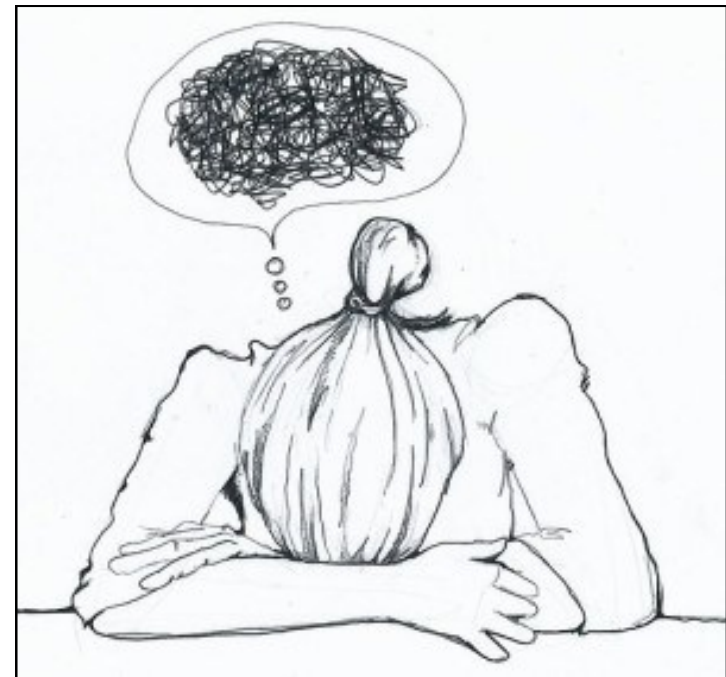


Deliberate Self-Harm in Children and Young People



Hampshire Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service

For a copy of today's presentation, please email:

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Learning Objectives

“To gain a better understanding and awareness of deliberate self harm in children and young people.”

“To obtain information regarding referrals to CAMHS– what will be accepted, what will not be accepted, how to refer and alternative services available”

Contents

- What is self harm?
 - Types of self harming behaviour
 - How does self-harm make YOU feel?
- Why do people self-harm?
- Signs of self-harming behaviour
- How to manage and support young people who self-harm and who have suicidal thoughts and urges
 - Things to do/things not to do
 - Developing a safety plan
- Multi-Agency Self Harm Pathway
- CAMHS Referral Criteria
- Specialist CAMHS Consultation Line
- Alternative support services

MindEd

MindEd is a portal that contains a wealth of information for anybody working with children and young people.

The bite-sized chunks of e-learning are designed to give you the confidence to identify a mental health issue and act swiftly, improving outcomes for the child or young person involved.



Website- www.minded.org.uk

Where can I get support?

Specialist CAMHS Consultation Line

*The Specialist CAMHS consultation lines provide an opportunity to talk with a mental health professional. They will be able to offer advice on referring to Specialist CAMHS or to discuss alternative strategies/services that will best meet a young person's need. **Available Mon-Fri between 12-1pm.***

Fareham & Gosport– 01329822220

Winchester– 01962828355

Eastleigh– 02380673984

New Forest– 02380743000

Andover– 01264835356

Aldershot– 01252335600

Basingstoke– 01256392766

Havant– 02392224560

MIND

The website has a printable PDFs that explains self harm, including possible causes and how you can access treatment and support. Includes guidance for friends and family.

Website: www.mind.org.uk

Apps

*NHS Choices (www.apps.nhs.uk) has a library of apps available to support young people with their mental health (e.g. **Mood Tracker & Headspace**).*

Websites

Young Minds– www.youngminds.org.uk

The Site– www.thesite.org/mental-health

Harmless– www.harmless.org.uk

National Self Harm Network– www.nshn.co.uk

Selfharm.co.uk– www.selfharm.co.uk

What is self harm?

Self harm can be described as-

'intentional self poisoning or injury, irrespective of the apparent purpose of the act' (NCE 2004).

Self harm can take many different forms, including :-

- Cutting, burning, biting
- Substance abuse
- Head banging and hitting
- Taking personal risks
- Picking and scratching
- Neglecting oneself
- Pulling out hair
- Overdosing and self-poisoning

In most cases, self harm is a very private act and individuals go to great lengths to hide scars/bruises and will opt to treat physical injuries themselves rather than seek medical help.

