

Student Wellbeing

Self harm



Have you taken part in self-harm behaviour or thought about doing so?

Are you concerned about a student, friend, family member or other person?

Some students may undertake self-harm behaviour. It is a behaviour (not a mental illness) and may be a way that a person copes with distress. It does not necessarily mean they want to die but it usually means they are experiencing emotional pain.

It is important to speak with a trusted person about it and if it becomes repetitive it is recommended you seek professional help.

If you know someone who is undertaking self-harm behaviour try to reassure them that help is available, and that you are willing to help them get professional advice. Be calm and supportive in your interaction with them. Encourage or help them make an appointment with a GP, counsellor (University Counselling is a good place to get advice and support) or contact an organisation such as Headspace.

Giving up self-harm and developing new ways of coping can be difficult. The urge to self-harm is like a wave - it feels most powerful when you start wanting to do it. Once you surf the wave, the urge can fade. You might need to try a range of different alternatives to help you manage your emotions and 'surf the wave'.

Here are a few alternatives you can try rather than harming yourself:

- Try holding ice cubes in your hand or eating a chilli – the cold and heat cause discomfort but are not dangerous to your health.
- Wear a rubber band on your wrist and snap it when you feel the need.
- Use a red pen to draw on the areas you might normally cut.
- Instead of cutting yourself get a piece of fruit, an orange is a good one, and slice it into small cubes of 5mm.
- Work it off with exercise.
- Scribbling with red pen on a piece of paper.
- Try deep breathing and relaxation exercises.
- Try and focus on something around you, something simple, watch it for a while and see if that can distract you from the negative thoughts and uncomfortable feelings.
- You might like to look at a few of our tip sheets to help you develop new coping skills in relaxation, meditation and grounding.

Please do not rely only on this information. Please seek professional help via your GP or University Counselling and Psychological Services on **(02) 4921 6622** or by completing our **online form** via the qr code.

If you need help outside of office hours, you can contact the University's after hours support line, which operated from 5pm to 9am Monday to Friday, and 24 hours on weekends and public holidays:

Phone: **1300 653 007** | Text: **0488 884 165**

Help on campus

After hours crisis support line

Phone: **1300 653 007**

Text: **0488 884 165**

The after hours support line is for University of Newcastle students. It operates from 5pm - 9am Monday to Friday, and 24 hours on weekends and public holidays.

Campus Care

(02) 4921 8600

www.newcastle.edu.au/campus-care

University Counselling and Psychological Services
(02) 4921 6622

www.newcastle.edu.au/current-students/support/personal

Health Service

(02) 4921 6000

www.newcastle.edu.au/current-students/support/personal/health-lifestyle/health-services

Online resources

Beyondblue

www.beyondblue.org.au/the-facts/self-harm-and-self-injury

Headspace

www.headspace.org.au/young-people/understanding-self-harm-for-young-people

Lifeline

13 11 14

www.lifeline.org.au

Orygen Youth Health

www.oyh.org.au/sites/oyh.org.au/files/factsheets/oyh_fs_selfh.pdf

Youth Beyond Blue

www.youthbeyondblue.com/understand-what's-going-on/self-harm-and-self-injury

Apps

The Calm Harm

The Calm Harm app provides tasks to help you resist or manage the urge to self-harm.

www.calmharm.co.uk



Access support and more information

www.newcastle.edu.au/counselling or call (02) 4921 6622

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