 **Self-harm- Information for young**

**people**

###### What is self-harm?

Self- harm is where someone does something to deliberately hurt him or herself. This may include: cutting parts of their body, burning, hitting or taking an overdose.

###### How many young people self-harm?

A recent large study in the UK found that about 7% (i.e. 7 people out of every 100) of 15-16 year olds had self-harmed in the last year.

###### Why do young people self-harm?

Self-harm is often a way of trying to cope with painful and confusing feelings. Difficult things that people who self-harm talk about include:

* Feeling sad or feeling worried
* Not feeling very good or confident about themselves
* Being hurt by others: physically, sexually or emotionally
* Feeling under a lot of pressure at school or at home
* Losing someone close; this could include someone dying or leaving

When difficult or stressful things happen in someone’s life, it can trigger self-harm.

* Arguments with family or friends
* Break-up of a relationship
* Failing (or thinking you are going to fail) exams
* Being bullied

Often these things build up until the young person feels they cannot cope anymore.

Self- harm can be a way of trying to deal with or escaping from these difficult feelings. It can also be a way of showing other people that something is wrong in their lives.

###### How can you cope with self-harm?

Replacing the self-harm with other safer coping strategies can be a positive and more

helpful way of dealing with difficult things in your life.

Helpful strategies can include:

* Finding someone to talk to about your feelings (this could be a friend or family member)
* Talking to someone on the phone (you might want to ring a help line)
* Sometimes it can be hard to talk about feelings; writing and drawing about your feelings may help.
* Listening to music
* Going for a walk, run or other kinds of exercise
* Getting out of the house and going somewhere where there are other people
* Keeping a diary
* Having a bath/using relaxing oils e.g. lavender
* Watching a favourite film

**Getting help**

In the longer term it is important that the young person can learn to understand and deal

with the causes of the stress that they feel. The support of someone who understands and

will listen to you can be very helpful in facing difficult feelings.

* At home - parents, brother/sister or another trusted family member
* In school- school nurse, teacher, teaching assistant or other member of staff
* GP- you can talk to your GP about your difficulties and he/she can make a referral for counselling

##### Useful help lines and websites include: -

##### https://i0.wp.com/www.kirkburtonmiddleschool.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/stem4.jpg

**STEM** <https://stem4.org.uk/> Teenage mental health charity

[](https://i0.wp.com/www.kirkburtonmiddleschool.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/youngminds.png)

[https://youngminds.org.uk](https://youngminds.org.uk/)   YoungMinds is the UK’s leading charity committed to improving the

emotional wellbeing and mental health of young people.

###### My friend has a problem - How can I help?

* You can really help by just being there, listening and giving support.
* Be open and honest. If you are worried about your friend's safety, you should tell an adult. Let your friend know that you are going to do this and you are doing it because you care about him/her.
* Encourage your friend to get help. Go with them or tell someone who they want to know.