

# Self-harm

## A guide for young people



**Easy  
Read**

# Easy Read



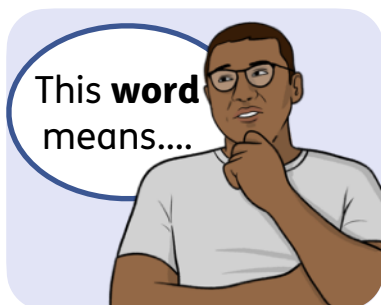
This is an Easy Read version of some information. It may not include all of the information but it will tell you about the important parts.



This Easy Read booklet uses easier words and pictures. Some people may still want help to read it.



Some words are in **bold** - this means the writing is thicker and darker. These are important words in the booklet.



Sometimes if a bold word is hard to understand, we will explain what it means.



[Blue and underlined](#) words show links to websites and email addresses. You can click on these links on a computer.

# What is in this booklet

About this booklet .....	4
What is self-harm? .....	5
How do I stop or manage my self-harm? .....	9
What can I do to manage my self-harming now? .....	12
Where else can I get help? .....	17

This Easy Read booklet was produced by [easy-read-online.co.uk](http://easy-read-online.co.uk)  
The booklet includes images licensed from Photosymbols & Shutterstock.

# About this booklet



This booklet is for any young person who hurts themselves on purpose.

This is also known as **self-harm**.



This booklet will help you to:

- Understand self-harm and why you may do it.



- Stop self-harming or manage your self-harming.

# What is self-harm?



**Self-harm** is when you hurt your body on purpose.



This can include cutting, burning or taking too much **medication**.

**Medication** is medicines, like tablets.

## Why do I self-harm?

Many young people who self-harm say it is a way of dealing with:

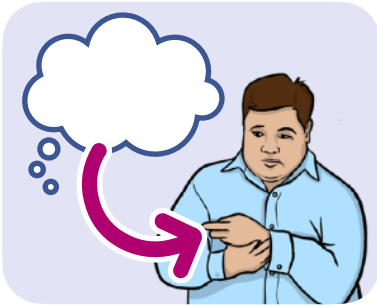


- Very difficult feelings, or



- Difficult things that have happened to them, like bullying.

Some young people have also said self-harm is a way for them to:



- Turn thoughts and feelings into something more real.



- Feel in control of themselves.



- Punish themselves.



Some young people who self-harm may be **suicidal**.

This is when someone wants to die and may try to take their own life.



But most young people who self-harm are not suicidal.

# How do I know when my self-harm is getting very dangerous?



It is important to understand that sometimes self-harming can accidentally lead to death.



For example, you may take too much medication by accident or lose too much blood by accident.



Your self-harm may be getting very dangerous if:

- You are not able to take a break from self-harming.



- You are self-harming after drinking alcohol or taking illegal drugs.

Your self-harm may also be getting very dangerous if:



- You are self-harming when nobody else is around to give you medical help if needed.



- Other problems you are having are getting more difficult to manage too.



- Your self-harm injuries need medical treatment more often.



- You are getting involved in dangerous situations because of self-harming.



- Your usual way of self-harming is not enough to manage your feelings anymore.



# How do I stop or manage my self-harm?



It can be hard to talk to others about self-harm.

People often hide that they are self-harming because they are embarrassed.



But you do not need to be embarrassed about self-harm.



Getting support with the reasons you self-harm will help you to stop or manage self-harming.



You could talk to someone you trust about your self-harm.

You could talk to:



- Someone in your family.



- Your school's nurse.



- Your doctor or another health professional.



We understand this may be scary.



You could write your feelings down if you find it hard to speak.



Lots of young people start to feel better after they have talked to someone about their self-harm.

Whoever you talk to will be able to:



- Listen to you without judging you.

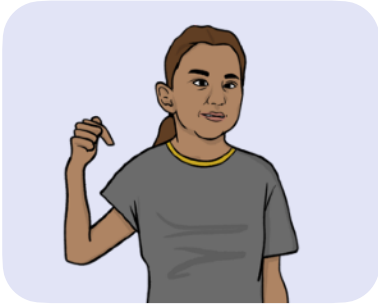


- Help you plan how to manage your self-harming and think about how you can do it less.



