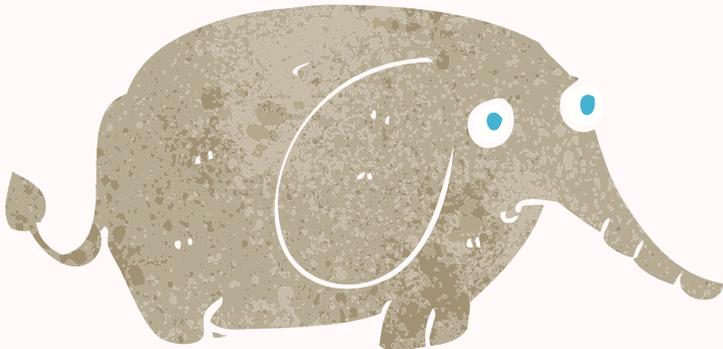
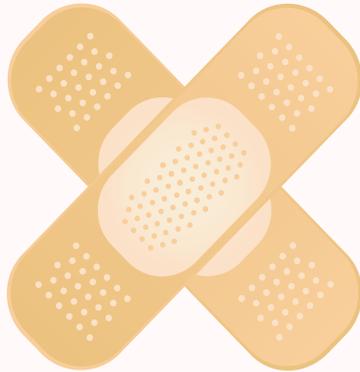


# SELF- INJURY



# WHAT IS SELF-INJURY?

The act of deliberately harming one's own body, without intending to commit suicide, e.g. cutting, burning/abrasions, biting, scratching, head banging, excessive body piercing.



## FUNCTIONS OF SELF-INJURY

- Relieve or control negative emotions
- Feel connected to reality
- Reduce suicidal urges
- Cry for help
- Regain self-control
- Self-punishment
- Distract from problems

## CYCLE OF SELF-HARM

Self-harm can keep occurring in teenagers as it helps to reduce negative emotions

### Negative emotion

e.g. low mood,  
frustration,  
anxiety



Self-harm



### Negative emotion

reduced



Feel relieved

The sense of relief trains the brain to revert to self-harm the next time negative emotions arise. Over time, self-harm becomes an automatic response. Using different ways to manage emotions can break this cycle!

## WHAT CAN I DO INSTEAD?



**Wait 20 minutes** when you get the urge

- distract yourself by watching TV, doing housework, or preparing something to eat

### Change your surroundings

- leave the place you usually self-harm at
- go outside when you get the urge

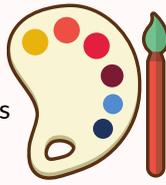


### Replace the sensation

- rub an ice cube across your skin
- take a cold shower
- draw on your skin with a marker pen
- snap a rubber band on your skin

### Express your feelings

- start a journal
- paint, draw or write poems
- okay to cry!



### Self-soothing and calming

activities to manage emotions

- listening to music
- petting or cuddling a pet
- taking a warm shower
- light exercise



### Connect with others

- talk it out with a trusty friend/family member
- make plans with friends

## SOME INFORMATION FOR PARENTS...

"It's just teenage angst!"



One main cause of self-injury is an **invalidating environment**. This means that a child is not assured that their emotions are valid, accepted, and worthy. Instead, emotions may be dismissed as "no big deal".

This makes a child unable to understand or manage their emotions, causing them to express themselves in unhealthy/extreme ways.

## SIGNS OF SELF-INJURY

- Wearing long sleeve-shirts/long pants even in **hot weather**
- Unexplained **wounds or scars**
- Wounds that don't seem to heal
- **Frequent injuries** that are brushed off as "accidents"
- Sharp objects **hidden** in their bag



### DON'T

**Ignore the problem** or think that it will go away on its own

**Confront** your child or **panic** even if you are feeling upset or worried

**Judge or criticize:** This can trigger more self-injury instead

Give them an **ultimatum** or make **demands**

### DO

Keep an eye out for **signs of self-injury**

**Show concern calmly and privately** about what you noticed

**Offer to listen** and see things from **their perspective**

**Give them time** to learn healthier ways to manage their emotions

# IPMDA

**Integrated Programme for Management of Depression in Adolescent**

## **DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGICAL MEDICINE**

University Medicine Cluster  
National University Hospital

5 LOWER KENT RIDGE ROAD, SINGAPORE 119074

TEL (65) 6779 5555      FAX: (65) 6779 5678

[www.nuh.com.sg](http://www.nuh.com.sg)

Company Registration Number: 198500843R

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