

Self-harm

Please note, this is a sensitive topic that impacts many people. If you find that this has caused you any upset or distress, please stop and seek appropriate support or feel free to reach out to the Safeguarding team.

Safeguarding support options

Ways to access support if you are worried for yourself or someone else:

- Call us on 07808 050273 or email safeguarding@qa.com
- Complete a [Safeguarding Self-Referral Form](#) if the concern relates to you.
- Complete a [Safeguarding Referral Form](#) if you are worried about someone else.

2025



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What is self-harm?

Self-harm describes any behaviour where someone causes harm to themselves, usually to help cope with difficult, overwhelming or distressing thoughts and feelings. It most frequently (but not limited to) takes the form of cutting, burning or non-lethal overdoses. However, it can also be any behaviour that causes injury - no matter how minor, or high-risk behaviours

Self-harm is also known as “non-suicidal self-injury” (NSSI) which is defined as deliberately injuring oneself without suicidal intent.

Some people have described self-harm to:

- Express something that is hard to put into words
- Turn invisible thoughts or feelings into something visible
- Change emotional pain into physical pain
- Reduce overwhelming emotions or thoughts
- Have a sense of being in control
- Escape traumatic memories
- Have something in life that they can rely on
- Punish themselves for their feelings and experiences
- Stop feeling numb, disconnected or dissociated
- Express suicidal feelings and thoughts without taking their own life.

The self-harm cycle



How do people self-harm?

There are lots of different forms of self-harming. Some people use the same one all the time, other people hurt themselves in different ways at different times. Ways people self-harm can include:



- Cutting - using sharp objects to intentionally injure the skin
- Poisoning - consuming harmful substances to hurt oneself
- Over-eating or under-eating including engaging in cycles of bingeing and purging to cope with emotions
- Exercising excessively - using extreme exercise to punish or harm the body.
- Biting - inflicting pain by biting oneself
- Picking or scratching at your skin
- Burning skin - deliberately applying heat or chemicals to cause burns.
- Hitting - striking oneself or objects (e.g., walls) to induce pain or injury
- Misusing alcohol, prescription and recreational drugs
- Pulling hair - repeatedly pulling out hair, which can lead to bald spots and physical pain.
- Having unsafe sex - engaging in high-risk sexual behaviour as a form of self-harm.

Activity – Video

1. What were some of the factors that made Ashley James turn to self-harm?
2. What were the support mechanisms that helped Ashley overcome her problems?



[Ashley James: I self-harmed as a teen because I was "slut-shamed"](#)

Support and further information:

[Self-harm](#) | [Advice for young people](#) | [Get help](#) | [YoungMinds](#)

Calm Harm

A free app providing support and strategies to help you resist or manage the urge to self-harm.

Can be downloaded from [Google Play](#) or [App Store](#).

Tellmi

Formerly known as MeeToo. A free app for teenagers (11+) providing resources and a fully moderated community where you can share your problems, get support and help other people too. Can be downloaded from [Google Play](#) or [App Store](#).

1. Samaritans

Whatever you're going through, you can contact the Samaritans for support. N.B. This is a listening service and does not offer advice or intervention.

Opening times: 24/7 [116123](tel:116123) jo@samaritans.org



Childline

If you're under 19 you can confidentially call, chat online or email about any problem big or small.

[Sign up](#) for a free Childline locker (real name or email address not needed) to use their [free 1-2-1 counsellor chat](#) and email support service.

Opening times: 24/7 [0800 11 11](#)

[Support with self-harm | Shout 85258](#) Shout 85258 free and confidential text support service is there for moments when you are dealing with self-harm and need support to get to a calmer place.

ASSISTline

National helpline offering supportive listening service to anyone throughout the UK with thoughts of suicide or thoughts of self-harm.

Phone: 0800 689 5652

Website: www.spuk.org.uk/national-suicide-prevention-helpline-uk

Further Resources

Visit our learner portal for Information, advice and activities to help prioritise your wellbeing during your apprenticeship programme, including workload management, handling stress, and external support services. [Apprentice learner's portal](#)

Reminder:

For safeguarding support please contact safeguarding@qa.com for further advice and support or make a referral via these links:

- [Staff/Employer/Peer Referral](#)
- [Learner Self-Referral](#)
- [Low level & Behavioural Concern](#)