- Get you the support you need.

# What can I do to manage my self-harming now?



As well as talking to someone, there are some other things you can do to manage your self-harming.



Most of these things are other ways of dealing with your feelings, instead of self-harming.

Here is a list of examples of what you could do instead of self-harming when you feel bad:

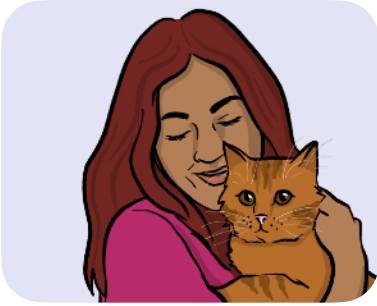


- Going for a walk and being outside.



- Creating something, like drawing a picture or writing in a diary.

If you are feeling bad, you could also:



- Care for your pet.



- Watch TV or a movie you like.



- Have a relaxing bath.



- Join an activity or sports team.



- Be around other people, like hanging out with a friend.

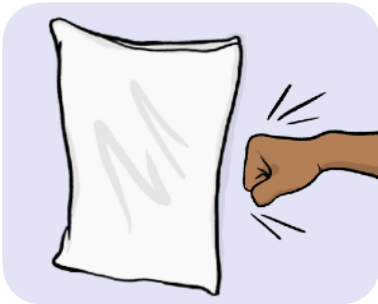
If you are feeling bad, you could also:



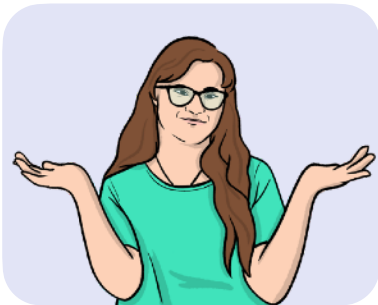
- Exercise or just move your body around in some way.



- Hold an ice cube in your hand really tight until it melts.



- Hit a pillow, punch bag or other soft object.

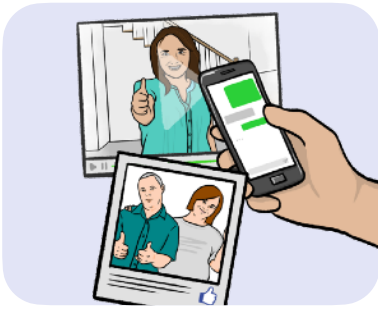


Not all of these work for everyone.



But you can try different things and see what works for you.

# Social media

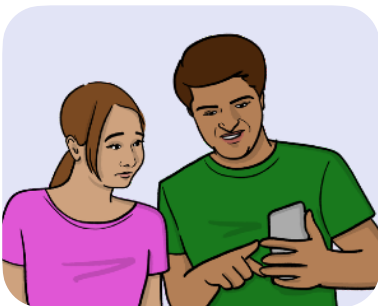


**Social media** is websites and apps like Instagram, X and TikTok.

There are some social media accounts that:



- Share images of self-harm.



- Try to make self-harm seem like a good thing.



These social media accounts are dangerous.



Try to not look at anything online that tries to make self-harming seem like a good thing.



Using social media too much can make it harder to manage your feelings.



So you could try and use social media less in general.



# Where else can I get help?

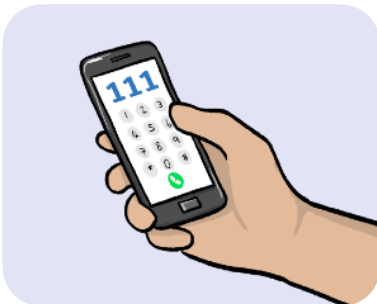
## Emergency help



An **emergency** is when you feel your life is in danger.



In an emergency call **999**.

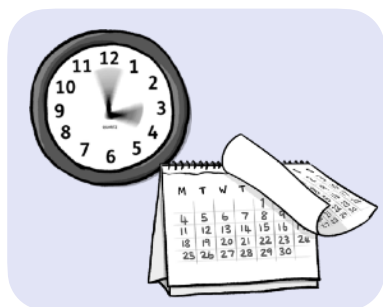


For urgent mental health advice, contact **NHS 111**.

