

Here are some other sources of support:

Samaritans, tel: 08457 909090, website: [www.samaritans.org](http://www.samaritans.org)

NHS Direct, tel: 0845 4647, website: [www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk](http://www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk)

Childline, tel: 0800 1111, website: [www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)

NSPCC, tel: 0808 800 5000, website: [www.nspcc.org.uk](http://www.nspcc.org.uk)

BEAT, tel: 0845 634 7650, website: [www.b-eat.co.uk](http://www.b-eat.co.uk)

Young Carers Net, website: [www.youngcarers.net](http://www.youngcarers.net)



Monster artworks by [billiambabble](#)

# nshn

The National Self Harm Network



# Advice for young people

**Contact us at:**

NSHN, Po Box 7264, Nottingham NG1 6WJ

Email: [info@nshn.co.uk](mailto:info@nshn.co.uk)

Website & Support Forum: [www.nshn.co.uk](http://www.nshn.co.uk)

A registered charity number: 1106336

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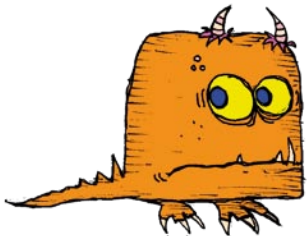


Everyday we encounter a number of thoughts, feelings and emotions. Sometimes there are situations in our lives that make these thoughts, feelings and emotions negative and at times distressing. These situations could be linked to difficulties in family life, upsetting relationships, troubled friendships, exam stress, and bullying behaviour, among others.



Being able to show how we feel, share our thoughts, express emotions and talk about things that are troubling us is not always easy. Holding in powerful thoughts, feelings and emotions such as guilt, anger, frustration, and self hate can be too much to bear. At times people may turn to themselves and their own bodies to express how they feel. This is usually called self harm which means anything we do to ourselves knowing it could cause damage and pain.

Self harm can become a way for people to cope with things that are happening and how those things make them feel. Once this is the case it can be hard to feel that anything other than self harm will help. But there are other ways to cope and other ways to express thoughts, feelings and emotions that are healthier and more effective.



Whilst the urges to self harm can be very strong distracting yourself from these thoughts can help to keep you occupied whilst the strong feelings pass. Here are a few ideas that might help: (For a full list see the NSHN distraction sheets. You can also download these at [www.nshn.co.uk](http://www.nshn.co.uk))

- Listen to music
- Painting, drawing, colouring
- Sport/Exercise (Football, running, walking, skipping)
- Telephone a friend or helpline
- Popping bubble wrap
- Draw on yourself with a non-permanent red marker pen.



Talking to someone can really help but can be very hard to do. If the things we need to say are very personal or scary it can be difficult to find someone we trust. Friends can be good to talk to but at times it is easier to talk to someone who is less personally involved in your life. Teachers, G.P's and counsellors can be good sources of support. Talking isn't the only way to say what you want to say and you could consider writing things down.



However if you are under the age of sixteen these people may not be able to keep everything you tell them confidential. If they feel you are a danger to yourself or to others, they may have to share the information with others. Often the people they may also tell can really be of help to you. If you are worried about them telling others it's an idea to ask what they may do before you say anything. Try not to let this put you off approaching them though as sometimes just starting a little general conversation can make you more confident to say more or approach other people you trust.

If you don't feel ready to talk then there are other ways through which you could express how you feel such as writing a diary, creative writing, poetry or art. Music can be a very helpful way to show how you feel. You could write a song yourself or find some lyrics that seem to say what you can't. You could also write about how you feel in an online forum, such as [www.nshn.co.uk/forum](http://www.nshn.co.uk/forum) Here you can be anonymous and share exactly how you feel and what you are thinking in a safe environment with people who understand and that may be going through the same as you.

