

buzz

Manchester  
Health & Wellbeing  
Service



# Keep Safe

Let's talk about self-harm



Produced by buzz Manchester Health & Wellbeing Service  
in partnership with Manchester Primary Care Mental Health Team.  
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[www.buzzmanchester.co.uk](http://www.buzzmanchester.co.uk)

This guide is one of a series about mental health and wellbeing by buzz Manchester Health & Wellbeing Service. You can find more guides at [www.mhim.org.uk](http://www.mhim.org.uk)

'Keep Safe' is about getting support for self-harm or self-injury. They are very common practices and can affect women and men across all ages and cultures.

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## What is self-harm?

Many people describe hurting themselves as a way of dealing with difficult feelings or overwhelming situations.

Often people who self-harm are experiencing extreme distress and self-harm is a way of coping.

People might harm themselves in different ways such as:

- Cutting
- Taking too much medication
- Burning
- Hair pulling
- Excessive scratching
- Hitting themselves

It can be difficult to talk about self-harm with other people but it is important not to suffer in silence. People often hide self-harm because they feel ashamed which can get in the way of asking for help, but self-harm is not something to be ashamed of.

Getting support to manage the reasons for the difficult feelings and discovering different ways of coping can help you to overcome self-harm.



# Getting help

Although an ideal goal might be to stop self-harm completely, it is important to think carefully before 'just stopping' especially if it is helping you to manage distress.

You may want to think about a plan for a gradual reduction, and put in place support for your difficult thoughts and feelings first.

Here are some ideas:

- See your GP for advice and routes to talking treatments such as counselling or Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT)
- Go to A&E for treatment for your injuries
- 42nd Street offer support for self-harm to young people aged 13-25 who have a GP in Manchester, Salford or Trafford. You can find their contact details at the back of this guide
- SHARE is a self-help group supporting people experiencing issues around self-harm. They meet every week and no appointment or referral is needed. You can find more information and contact details at the back of this guide
- Visit [www.mhim.org.uk](http://www.mhim.org.uk) for more services in Manchester

Go to pages 10 and 11 at the back of this guide for more organisations that could help.

# Helping yourself

There are things that you can do to help yourself if you feel the urge to self-harm:

- Talk to someone you trust
- Distract yourself, go out, read or do something else that interests you
- Write a diary about your feelings
- Stay healthy and active
- Keep a good sleep routine
- See friends and do the things you enjoy
- Learn about the 'five ways to mental wellbeing' visit [www.mhim.org.uk](http://www.mhim.org.uk) for more ideas

Begin to understand your triggers and patterns of self-harm. Here are some questions that may help:

- What was happening in your life when you first began harming yourself?
- What seems to trigger the feeling now?
- Are you always at a certain place or with a certain person?
- Do you have thoughts or memories that are too frightening to tell someone?
- Is there anything else you can think of that makes you want to harm yourself?

Write down the answers to these questions in the 'Your ideas' section of this guide on page 9.

Once you understand what is happening to yourself, it may make it easier to explain to other people. Even if you're not sure of the reasons it is important to seek help.

Go to pages 10 and 11 at the back of this guide for more organisations that could help.

“It is difficult  
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## Other sources of help

### Organisations

- **The Samaritans**

They provide emotional support and help in a crisis 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.  
[www.samaritans.org.uk](http://www.samaritans.org.uk)  
Helpline: 116 123

- **CALM**

A helpline for men aged 15-35 feeling depressed or down.  
[www.thecalmzone.net](http://www.thecalmzone.net)  
Helpline: 0800 58 58 58 (open 5pm to midnight, 365 days a year)

- **Women's Self-Injury**

For women of any age affected by self-injury, plus their friends, families and carers.  
[www.selfinjurysupport.org.uk](http://www.selfinjurysupport.org.uk)  
Helpline: 0808 800 8088 (open Tues to Thurs 7pm-10pm)

- **SHARE**

Self-harm awareness and recovery for everyone. A self-help group supporting people who are experiencing issues around self-harm. The group is open to everyone, no appointment or referral needed. It runs every Tuesday 6pm-8pm at the Zion Community Resource Centre, 339 Stretford Road, Hulme, Manchester, M15 4ZY.  
Contact Jane or Steve at [selfhelpselfharmgroup@googlemail.com](mailto:selfhelpselfharmgroup@googlemail.com)

- **42nd Street**

Supporting young people under stress.  
[www.42ndstreet.org.uk](http://www.42ndstreet.org.uk)  
Tel: 0161 228 7321 (open Mon to Fri 9.30am-5pm)  
Email: [theteam@42ndstreet.org.uk](mailto:theteam@42ndstreet.org.uk)  
42nd Street, The Space, 87-91 Great Ancoats Street, Manchester, M4 5AG

### Websites

#### [www.harmless.org.uk](http://www.harmless.org.uk)

A national organisation offering information and support.

#### [www.recoveryourlife.com](http://www.recoveryourlife.com)

An online self-harm support community.

#### [www.nshn.co.uk](http://www.nshn.co.uk)

An online forum for people who self-harm and those who support them.

#### [www.selfharm.co.uk](http://www.selfharm.co.uk)

A safe online space available to inform and support young people who self-harm.

#### [www.healthtalk.org](http://www.healthtalk.org)

This website has information from parents on caring for people who self-harm. A starting point would be to go to the A-Z, select S and then choose 'Self-harm: Parents' experiences'.

### Websites offering support for mental health

#### [www.getselfhelp.co.uk](http://www.getselfhelp.co.uk)

This website offers free Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) self-help information, resources and includes therapy worksheets.

#### [www.llttf.com](http://www.llttf.com)

The 'Living Life to the Full' website is a free, online life skills course. It covers a range of skills to help deal with everyday stresses.

#### [www.mhim.org.uk](http://www.mhim.org.uk)

This is the 'Mental Health in Manchester' website. It has information about mental health issues and there are details of local services. It also includes information in a range of languages, and you can download the full range of self-help guides from this website.

#### [buzzmanchester.co.uk](http://buzzmanchester.co.uk)

buzz Manchester Health & Wellbeing Service are experts in health improvement and self-care offering one to one support and training for a range of health and wellbeing issues.

#### [www.cci.health.wa.gov.au](http://www.cci.health.wa.gov.au)

This website features free online self-help modules and resources.

#### [ecouch.anu.edu.au](http://ecouch.anu.edu.au)

E-couch is a free interactive self-help program. It covers a range of topics. These include modules for depression, anxiety and worry.

#### [moodgym.anu.edu.au](http://moodgym.anu.edu.au)

Moodgym is a free online self-help program. It covers a range of skills to help prevent and deal with depression.

#### [www.rcpsych.ac.uk](http://www.rcpsych.ac.uk)

This is the 'Royal College of Psychiatrists' website. It is an online mental health resource.