



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



A hands-on approach to help children in Slough be
..... Safe, Secure and Successful

Breakaway Children's Home defines; self-harm refers to the deliberate attempt to physically injure oneself without causing death. This can include self-mutilation (e.g. cutting behaviours), self-poisoning, burning, scalding, banging, and hair-pulling, self hitting, self slapping, self skin picking etc.

Although clearly damaging, alcohol and drugs misuse, eating disorders, unsafe sex and other excessively risky behaviour, such as dangerous driving, are not generally classified as self-harm.

Self harm is a broad term, people may injure or poison themselves by scratching, cutting, or burning skin, by hitting themselves against objects, taking a drug overdose, or swallowing or putting things inside themselves.

These responses may help someone with feelings that threaten to overwhelm them, painful emotions such as rage, sadness, emptiness, grief, self-hatred, fear, loneliness, and guilt.

For young people who have suffered abuse, trauma and rejection they may feel that the only way to deal with how they are feeling is to self –punish themselves to try and gain some control over their life.

We must keep emphasising all the positive aspects of a young person's life to help develop and support their sense of self-worth.

If a young person is suspected or found to be self-harming, the strategies that should be taken are those determined by any existing plan, for example, in the young person's **Placement Plan /Care plan**

If no plan or strategy exists, all reasonable measures should be taken to reduce or prevent continuation of the behaviour.

This may include providing additional supervision, confiscation of materials that may be used to self-harm or, as a Last Resort, use of calling for assistance from the emergency services.

If there is any suspicion that the young person may be involved in self harming, the social worker must be informed and a risk assessment undertaken with a view to deciding whether a strategy should be adopted to reduce or prevent the behaviour. That strategy should be included in the young person's Placement Plan.

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 Unit 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.

The young person's Placement 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.