

## HELPLINE

(01382) 201291

Women are always available, at the following times, to offer support and give information.

**Monday 12pm-2pm**

**Tuesday 10am-12pm**

**Wednesday 7pm-9pm**

**Thursday 2pm-4pm**

**Friday 7pm-9pm**

**Saturday 2pm-4pm**

**24 Hour Answering Machine**

At any other time, messages can be left and will be returned discreetly, as soon as possible.

## ONE TO ONE SUPPORT

Alternatively, an appointment can be made, for day, evening or weekends, to meet, and speak with a worker at the Centre.

Sessions usually last about an hour and we can provide reasonable travel and childcare costs.

## SUPPORT BY LETTER

You can access support by letter. A support worker from the Centre can write discreetly on a regular basis.

Alternatively you can receive support via email.

## SUPPORT GROUPS

The Centre runs support groups for survivors. If you would like to join a support group contact the Centre for more details.

## HELPLINE

- Bristol Crisis Service for Women who self-Harm (0117) 9251119
- Samaritans (National Helpline) (08457) 909090
- Genito-Urinary Clinic (01382) 425542
- Police (Family Protection Unit) (01382) 665117

## LEAFLETS AVAILABLE

- Sexual harassment at work.
- Information for family and friends of survivors
- Information for women who want to volunteer
- Information on the police and courts
- Information for survivors of rape or sexual assault.
- Information for adult survivors of Child Sexual Abuse.
- Information for workers.
- Information on ritual abuse for survivors and supporters.
- Survivors and Flashbacks.
- Survivors and Self-Harm – Self-Injury.
- Resources and Contacts.
- W.R.A.S.A.C Service Information

## HOW TO CONTACT US

Women's Rape and Sexual Abuse Centre  
PO Box 83, Dundee, DDI 4YZ

**Text-phone:** (01382) 226936

**Business Line:** (01382) 205556

**Email:** [wrasac@btconnect.com](mailto:wrasac@btconnect.com)



**WOMEN'S RAPE AND  
SEXUAL ABUSE CENTRE**



**A free and confidential service**

**SURVIVORS AND SELF - HARM  
SELF - INJURY**

## MYTHS ABOUT SELF HARM

### **Self-injury is a failed suicide attempt**

It is a way of coping with life, not a bid to die. Injuries are seldom life threatening. A survivor may want to kill her feelings - not herself.

### **It's attention seeking, ignore it**

Everyone needs attention. For some, self-injury is a desperate physical attempt to draw attention to the mental and emotional pain they are suffering. This should not be ignored, it is important to give attention and listen to what the survivor has to say.

On the other hand many people who self-injure hide their injuries from others. It has far more to do with coping than seeking attention.

The attention that self-injury receives is likely to be negative. Seldom does it lead to helping a survivor feel better about herself or relieving the distress that it caused.

### **Self-injury is a sign of insanity**

This is not true. It is a sign of distress and of someone trying to cope with their life, despite great pain. Many survivors, who self-injure lead successful lives, have careers, partners, family and friends.

### **Someone who self-injures is a danger to others.**

Self-injury is often very private and not openly discussed due to the negative response it receives. Someone who self-harms is no more likely to be a danger to others as anyone else.

## MINIMISING THE HARM

**Avoid drugs and/or alcohol** if you think you are likely to self-harm, so you don't accidentally inflict a more severe wound than you intended.

**Prevent infection** by using something clean when you cut. Never share what you use to self-injure. Try to avoid areas where there are major veins and arteries close to the surface. Make sure your tetanus jabs are up to date.

**Put burns under cold water** for twenty to thirty minutes. Burns and scalds can be more severe than you think - the pain can be far worse later.

Cling film, loosely covering the burn, can act as a temporary dressing. You can buy creams, sprays etc. for burns from your chemist.

**Be prepared.** Have dressings and antiseptics ready so you can care for your injuries. You can learn more about looking after wounds, cuts, burns etc. from a first aid book, someone you trust who knows about first aid or perhaps the nurse in your doctor's practice.

**Call an ambulance** if blood is spurting from a wound. Wrap the injury in a clean towel or tea towel and try and stay calm.

**Clean any cuts with gauze swabs,** not cotton wool. Cover with a dry, non-adhesive dressing. It can be useful to keep antiseptic creams, sprays etc. handy. Paper stitches can be used to close superficial wounds.

## SEEKING MEDICAL ADVICE

**Severe injuries.** If any of your cuts are gaping and deep you will need medical attention. Try to keep the injured part raised and apply pressure until you get to hospital, to reduce the bleeding. You should also seek medical attention for burns larger than a fifty pence piece, or that have penetrated deep into the skin.

**Infection.** If cuts or burns become infected it is important to get medical treatment or you may become seriously ill.

**Shock** can occur if you lose a lot of blood (i.e. spurting or blood running continuously) or if you have severe or large burns.

Call an ambulance if this happens.

**Poisoning.** If you drink bleach or any other corrosive liquid you can be in danger of poisoning. In these circumstances you must get medical advice or attention immediately.

**Overdoses.** If you think you may have taken too many drugs (prescribed or illegal) it is important to get medical help quickly, particularly with drugs such as paracetamol.

## GET SUPPORT

We are a women only service that provides a free and confidential service to women who have been raped or sexually abused at any time in their lives (all our workers have training on self injury). You can contact our Centre via our Helpline (number and opening times on back of leaflet). Remember you are not alone - there are many survivors who use self-harm as a way of coping.