Important messages from your Safeguarding team

What is self-harm?

Self-harm is the term used to describe when someone deliberately hurts themselves as a way of dealing with their emotions by, cutting, scratching or burning themselves, causing bruising to their body, taking overdoses of tablets or pulling their own hair. This is by no means an exhaustive list.

Why do people self-harm?

Self-harm is a coping strategy that helps people to manage their emotional hurt or stress. It is important to remember that it is not attempted suicide, but it is something that people do in order to survive. Often people self-harm to try and feel as if they have more control over their emotions, or to get immediate relief from high levels of distress. Sometimes people harm themselves because of self-hate, or because they want to punish themselves.

Self-harm is very common behaviour and affects around one in 12 people with 10% of 15-16 year olds self-harming.

How can I help someone who is self-harming?

There are lots of things you can do to make a difference to someone you know who self-harms. Your attitude and how you relate to them is one of the key things that can help them feel supported. Here are some things to keep in mind:

- ➢ Try to be non-judgemental
- ➢ Let the person know that you are there for them
- ➢ Relate to them as a whole person, not just their self-harm
- ➢ Try to have empathy and understanding about what they are doing.
- ➢ Let them be in control of their decisions
- ➢ Offer to help them find support (see Useful info)
- ➢ Remind them of their positive qualities and things they do well
- ➢ Try to have honest communication, where you take responsibility for any fears you have

Useful info:

Mind   Self harm- NHS   NSPCC   RETHINK   Harmless

Email us at safeguarding@gloscol.ac.uk (Monday to Friday, 08:30-17:00)