SAFEGUARDING BULLETIN



March 2024

In this safeguarding bulletin we are going to look at self harm and how to support young people who are harming.

Please be advised that some of the things discussed here will be upsetting for some of you. If you or your children are affected by anything in this bulletin, please do not hesitate to get in touch with our Safeguarding Team for support.



1 in 4 young females and 1 in 10 young males have self harmed.

Why do people self-harm?

It is important to understand the underlying cause as to why someone is self-harming. It can be an underlying mental health condition that they are struggling to manage but other reasons include:

- To reduce tension
- To manage extreme emotional upset
- To distract from emotional pain
- To express emotions, such as hurt or anger
- To regain control over feelings or problems
- to punish themselves or others
- To receive care from others
- To identify with a peer group

25,000 young people are sent to A & E every year as a result of injuries from self-harm

Self-harm can be come a habit and be difficult to stop.

For more information and support, click on this link:

https://www.youngminds.org.uk /parent/how-to-talk-to-yourchild-about-mental-health/

Supporting your child when they are self-harming.

When you find out your child is self-harming, it can cause you to feel very difficult emotions. These emotions are normal reactions to an upsetting and a stressful situation.

Try and deal with your own emotions before talking to your child.

This will ensure that your child is not further upset by the situation as they do not take on the responsibility for your emotions and that you are not overwhelmed and able to deal with the situation.



These are some of the emotions that **you** might be feeling when you find out your child has self-harmed. You may even feel ashamed by the way your child is behaving.

To be able to support your child correctly, you will need to be able to support your own feelings and emotions first.

Consider how you are feeling

Think about the impact your feelings might have on your child.

Talk to the other adults in your life for support to deal with your own emotions so that you will be in a good, healthy place to be able to support your child.

You will naturally want to keep your child physically close to monitor their behaviour and keep them safe. Although this is completely understandable, it can be frustrating for your child and may create a feeling of mistrust – young people are more likely to hide things if they do not feel trusted.

Plan a time to speak to your child when you won't be interrupted. The meeting may be emotional – a comfortable, private space is a much better place to talk than a public space which might inhibit you both from speaking honestly. Try to ensure any siblings are not around so your child has your undivided attention.

It is important to be honest with your child about your feelings. Be honest about being, e.g. shocked or upset. Ensure that your child knows you are not upset with them but are upset that they are hurting themselves. Reassure them that they are loved and that you are there to support them.

Having an honest and an open conversation can bring you closer together and reassure your child of your love and support.



Follow these helpful hints and tips to start to talk to your child if they have self-harmed.

Try not to judge

Even if you find it difficult to understand why they are self-harming, try not to criticise or make assumptions

Be honest

If you don't understand why your child is self-=harming then say so. They will appreciate your honesty.

Listen to them

Let your child explain. If they find it difficult to explain, let them talk about their feelings and what is happening in their life. Talking may help you and your child understand why the self-harm occurs and when it is likely to happen.

Accept the self-harm

This can be extremely difficult because you want to protect your child from the harm. Self-harm is not a behaviour that just stops. Your young person will need interventions and support to slowly reduce the self-harm until it stops.

Treat your child normally

Your child is is still the same person. Treat them the same, continue to have fun with them and talk about the other things that are happening, not just the self-harm. This wil help your child know you still love them and that the self-harm has not altered your relationship and special bond.

Once you have spoken to them ask with your child what they would like to do. If they would like support, speak to the school or your family doctor. Young people will usually have a preference and it is important to let them choose. Show them that you are patient and that you are willing to support them for as long as needed. Do not rush them into dealing with the self-harm straight away. Allow your child to set the pace.

Make sure you treat any injuries with care and empathy. Let your child know they are loved and you are not judging them. They are more likely to come to you for help if they do not feel judged. Make sure your child is aware of how to treat their own cuts etc. and give them open access to a first aid kit. Research information about potential triggers, interventions and support plans.

Managing triggers

You can help build a support plan for your child which includes putting together some information about triggers and distraction techniques when they feel the need to self-harm. Be aware that this might only delay the harm, but eventually with time, patience and empathy they will be able to manage the urge to harm.

PHYSICAL DISTRACTIONS

Go out doors - take your pet if you have one

Use a punch bag or hit a pillow to release some frustration

Find some space and scream and shout

Go to the gym, an exercise class or for a swim. Yoga is particullary good for strengthening the connection between your body and mind

Sit in the garden, outside in the park or on the beach and listen to the sounds of nature

Try and do some cleaning and tidying

Play with a stress toy

Ball up your socks and throw them at a wall

Dance around and burn some energy.



