



Breakaway

Recognizing Self Harm

Policy Owner:	Ranbir Sidhu (Registered Manager)
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Policy Summary:

Regulations 12,14,17,21,23,34,38,40. Regulations of the Children's Homes Regulations 2015 including the Quality Standards

Breakaway Children's Home defines; Self-harm refers to deliberate self-injury without suicidal intent. It can include cutting, burning, scalding, banging, self-hitting, self-slapping, hair-pulling, skin-picking, self-poisoning, or inserting objects into the body. While harmful, behaviours such as alcohol or drug misuse, eating disorders, unsafe sex, or reckless driving are not typically classified as self-harm.

Self-harm may serve as a coping mechanism for overwhelming emotions such as anger, sadness, guilt, fear, or low self-worth. Young people who have experienced trauma, abuse, or rejection may use self-harm as a way to express pain or regain a sense of control.

Staff should focus on supporting the young person's self-worth by highlighting their strengths and positive attributes.

Response to Self-Harm:

- If self-harm is suspected or identified, follow any strategies outlined in the young person's Placement or Care Plan.
- If no plan exists, take reasonable measures to reduce or prevent the behaviour, such as: Increased supervision, Removing items that could be used to self-harm

As a last resort, contacting emergency services

Any suspicion of self-harm must be reported to the child's social worker, and a risk assessment should be completed. If needed, a strategy should be developed and included in the Placement Plan to address and manage the behaviour appropriately.

We must try to use alternatives / therapeutic strategies to support the young person such as:

- Hitting a punch bag to vent anger and frustration.
- Hitting pillows or cushions or having a good scream into a cushion or pillow.
- Going for a walk with staff, all other forms of exercised to release adrenaline.
- Keeping a diary.
- Breakaway staff must update Risk Assessment.
- Taking part in art work session, play dough or other activities to help divert stress or upset.

If necessary, specialist advice or support should be sought from the children's mental health team [CAHMS](#)

Notifications of Minor or Non Persistent Self Harming

Minor or non-persistent self-harming should be notified to the Manager at the first opportunity; the management team will decide whether to inform the relevant social worker, parents, and other professionals.

Notifications of Serious or Persistent Self Harming

Serious or persistent self-harming must be notified immediately to the Manager and the relevant Social Worker notified within 1 working day - the social worker should be consulted and consideration given to whether a young person's Protection Referral should be made and a protection referral plan set in place.

Recording and Review

- All self-harming must be recorded in the Daily Log and relevant young person's Daily Record.
- An Incident Report must also be completed.
- If First Aid is administered, details must be recorded.
- Add this to 'Worries and concerns' sheet to monitor the patterns

The young person's Care Plan should be reviewed with a view to incorporating strategies to reduce or prevent future incidents, personal risk assessments, guidelines and support with providing a safe place for the young person to talk about their feeling can actually reduce ,distress, and may decrease the likelihood that self harm self-harm romanticised in their minds.