

Acute Training Solutions

Self Harm & Suicide Awareness - Fact or fiction

"It's only attention seeking."	Self-Harming is often done in private and not shown to others, so is often not a very effective way of seeking attention, however Self-Harm always indicates that something in that person needs attending too. Louise Pembroke, Andy Smith & The National Self-Harm Network, September 1996
"It's self-inflicted so it's not serious."	How severe a wound is doesn't necessarily equate to how bad a person feels. Louise Pembroke, Andy Smith & The National Self-Harm Network, September 1996
"Self-harmers are usually young people who grow out of it."	Traditionally this has been the assumption yet there is no evidence to show young people "grow out" of it and self-injury can begin at any age. Louise Pembroke, Andy Smith & The National Self-Harm Network, September 1996
"Self-harm isn't necessarily about suicide"	Sometimes people harm themselves because they want to die. But often it's more about staying alive. People may hurt themselves to help them get through a bad time. It's a way to cope.
People self-harm in different ways	Some cut their arms or legs, others bang or bruise their bodies. Self-harm also includes burning, scratching, hair-pulling, scrubbing, or anything that causes injury to the body. Some people take tablets, perhaps not a big overdose, but enough to blot things out for a while.
It can happen once, or many times	Some people attempt suicide or hurt themselves just once or twice. Other people use self-harm to cope over a long time. They might hurt themselves quite often during a bad patch.
It doesn't mean you're off your head	All sorts of people self-harm. Even people in high-powered jobs. It's a sign that something is bothering and upsetting you, not that you are mad.
Other things can be 'self-harm' too	Things like starving, overeating, drinking too much, risk-taking, smoking and many others are also types of 'self-harm'. Some coping methods (like burying yourself in work) may be more acceptable, but can still be harmful.
It's not 'just attention-seeking'	People self-harm because they are in pain and trying to cope. They could also be trying to show that something is wrong. They need to be taken seriously.
Lots of people self-harm	You may not have yet met anyone who self harms and may even think if you did they are the only one who does it. There's a lot of secrecy about self-harm. But many thousands of people cope in this way for a while.
People do stop self-harming	Many people stop self-harming - when they're ready. They sort their problems out and find other ways of dealing with their feelings. It might take a long time and they might need help. But things can get better.
Complete this statement The best way to respond to someone who self-harms is...	