SOOTHING DISTRACTIONS

Use your favourite bubble bath or shower gels and have a long bath or shower - set the mood with candles and relaxing music or an audio book

Wrap yourself in a blanket or layer up in jumpers and hoodies

Go to your safe place - this could be inside or outside. This should be a place where you feel calm and safe

Switch off all your technology and take time for yourself - try sitting in the dark and focusing on your breathing

Treat yourself to your comfort food or a hot drink

Watch videos on YouTube - music videos, animal videos, cartoons or tutorials

Engage in a skin care routine - try face masks, face washes or trim and file your nails

Watch your favourite childhood film or something new you have been wanting to see

Use a mediation tool such as pixelthought.co or Headspace app (available on iOS and Android)



CREATIVE DISTRACTIONS



Try drawing, painting or colouring - mindfulness colouring books are available in most shops and newsagents

Start a blog. Perhaps you can write about how you get through difficult times to help others going through similar experiences

Make a playlist of songs that can help you - these can be sad, happy or uplifting songs

Learn a new song, listen to it on repeat until you have learnt the lyrics off by heart

Make a HOPEBOX - see our resources for ideas on this

Decorate your room

Try cooking or baking a new recipie

Play with kinetic sand - mould it, shape it or cut it up

Make shapes using weavesilk.com - also available on iOS and Android. Other interactive distractions can be found at neave.com.



PRODUCTIVE DISTRACTIONS



Make a to-do list for your day or your week

Do something nice for someone else - visit a friend or an elderly relative. Invite someone over and make dinner

Try and do some homework or engage in study time

Read a book or start a diary

Make yourself a personal development plan and focus on the things you want to do and achieve - short-term and long-term.

Rearrange or organise your wardrobe or drawers

Have a clear out of stuff you don't want or need anymore - perhaps

Go shopping and treat yourself to something you want - why not buy the materials you need to make a HOPEBOX.



When you child stops harming, then still continue using your safety techniques, such as distraction techniques, hobbies you do together and anything else which is safe and keeps their mental health and wellbeing healthy and well.

By continuing to do these, you are promoting a healthy and communicative relationship which means they will be able to come to you if they feel like they might be feeling the need to harm again.

Support for the wider family

Remember that this time is as distressing for the people around your child as it is for you and the young person involved.

These tips might help to ensure everyone is mentally healthy:

- Continue to talk to people about how you are feeling.
- Spend quality time doing the things you enjoy and that make you happy
- Spend quality time with your other children, ensuring that they have a safe space to be able to express themselves should they need to
- Be honest with your children what is happening make sure you do not scare them and use age appropriate language so they understand.
- Seek support from external services if you need to
- Work together with school and services, we are here to help.
- Do not feel guilty if you are finding things difficult.

Services that can help:

Your GP

School Nurse

https://selfharm.co.uk/

Free online self-harm support for 10-17 year olds

https://www.papyrus-uk.org/

https://www.childline.org.uk/?
gclsrc=aw.ds&gad_source=1&gclid=CjOKCQiAwvKtB
hDrARIsAJj-

<u>kTj Z4sTlJzvV5bre jNKLeRgxZ9Q4Jx3X0Mxu6XsL0</u> <u>UJbg-noaYz3caAmswEALw_wcB&gclsrc=aw.ds</u>

Support with suicidal thoughts_

Childline - free online advice for children and young people



https://www.ns hn.co.uk/nshn.co.uk/

National Self Harm Network - online support

What is Early Help?

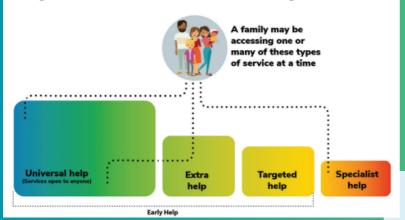
There are times in family life when things might be difficult or someone in the family is having problems. When you get help for issues as soon as possible, things can get better much quicker for your child and family than if the problem was left unresolved. Early help gets your family the right support at the right time.

Is this something I have to do?

No. Early Help is voluntary and no one can make you access Early Help. It's there to help you and your family at the right time to make things better. We will involve you in the process every step of the way and will work with you to find out what help you need. You and your child's voice in this process is very important as it will help the professionals supporting you know what is happening and how they can best help you.

How could you help me and my family?

We offer universal support for families as well as targeted help. You can access universal support through our webpages where we have useful information, advice and guidance on a varity of topics as well as courses for parents and carers. Help is also at hand from Family Support Workers on the Family Support Line (01926 412412). Some situations will benefit from a "team around the family" with professionals and the family working together in a joint, coordinated way. This is called an Early Help Pathway to Change and includes an assessment and review meetings.





Children and family centres

https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/chil drenandfamilycentres

Mental health and wellbeing support

https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/me ntalhealth



EARLY HELP AND THE EARLY HELP PATHWAY TO CHANGE

Information for parents and carers

What is the Early Help Pathway Assessment?