STATISTICS

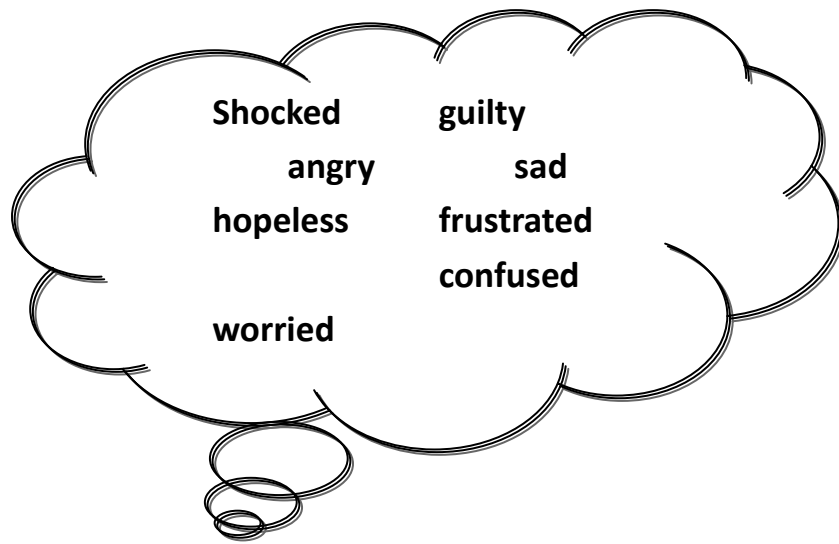
The UK has one of the highest rates of self-harm in Europe, at 400 per 100,000 population.

(The Fundamental Facts: The Mental Health Foundation, 2007)

8.2% of 16-24 year olds have self-harmed in their lifetime and 6.2% have attempted suicide.

(Adult Psychiatric Morbidity England, 2007)

How does self harm make YOU feel?



It is important to identify how self harm makes you feel, as young people will be hyper-aware and sensitive to your reactions and the reactions of others.

It is OK to have strong and sometimes negative reactions when working with a young person who is self-harming but remember that how you respond to them can make a big impact.

Why do people self-harm?

Self-harm can be a way of communicating distress, emotional coping or a way to get their needs met. However, each time a young person self-harms, it might not be for the same reason so be sure not to make assumptions about why a young person is self harming.

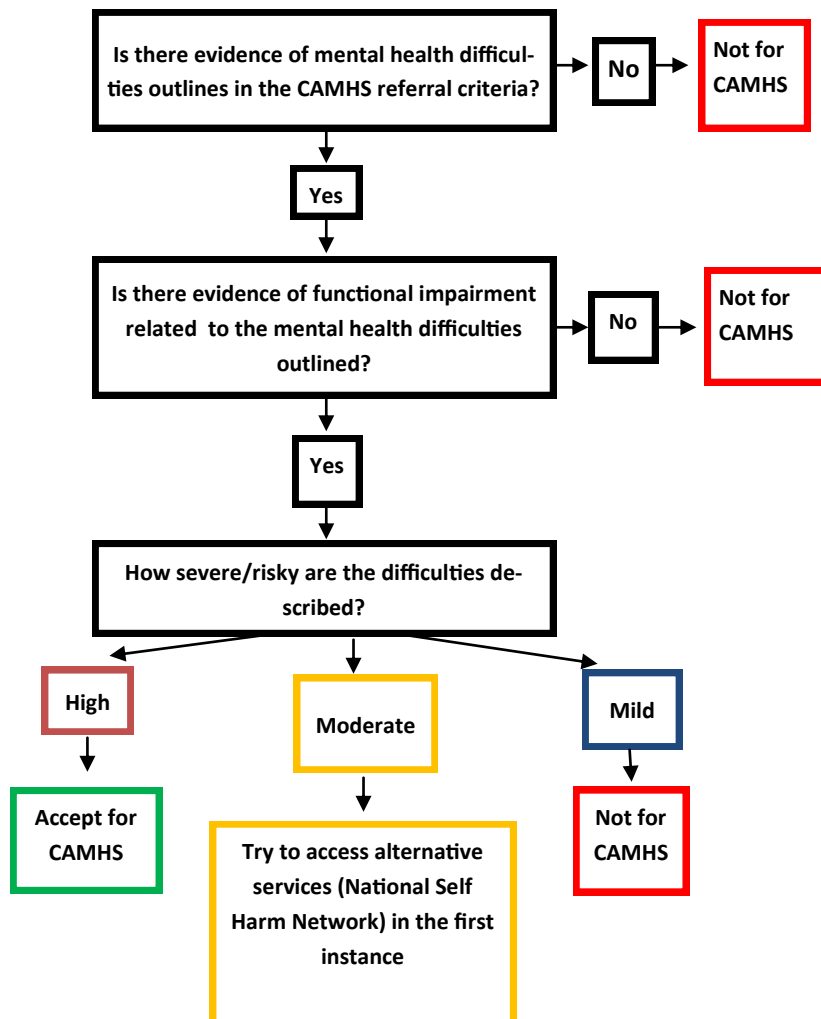
CAMHS Referral Criteria

Referrals for consultation and/or treatment are likely to be appropriate for CAMHS when:

