

Risk factors for self-harm among young people

Individual

- Depression and anxiety
- Drug and alcohol misuse
- Low self-esteem
- Poor problem solving skills
- Impulsiveness
- Feeling hopeless
- Having ADHD or ASC
- Past or present sexual or physical abuse
- Trauma
- Neglect
- Identifying as LGBTQA+

Familial

- Parental mental health disorders
- Drug or alcohol misuse within the family
- Family history of self-harm or suicide
- Parental conflict or separation
- Being in the care system
- Domestic violence/abuse
- Sexual abuse, trauma
- Conflict with parents
- Parents' unreasonable expectations or pressure

Social

- Bullying/cyberbullying
- Homophobic/gender bullying or discrimination
- Peer rejection
- Difficult peer relationships
- Having friends who self-harm
- Being influenced by social media, websites or self-harm of well known figures in the media
- School pressure

Many factors can increase the risk of young people self-harming. However, it is important to remember that young people exposed to multiple risk factors may not necessarily self-harm. The opposite is also true; young people who seemingly have no risk factors may be self-harming.