The Early Help Pathway to Change is an assessment which families can access to help them and professionals understand what is happening for them. Those professionals can then work together as a team with you and your family to help improve things for your family as a whole.

How does it work?

A professional who is already working with you will normally lead the process. They will work with you to identify what is causing any difficulties in your family life. Alongside other professionals, they will help you

to resolve these issues by providing the right support. Specific actions are discussed in the meetings that you will attend. Everybody in the meeting is clear about what needs to happen and by when, and this is recorded on an action plan, which is reviewed regularly. The intervention is short term and normally lasts no more than six months.



A lead professional will be appointed who will keep in regular contact with you and your family.



Who will have my information?

Each families needs are unique so this will depend on the services that are supporting your identified needs. We work closely with other agencies, however we will only ever share information on a need to know basis. There may be times when we will need to talk to other agencies to make sure you and your family are safe. This could be because a child or adult is at risk of harm or if a crime could be prevented. For more information view the Warwickshire County Council privacy notice online at www.warwickshire.gov.uk/privacy.

How do I access Early Help?

You can speak with a professional already working with your family, they can start the process on your behalf.

You can also access information, advice and guidance from the following services:

Family Information Service

Information, advice and one-to-one support for families with children and young people aged 0 to 25 across Warwickshire on issues including family relationships, finance, housing, special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), childcare and health and wellbeing.

T: 01926 742274 E: fis@warwickshire.gov.uk

Get regular updates, advice and information from the Family Information Service by following @WarksFIS on Twitter and @WarwickshireFIS on Facebook, or sign up to the weekly newsletter by visiting www.warwickshire.gov.uk/parentupdates

The Family Support Line

Family support workers are available across Warwickshire to listen, support and offer advice and guidance to families on parenting and all aspects of family life.

To speak to a family support worker over the telephone, call 01926 412412, Monday to Friday between 9am - 4pm.

Parenting Workshops and Programmes

There are a range of free online and face-to-face workshops and programmes available for parents and carers in Warwickshire to access including support with managing your child's behaviour, sleep, routines and boundaries, safe home happy home and more.



Workshops can be booked via Eventbrite.

Visit <u>www.eventbrite.co.uk</u> and search for 'Warwickshire Children and Families' (make sure the 'search for online events' filter is on) or scan the OR code.



To find out more about the support available for you and your family visit www.warwickshire.gov.uk/childrenandfamilies





If you feel like you need any support with any of the issues raised in this bulletin, please do not hesitate to contact us for support.



Designated Safeguarding Team



Andy Commander Deputy Headteacher Designated Safeguarding Lead



Helen Seickell Headteacher Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead



Helen Hughes Assistant Headteacher Primary



Geoff Goode Assistant Headteacher Year 7, 8 & 9



Janet Bacon Assistant Headteacher Year 10 & 11



Caroline Parkhouse Assistant Headteacher



Fiona Holliland Family / Pupil Support



Julija Andrejeva Family / Pupil Support



Lauren Pinfield Pupil Wellbeing Lead



Roy Owen Emotional Wellbeing Key Worker



Faye Commander Lead Consultant Teacher Warwickshire Vision Support Service



Alicia Pegg Learning Pod Manager

Pupils: All staff have a responsibility to keep you safe and you can talk to any staff member if you are concerned or worried about anything. The 12 staff members above can give you extra help and support. **Staff:** If you have concern for a pupils safety and welfare, report immediately to a member of the Designated Safeguarding Team.

Useful mental health services



- 24/7 text helpline for mental health and suicide
- Machine learning detects suicide intent/thoughts
- Machine learning informed prioritisation protocol (the system can prioritise certain behaviours to receive support)



- Free to use 24/7 access to phone line
- One to one communication
- 24 hour response time on email access
- Confidential no contact details are displayed to volunteers



- Helpline 0800 58 58 58,
- Webchat https://www.thecalmzone.net/help/webchat/
- Instant response between 5pm midnight phone and web chat helplines
- Free offer practical support and vital intervention for those in crisis
- One to one communication



- Free, safe and anonymous online chat and wellbeing service
- Support for 11-25 year olds
- Friendly counsellors who can help you talk through your problems
- They are there for you to talk to when you need someone



- Calm free app to download.
- Can access lots of things to support mental health and wellbeing, however there is a subscription charge for access to the whole app.
- Meditation and other techniques to support mental health and wellbeing



- Calm Harm free app to download.
- Support for young people who are self-harming
- Helps reduce the urges to harm and offers practical solutions and distractions
- Comfort, Distract, Express Yourself, Release, and Random.



- notOK App® is a free digital panic button to get you immediate support via text,, phone call, or GPS location when you're struggling to reach out.
- Pre-crisis tool
- Other resources available online too.



- Combined Minds is an app to help parents, family, friends support a young person who is in distress
- Share plans and guidance amongst support system to ensure the young person can access the right support at the right time.