

Let's Talk: Self-injury



Covid-19 has had an impact on the lives of children, young people and families in Essex. Self-injury has been identified as an increasing concern for all ages.

If you are worried about a child or young person self-injuring, there are things you can do to help.

If you are noticing any changes from a child/young person's presentation, **be curious with the family** to find out more. Remember to discuss confidentiality agreement and boundaries with the pupil before having conversations with them.

Look

- Are there signs of repeated or ritualistic self-injury?
- Are there signs of scratches, bites, scabs and bruises?
- Are there signs of scold and burn marks or cuts?
- Are they wearing clothes specifically to cover up?
- Are they seeking to control aspects of their life?

Listen

- To the story about the injury
- To the account from another person describing the injury
- For indicators of stress, hopelessness and/or anger
- Distorted views about self-image and relationships

Say

- "I've noticed.. and I'm wondering what's happening?"
- "Let's think about this together."
- "Help is available for you."

Do

- Basic first aid
- Offer emotional support, let them know you care with regular check-ins
- Think with the child/young person about distraction and calming techniques e.g. music, breathing exercises, writing their thoughts down
- Make reasonable adjustments to the school day for the child/young person, so they feel supported through this difficult period in time
- Follow your policies and procedures for Safeguarding

Signpost

- Self-harm management toolkit: <https://bit.ly/3vq8ULL>
- GP or NHS 111
- Essex Wellbeing Service 0300 303 9988 (for education staff and families)
- Papyrus <https://www.papyrus-uk.org/>
- EWMHS EP helpline: <https://bit.ly/38vdNZm>

Essex promotes the values of Trauma Perceptive Practice (TPP) in all that we do:

Compassion & Kindness

Hope

Connection & Belonging

Other topics available in this series of posters:

**Disordered Eating, Loneliness & Isolation
and Social, Emotional and Mental Health Pillars.**

If you found this poster useful and would like to propose more themes to add to the range, please get in touch: semhstrategy@essex.gov.uk



Essex County Council