

How do schools address self-harm in adolescents?

6 December 2018

In a survey-based study of 153 secondary schools in England and Wales, staff stated that adolescent self-harm is an important concern, but emotional health and wellbeing is the primary health priority for schools. In the *Child & Adolescent Mental Health* study, counselling was seen as the most useful school-based provision to respond to adolescent self-harm.

Only 53 percent of schools had received staff training on self-harm, with only 22 percent of these schools rating the adequacy of training as high. Key barriers to addressing adolescent self-harm in schools were lack of time, lack of resources, lack of [staff training](#) and time, and fear of encouraging self-harm amongst adolescents.

"Adolescent [self-harm](#) is a major concern in the UK, and our study reports the extent to which schools are involved in managing incidents of disclosure or detection. Rather worryingly, school staff are not yet receiving comprehensive training to support students. We need to do more to address this, particularly given some schools' fear of encouraging students to engage in self-harming practices," said lead author Dr. Rhiannon Evans, of Cardiff University, in the UK. "There are also positive findings from the study, however, not least the extent to which schools see themselves as an appropriate site to provide prevention and intervention activities."

More information: Rhiannon Evans et al, Adolescent self-harm prevention and intervention in secondary schools: a survey of staff in England and Wales, *Child and Adolescent Mental Health* (2018). [DOI: 10.1111/camh.12308](https://doi.org/10.1111/camh.12308)

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