

“STRENGTHENING THE CIRCLE”

Common Mental Health Conditions Affecting Children and Young People (Categorisation: Public Health England, Dec 2016)

Self-Harm

What do you see?	How do you respond?
<p>There may be no signs at all, or</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Withdrawal or isolation from everyday life. • Signs of depression • Changes in mood, activity levels, eating/sleeping habits. • Talking about self-harming or suicide. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expressing feelings of failure, uselessness or loss of hope. • Risk taking behaviour (substance misuse, unprotected sexual acts). • Signs of low self-esteem such as blaming themselves for any problems or saying they are not good enough. • Unexplained cuts, bruises or marks. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Covering up all the time, when in hot weather. • Being quieter than usual. • Lacking energy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acknowledge how difficult it might be to talk about their self-harm but don't focus on, or encourage them to tell you details about specific injuries or behaviours. Instead talk about how they are feeling and what they are going through. • Think about how you can foster their sense of belonging, core self, coping mechanisms and learning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reassure them that you are there for them and that there are lots of sources of support available to them. • Offer them help in seeking professional support and provide information on ways to do this. • Be positive and let them know that recovery is possible <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allow yourself to treat the person exactly the same as usual
What resources will help?	
<p> www.Childline.org.uk www.minded.org.uk www.papyrus-uk.org www.samaritans.org www.selfharm.co.uk https://youngminds.org.uk/ucommerce/self-harm/c-23/p-177 </p>	
How do you support self-management?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help them to identify what triggers their self-harming behaviour, and to plan distractions • Help the young person to plan how to stay safe e.g. how they could restrict access to pills, substances etc. • Support them to develop strategies to cope e.g. talking, meditation / mindfulness, exercise, listening to music • Encourage them to develop a “self-soothe box” • Remain ALERT: ASK how they are feeling, Listen, Empathise, Reassure that there is a positive future, Try to give practical support 	
Immediate Medical Attention? Depending on injuries, first aid or A&E may be needed	Referral? All young people who attend A&E should have a mental health assessment before discharge