

# Information for parents and carers: Mental health and wellbeing

City of Bradford MDC

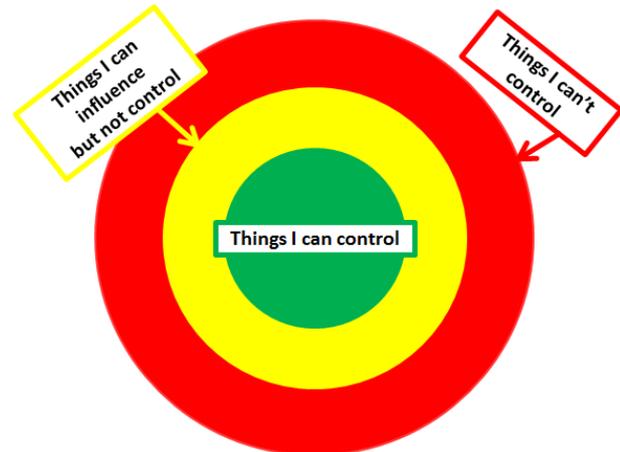
[www.bradford.gov.uk](http://www.bradford.gov.uk)

As part of the Mental Health in Schools Strategy, three assemblies have been developed with the aim of opening up conversations about mental health. By normalising the feelings that young people experience growing up, we hope to empower them by helping them to understand what's happening.

This information leaflet follows on from the assembly about self-harm. For primary school children, the focus is around mental health and wellbeing rather than self-harm itself. We talked about how to look after ourselves when things become difficult and seem overwhelming.

## Key points for parents and carers:

- Self-harm is often an expression of being emotionally overwhelmed
- There is a lot of help and support available if you are worried about your child
- Self-harm can be very addictive
- It's important for children to learn how to manage their feelings in a safe, healthy way
- Your child needs to have someone in their life they trust and can talk to
- Self-harm comes in many different forms



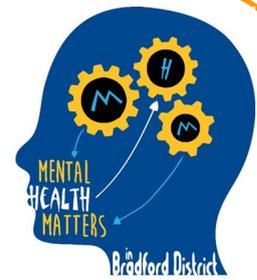
*We talked about different worries and how these can add up to stop us feeling happy, calm and in control.*

*Self-harm often occurs when someone feels overwhelmed. It's important to support children to cope with their feelings in safe, healthy ways.*

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As an adult, overwhelming feelings of low self-esteem, loneliness, sadness, anger, and a lack of control over your life can be difficult to deal with. For children this can be overwhelming too. Some children see self-harming as the best way to cope.

Young people who have struggled with managing their feelings often cite 'not being listened to' or 'not being taken seriously' as having made their experiences more difficult. Making sure your child feels that they can trust you and talk to you will help them to feel valued and to make sense of what's happening in their life.

Equipping children with an understanding of their feelings can help them to recognise and deal with them in a healthy and safe way. Talking to someone, being physically active, listening to music and craft activities are just a few of the many ways to manage these feelings positively.

Self-harm can be complicated and takes many forms; we don't have to understand it fully to help children and young people find other, safer ways of coping with what's going on in their lives.

### **Useful links:**

#### **Young Minds: Parents' helpline**

[http://www.youngminds.org.uk/for\\_parents/parent\\_helpline](http://www.youngminds.org.uk/for_parents/parent_helpline)

#### **Young Minds: Parents worried about self-harm**

[http://www.youngminds.org.uk/for\\_parents/whats\\_worrying\\_you\\_about\\_your\\_child/self-harm](http://www.youngminds.org.uk/for_parents/whats_worrying_you_about_your_child/self-harm)

#### **Information about self-harm**

<http://www.selfharm.co.uk/get>

#### **Talking to your child about mental health**

<http://www.time-to-change.org.uk/parents>