel pain but they may experience it differently to those who don't self harm. It can even release endorphins.

Self harm is more common in adolescents.

Self harm is not just a phase. It requires intervention.

People who self harm often do not intend to end their lives.



What is self harm?

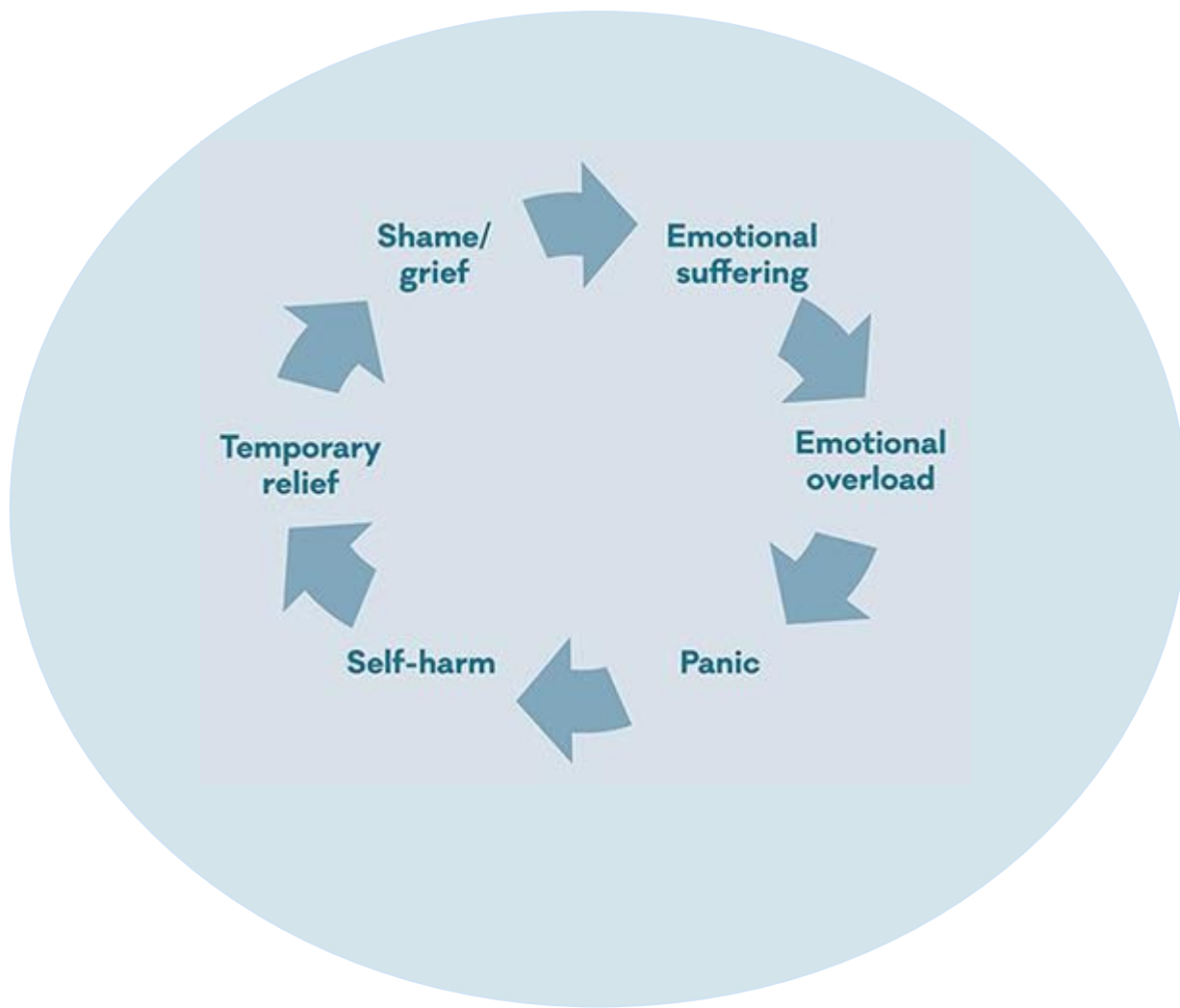
Self-harm is when you hurt yourself as a way of dealing with very difficult feelings, painful memories or overwhelming situations and experiences. Some people have described self-harm as a way to:

- express something that is hard to put into words
- turn invisible thoughts or feelings into something visible
- change emotional pain into physical pain
- reduce overwhelming emotional feelings or thoughts
- have a sense of being in control
- escape traumatic memories
- have something in life that they can rely on
- punish themselves for their feelings and experiences
- stop feeling numb, disconnected or dissociated
- create a reason to physically care for themselves
- express suicidal feelings and thoughts without taking their own life.