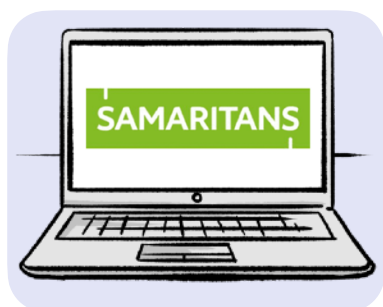
# The Samaritans



**The Samaritans** is a charity that can support you with any worries you have.



They are open 24 hours a day, every day.



You can find out more about the Samaritans here:

[www.samaritans.org/](http://www.samaritans.org/)



You can also call the Samaritans **helpline**: 116 123



A **helpline** is a free service you can contact to get support and advice straight away.

# Childline



**Childline** is a helpline for children and young people.



Childline can give you support and advice with lots of different issues.



You can contact Childline by calling:  
0800 1111



You can also talk to a mental health professional online or send Childline an email by going to the Childline website: [www.childline.org.uk/](http://www.childline.org.uk/)

# Hopeline UK



**Hopeline UK** is a helpline for people under the age of 35 who are having suicidal thoughts.



You can find out more about Hopeline UK here: [www.papyrus-uk.org/papyrus-hopeline247/](http://www.papyrus-uk.org/papyrus-hopeline247/)

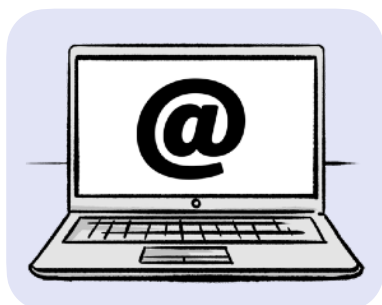
You can contact Hopeline UK by:



- Calling: 0800 068 4141



- Texting: 88247



- Emailing: [pat@papyrus-uk.org](mailto:pat@papyrus-uk.org)

# CALM



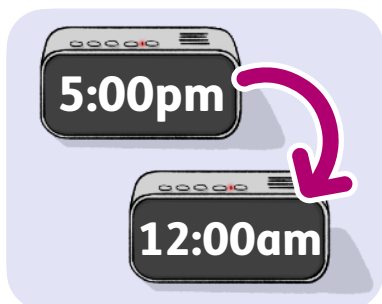
**CALM** is a charity that supports people who are having suicidal thoughts.



You can find out more about CALM here: [www.thecalmzone.net/](http://www.thecalmzone.net/)



You can also call the CALM helpline:  
0800 58 58 58



The helpline is open 5:00pm until 12:00am, every day.

# SHOUT

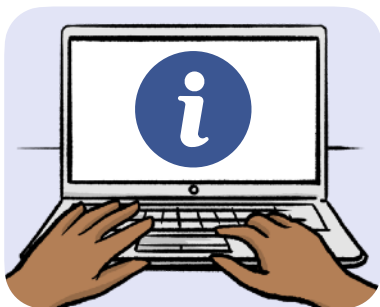


**SHOUT** is a helpline for anyone who needs support.

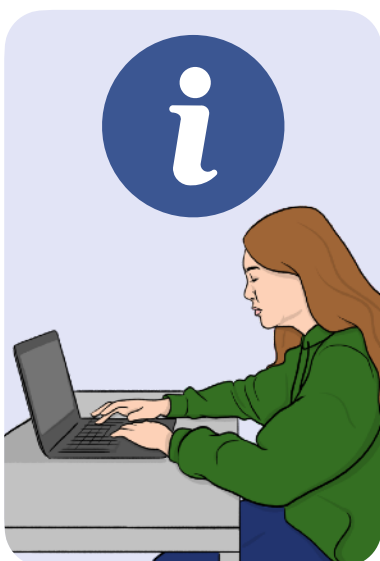


You can text the SHOUT helpline: 85258

## Helpful websites



There are lots of websites that can give you information about self-harming and how to manage it.



Here are some you could take a look at. Please note that Kooth and Qwell are only available in certain areas:

- [www.kooth.com](http://www.kooth.com)
- [www.qwell.io](http://www.qwell.io)
- [www.sppcm.co.uk](http://www.sppcm.co.uk)
- [www.harmless.org.uk](http://www.harmless.org.uk)
- [www.selfharm.co.uk](http://www.selfharm.co.uk)