



# Self-Harm



## Signs and Symptoms

- Covering up, for example by wearing long sleeves a lot of the time, especially in summer
- Unexplained bruises, cuts, burns or bite-marks on their body
- Becoming withdrawn and spending a lot of time alone
- Avoiding friends and family
- Low self-esteem or blaming themselves for things
- Outbursts of anger or irritability
- Risky behaviours like drinking or taking drugs

## Strategies

- Say something. Talking about self-harm will not encourage more self-harm.
- Promote good wound care and keeping any tools clean. Talk to the young person about spotting signs of infection and when to go to the GP.
- Offer alternative coping and distraction strategies to help 'ride the wave'. These can include physical activity, drawing on the body, holding an ice cube, shouting into a pillow etc.
- Make a plan together. This could include planning to tell someone else, visit the GP, make a referral, try a new coping strategy etc.



If the young person has a smart phone, you can signpost them to the CalmHarm app.

Not all self-harm is linked to feeling suicidal, but it is important that you ask the young person if they have thoughts of ending their life.

If they do, seek appropriate support, including 999 if you feel there is an immediate risk to life.