1. There is concern that a child/young person is developing a **significant psychiatric disorder**, for example displaying psychotic symptoms, mania, schizophrenia or an affective disorder such as significant depressive signs, an eating disorder, obsessive-compulsive disorder, anxiety disorder etc.
2. A child/young person is presenting with significant and/or escalating **self-harming behaviour** where there is also evidence of an underlying mental health issue and/or the self-harm is likely to cause lasting damage or on-going mental health difficulties.
3. A child/young person presents with symptoms of **distress** that are **unusually prolonged** or **disabling** secondary to an event (e.g. physical, emotional, sexual abuse, bereavement, and divorce) or other potentially traumatising family, environmental or physical influences.
4. There are significant **family relationship difficulties**, which are **leading to impairing mental health** symptoms within the child/young person.
5. A child/young person has a **developmental delay** including tourettes/tics, moderate learning difficulties, or autistic spectrum disorder and there are mental health symptoms or complex presentations.
6. A child/young person is exhibiting **over-activity, impulsivity** and a degree of **distraction/inattention** which is appreciably inappropriate for the child/young person's developmental age and are observed as impeding the child/young person's capacity to engage and access the school curriculum and general social interactions with peers and adults.

CAMHS Referral Criteria

In the first instance, referrers are advised to call their local CAMHS consultation line for advice and sign-posting to alternative services. When referring a case of self harm to CAMHS; severity and duration of self harm, level of impairment and the young person's mental state will all be considered.

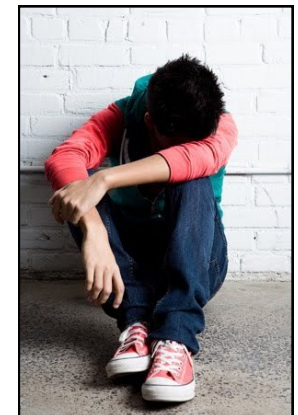


- *Attention seeking?* - many people often feel that young people self-harm in order to get attention. In fact, it is likely that they are not getting their needs met and are resorting to self harm to

Signs of Self-Harming Behaviour

It can be hard to spot the signs of self harm, due to the fact that it is often a secretive act. However, signs to look for can include:

- Unexplained cuts/bruises/burns on wrists/arms/thighs/legs or chest.
- Attempts to keep themselves covered up (even in hot weather).
- Low mood, tearfulness or a general lack of motivation or interest in anything.
- Changes in eating habits– unusual weight gain/loss.
- Signs of low self esteem– blaming themselves/ thinking they are not good enough.
- Alcohol or drug misuse.



How to manage and support young people who self-harm and who have suicidal thoughts and urges

Consent and Confidentiality

You cannot keep self-harm/suicidal thoughts a secret. You must encourage the young person to disclose to a parent or professional. If they do not, you need to make them aware that you have a duty of care to share information with the relevant professionals (GP, CAMHS) and their parents if you are concerned for their well-being.

