

Fact Sheet Self-Harm

Self-harm is the conscious act made by an individual where-in they cause deliberate damage to their physical health. Self-harm can be an attempt of communication, punishment or a coping strategy. Although it can be an element of suicide it isn't necessarily a sign; suicidal people wish to end their pain and their life, self-harm is often a tool to feeling better.

Only one-in-ten people who self-harm come to clinical attention

Types

- ❖ Cutting skin
- ❖ Burning skin
- ❖ Scalding skin
- ❖ Banging or scratching the body
- ❖ Breaking bones
- ❖ Hair pulling
- ❖ Picking skin
- ❖ Self-strangulation
- ❖ Taking toxic substances or objects
- ❖ Taking overdose
- ❖ Risk-taking behavior eg. Driving recklessly
- ❖ Unprotected sex

Stressors

- ❖ Bullying
- ❖ Stress
- ❖ Isolation
- ❖ Family conflict
- ❖ Family separation
- ❖ Physical, sexual or verbal abuse
- ❖ Issues with their sexuality
- ❖ Low self-esteem
- ❖ Bereavement
- ❖ Unwanted pregnancy
- ❖ Substance use
- ❖ Mental health



Getting help

- Talk to a health professional
- Talk to a loved one
- Seek support
- Find information of other coping strategies
- Seek a counselling service
- Call a helpline

Reasons

Controlling Mood

When unable to cope with emotions, hurting oneself draws focus to away.

Communication

As a means of showing others how you feel. A cry for help.

Control:

When feeling powerless, uses self-harm as a way to control an aspect of their life.

Zonta House Refuge Association provides support services to women who have experienced family and domestic violence, mental health issues, homelessness and other crises enabling them the opportunity to make safe and sustainable life choices. For more information or support, visit our resource page at www.zontahouse.org.au