Cutting (visible or non visible areas)	Taking an overdose / poisoning	Inserting or swallowing hazardous materials or substances
Burning - either physically or chemically	Hair pulling/skin picking/pulling	Punching/hitting/bruising
Head banging	Episodes of alcohol/drug/substance misuse or over/under eating can at times can be acts of deliberate self harm	Risk taking behaviours may be acts of deliberate self harm e.g. running in front of cars



Self Harm Cycle



What can you do to help?

Be alert to the signs. A change of character like becoming withdrawn.

If there is a recent bereavement by suicide then they may be more vulnerable to suicide themselves.

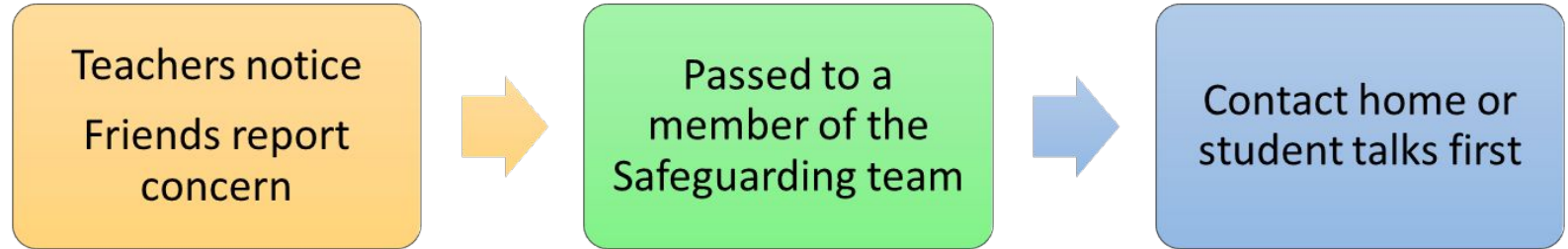
Encourage them to get some help. Be clear that it is ok to get support.

Take care of yourself and get some support.

Be open about feelings with judgement to offset feelings of isolation.

Remain hopeful and positive at all times.

In school



Direct questions

What's going on at the moment?

When did you last self harm?

What did you use?

Do your parents/carers know?

What are you doing to look after your wounds?



Things I have
learnt

the future is scary

Things I have
learnt

A vintage-style map with a compass resting on it. The map is aged and yellowed, showing various geographical features and place names. The compass is a small, round, metal device with a black face and white markings. It has a ring at the top and is positioned in the lower-left quadrant of the image. The map's background is a light blue gradient.

You can only do so much to protect them

Things I have
learnt



Control

Things I have
learnt

A vintage-style map with a compass resting on it. The map is aged and yellowed, showing various geographical features and place names. The compass is a small, round, metal device with a black face and white markings. It has a ring at the top and a needle pointing towards the top. The map is spread out on a wooden surface.

How can you empower your young person?

Things I have
learnt


Let them Rant



Advice

No one wants advice
– only corroboration.

John Steinbeck

 quoteency

Things I have
learnt

Model it



Time to Talk

Your friend tells you that they think their child is self-harming. How would you respond and what could you advise them to do?



Avoiding escalation

Treating the reason behind the self harm

Expressing or coping with emotional distress	Trying to feel in control	A way of punishing themselves
Relieving unbearable tension	A cry for help	A response to intrusive thoughts



Common causes of emotional distress

Being bullied	Pressure at school	Family arguments or relationship problems
Money worries	Low self esteem	Struggling with stress, anxiety or depression
Confusion about sexuality	Grief after bereavement or loss	Physical or sexual abuse





Self harm and suicide

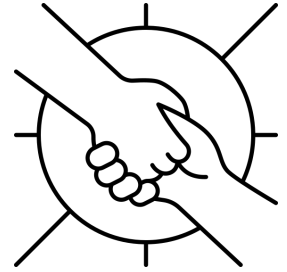
There is a clear link between suicide or suicidal thoughts and people who have previously self harmed.

However, not everyone who self harms wants to end their life. Some people describe their self harm as a way of staying alive by responding to or coping with severe emotional distress.

Staff will ask direct questions of students that express suicidal thoughts.



Signposting for support



[Harmless](#)

[OLLIE Foundation](#)

[harmLESS](#)

[Beaumont School Support](#)

[Young Minds Parent helpline](#)

[Mind](#)

[Campaign Against Living Miserably](#)

[Childline](#)

HopeLine 0800 068 4141

[Papyrus](#)

[Samaritans](#)

