

Supporting a child who has self-harmed:

a guide for professionals that work in non-healthcare settings in Surrey

Treat the person with respect, dignity and compassion, with an awareness of cultural sensitivity

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Step 1 Assess the severity of the injury

Is urgent treatment needed?

If yes: Address any immediate physical health needs; keeping any wounds clean to avoid infections.

If necessary, call 111 or 999.

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Step 2 Connect, Listen and talk

Identify an appropriate member of staff to carry out the following steps (e.g. Designated Safeguarding Lead), and keep a record of proceedings.

1. Connect with the child about what is going on for them.

Notice the child's emotional and mental state and level of distress. Focus on what's causing their feelings rather than the self-harm itself.

2. Listen non-judgementally

to work out the best course of action. Work collaboratively with the child to ensure that their views are taken into account when making decisions.

3. Talk to the child about how to inform parents / carers and agree how this will be done

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Step 3 Assess further concerns

Are there any immediate concerns about the child's safety?

If yes: Seek advice from a healthcare professional or social care practitioner, which may include referral to a healthcare or mental health service (see Appendix B: Crisis Lines and Safeguarding).

Are there any safeguarding concerns?

If yes: Respond to safeguarding issues such as indicators and or disclosures of abuse or neglect and make onward safeguarding referrals (see Appendix B: Crisis Lines and Safeguarding).

Is there a need to refer the person to a specialist mental health service or Emotional Wellbeing being service for assessment?

If yes: Use the [Continuum of Support Matrix](#) alongside the [Continuum of Support guidance](#) to determine the appropriate referral pathway. The [C-SPA Child Protection Consultation Line](#) provides advice, support and signposting to the most appropriate service to meet the needs of the child.

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Step 5 Sources of additional support

Ensure that the child is aware of sources of support (see Appendix C: Resources for Children and Families) and is able to seek help promptly.

Consider if close friends / peer group also need support (see Appendix B: Crisis Lines and Safeguarding).

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Step 4 Does the child have a safety plan?

This can be established by contacting Mindworks (see Appendix B: Crisis Lines and Safeguarding).

If yes: Work collaboratively with the child to discuss, review and implement the safety plan, taking into consideration the child's strengths, protective factors and the network around them. Seek consent to involve relevant professionals and parents/carers.