

WELLNESS WEDNESDAY

MARCH 23, 2022

Understanding Self-Injury



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This week for Wellness Wednesday we will explore self-injury. This topic can be disturbing; however, understanding self-injury can encourage empathy and raise awareness.

SELF-INJURY AWARENESS

March marks self-injury awareness month. Self-harm can be difficult to understand and as a result, people can be judgmental or react negatively. Raising awareness is so important for our communities, as it encourages empathy for those struggling with mental illness. It is vital to understand why individuals may turn to self-harm behaviors, especially during times of isolation, and increase in depression and anxiety symptoms.

WHAT IS SELF-HARM?

Self-harm is a symptom of a deeper issue. Self-harm communicates that an individual is struggling to manage their emotions. Self-harm describes behaviors that include cutting, burning, picking, etc. Self-harm can also describe other behaviors. The objective is gaining in behaviors that help temporarily manage symptoms.

UNDERSTANDING SELF-HARM

Individuals may engage in self-harming behaviors for the following reasons.

- ✓ To help manage unbearable emotions and symptoms
- ✓ To help regain a sense of feeling (for those experiencing numbness)
- ✓ To help relieve stress and pressure
- ✓ To help feel in control
- ✓ To reenact a trauma in an attempt to resolve it
- ✓ To protect others from emotional pain



SIGNS OF SELF-INJURY

For family and friends, especially those who have loved ones suffering some type of mental illness, it's important to watch for signs and patterns of self-injury.

These might include:

- ✓ Arms, legs or other parts of the body that show signs of consistent injury, such as scabs, bruises, burns and cuts
- ✓ Overdressing in particularly warm weather, wearing, for example, coats, long sleeve shirts or pants
- ✓ Repeatedly making excuses for why or how they got injured
- ✓ Avoidance, isolation and withdrawal from activities and relationships they previously enjoyed





Support Matters!

It may be distressing to hear that someone you love is engaging in self-harm. The list below provides some ways to respond if someone reveals they are engaging in this. How you respond truly matters.

1. Don't Panic- learning that someone you know or love has been or is currently self-harming can be a shock. You do not have to fix the problem. Sometimes just being there and being nonjudgmental is plenty.

2. Listen- Allow the person to speak with interruption or judgement. For a lot of individuals who self-harm, self-harming is the only way they know how to express emotion. So for someone to open up to you about their self-harming behaviors is a huge breakthrough!

3. Help Them Find Support- Offer to help the individual find support in the area if they are open to it. Finding support options can be overwhelming for them and your assistance may be just what they need.

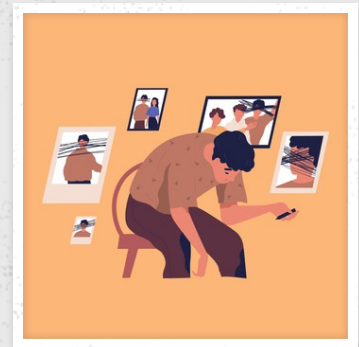
4. Be There for the Long Haul- Don't expect a quick fix. Some people self-harm for years as a way of dealing with difficult emotions or situations. Most people don't want to be defined by their self-harm, so keep on being a friend to them as normal too.

5. Look After Yourself- It's important to look after yourself when helping a loved one who is self-harming. Recognizing the need to set boundaries on what you can offer and getting help for yourself is important.

BEHAVIORS COMMUNICATE

Sometimes we struggle to be vulnerable about what is happening for us. We instead engage in behaviors that show what we are experiencing.

For example, someone that feels alone may engage in risky relationships to feel connected, or someone that feels too much may use drugs or alcohol to numb their feelings. Human nature is to survive and that can mean a variety of things.



Vital Resources

IF YOU OR SOMEONE YOU KNOW IS SUFFERING FROM SELF-HARM BEHAVIORS,
CONTACT THE RESOURCES BELOW.

Self-harm Crisis Hotline

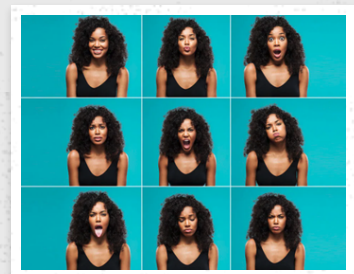
1-800-273-TALK(8255)

National Suicide Hotline

1-800-273-8255

Crisis Intervention of Houston

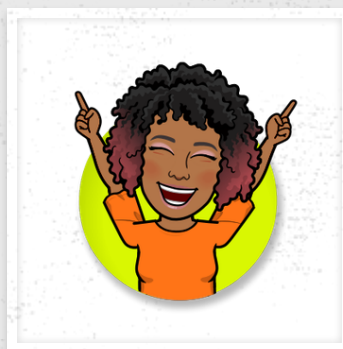
(832) 416-1200





EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Galena Park ISD Employee Assistance Program



EAP ENGLISH
FLYER

CHECK THESE
OUT!

EAP SPANISH
FLYER



CLICK TO SUBMIT



Chat with a PRO



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Wellness Wednesday