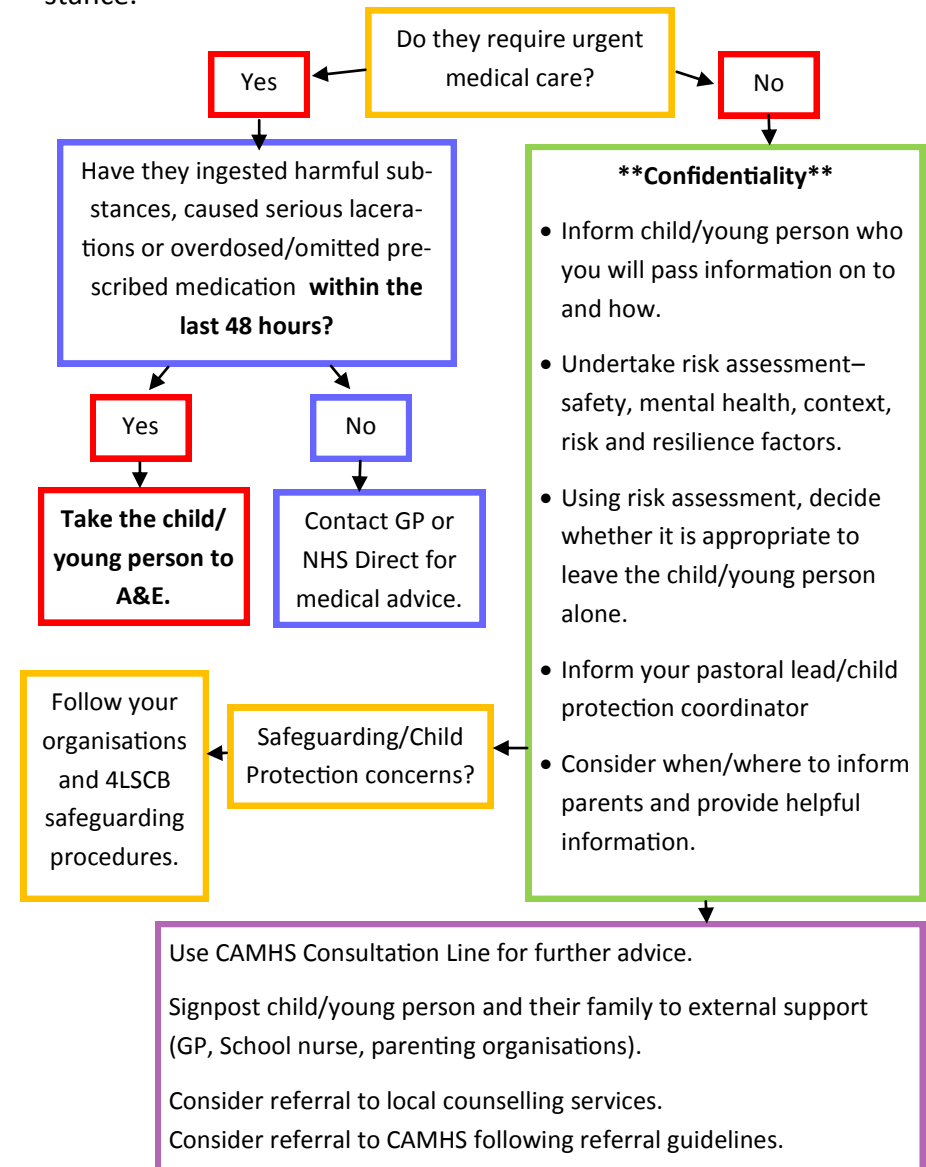
Boundaries in school

1. Young people can speak to staff but it is to be discouraged displaying self-harm or discussing self-harm/ suicide between peers (especially on social networking sites).
2. Young people should not bring sharps into school (e.g. scissors or knives).
3. Have 'sharps boxes' available so that if someone has self-harmed, they can be encouraged to dispose of sharps safely.
4. Ensure young people are aware of your responsibility to safeguard and share information when necessary.
5. If a young person seems to want to discuss concerns at every available opportunity– set a designated day, time and duration (but be flexible with this, especially if the young person is in crisis.)



Multi-Agency Self Harm Pathway

If a child/young person is self harming or tells you that they have self harmed, follow the Multi-Agency Self Harm Pathway in the first instance.



Developing a Safety Plan

A safety plan is something a young person, and the people that care for them, can refer to in times when the individual is feeling vulnerable, perhaps at home, school, work or out in the community.

The safety plan can act as a reminder for young people; suggesting calming activities, strategies they can use, people they can talk to and what services are available to them.

Please refer to the safety plan provided in the training session for an example.



Things to remember when creating a safety plan:-

- Try to work collaboratively with the young person
- Give the young person options– e.g. allow them to decide which calming activities they would find useful and who they would like to talk to in times of distress
- Share information and safety plans with relevant people
- Review the plan regularly
- Some young people also find it helpful to have a ‘pocket sized’ plan that they can keep on their person .

Things to do...

- Let them know you are here to talk to if they want to.
- As much as possible, let them remain in control.
- Encourage (but don't push) accessing support services by making them aware of the options available to them.
- Show them that you care– focus on their strengths, make sure you show that you can see the person beyond the self harm.
- If they have recently self harmed, ask if they need medical help.
- Be approachable.
- Validate the emotion, not the behaviour.

Things NOT to do...

- Don't force them to talk about it.
- Avoid trying to 'counsel' them– let the appropriate professionals do this.
- Don't make them feel ashamed or feel they need to keep it a secret.
- Try not to make assumptions or judgements about why the young person may be engaging in self-harming behaviour.
- Force them to get help or take control away from them.
- Don't make them promise to stop self harming “for you”.
- Don't make promises you can't keep.