

High Risk

- Increasing self-harm, either frequency, potential lethality or both.
- Situation felt to be causing unbearable pain or distress.
- Frequent suicidal thoughts, which are not easily dismissed.
- Specific plans with access to potentially lethal means.
- Evidence of current mental illness.
- Significant drug or alcohol use.

Action

- Ease distress as far as possible.
- Empathic listening.
- Joint problem solving to resolve difficulties.
- Review safety plan.
- Discussion with parents/carers or other significant figures.

- Involve GP for possible referral to Tayside self-harm nurses and/or;
- Seek CAMHS referral.
- Consider consent issues for referrals.
- Consider support for others who know about the self-harm (peers/parents).
- Consider increasing levels of support/professional input.
- Link person to existing resources.
- Monitor in light of level of involvement of other professionals.
- Ensure there is ongoing support for child/young person and review and reassess at agreed intervals.

For more resources have a look at:
www.pkc.gov.uk/youngmentalhealthwellbeing

If you or someone you know would like a copy of this document in another language or format, (on occasion, only a summary of the document will be provided in translation), this can be arranged by contacting the Customer Service Centre on 01738 475000.

You can also send us a text message on 07824 498145.

All Council Services can offer a telephone translation facility.

www.pkc.gov.uk



attempted suicide

If you discover someone in the act of trying to take their own life:

- keep safe - do not endanger your own life;
- if the person's life is in danger, phone 999 immediately or take the person directly to A&E;
- perform first aid if it is necessary and if it is safe to do so;
- remove the means if possible;
- if the person is drinking alcohol or taking drugs, try to get them to stop;
- encourage the person to talk and listen non-judgementally.

If the young person has suicidal thoughts but you do not think they are in imminent danger, phone NHS24 on 08454 24 24 24 (open 24 hours) or contact a local nurse or doctor. Encourage the young person to contact one of the helplines such as the Samaritans (08457 90 90 90), Breathing Space (0800 83 85 87) or Childline (0800 1111).

Self-Harm and Suicide Quick Reference Guide



Low Risk

- Self-harm is superficial.
- Underlying problems are short term and solvable.
- Few or no signs of depression.
- No signs of psychosis.
- Current situation felt to be painful but bearable.
- Suicidal thoughts are fleeting and soon dismissed.

If you are untrained in this area of work, encourage the young person to seek help from a trained worker. Where this is not possible, or if the young person prefers to continue to work with you, consult local specialist staff.

Action

- Ease distress as far as possible.
- Empathic listening.
- Joint problem solving for underlying issues.
- Discuss harm reduction - other strategies used.
- Advise on safety.
- Use safety plan resource.
- Link to other sources of support/counselling.
- Consider support for others who know about the self-harm (peers/parents).
- Make use of line management or supervision to discuss particular cases and concerns.
- Ensure there is ongoing support for child/young person and review and reassess at agreed intervals.
- Some young people find the 'five minute rule' helps - where if they feel they want to self-harm they have to wait 5 minutes. Then another five minutes if possible - 'until the urge is over' (Truth Hurts, 2006).

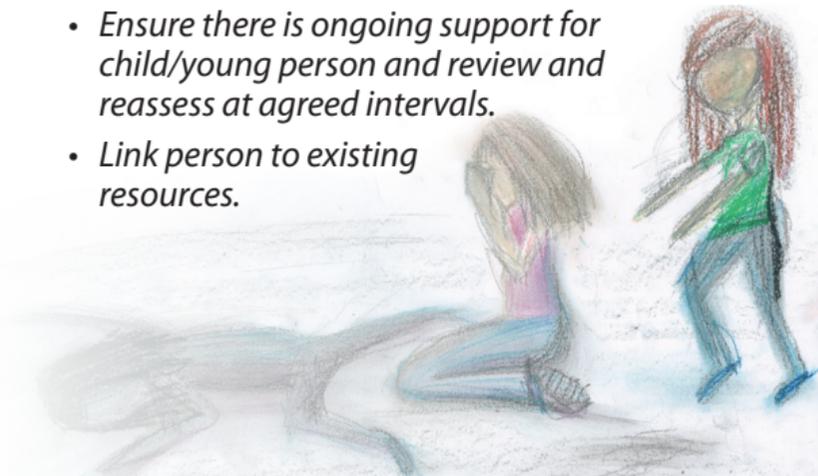
Moderate Risk

- Current self-harm is frequent and distressing.
- Situation felt to be painful, but no immediate crisis.
- Suicidal thoughts may be frequent but still fleeting with no specific plan or immediate intent to act.
- Evidence of current mental health problem, especially depression, anxiety or psychosis.
- Drug or alcohol use, binge drinking.

Action

- Ease distress as far as possible.
- Empathic listening.
- Joint problem solving to resolve difficulties.
- Consider safety of young person, including possible discussion with parents/carers or other significant figures.

- Use/review safety plan.
- Seek specialist advice.
- Discuss with - primary mental health worker, Tayside self-harm nurses, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service, Educational Psychologist or advise talking with GP.
- Consider consent issues for the above.
- Consider support for others who know about the self-harm (peers/parents).
- Consider increasing levels of support/professional supervision.
- Ensure there is ongoing support for child/young person and review and reassess at agreed intervals.
- Link person to existing resources.



self harm
moderate risk

