

Statement Answers

1. A youngster taking 10 vitamin tablets has no intent to die. FALSE — the amount has no relation to the intent.

2 SELF-HARMING IS ATTENTION SEEKING BEHAVIOUR. FALSE — Self-harm is a way of expressing very deep distress.

3 YOUNG PEOPLE WHO SELF-HARM WANT TO COMMIT SUICIDE. UNSURE — People often think that self-harm is closely linked to suicide however, the vast majority of people who self-harm are not trying to kill themselves. It is their way of coping with difficult feeling and circumstances. It is estimated that for every one young person who has committed suicide, there are between 40 and 100 who have self-harmed. This supports the view that self-harm in most cases does not lead to suicide. However, adults/parents need to be mindful that those who have self-harmed are 100 times more likely than the general population to die by suicide in the following year. The risk increases for those who self-harm repeatedly.

4 ABOUT 1 IN 10 YOUNG PEOPLE WILL SELF-HARM. UNSURE — It is true that studies suggest about 1 in 10 young people will self-harm but it is difficult to provide accurate numbers on how widespread self-harm is among young people. This is because definitions of self-harm vary, so cases may be reported differently, but also because many cases of self-harm probably go unreported.

5 SELF-HARM IS ADDICTIVE FALSE — However, young people who self-harm may discover that inflicting pain changes their mood, which then may become habit-forming. Cutting, for example, releases endorphins, which produce brief feelings of calm, and serotonin, which is mood-lifting.

6 HAVING A FRIEND WHO SELF-HARMS OR BEING PART OF SOME YOUTH SUB-CULTURES GROUPS (EMO, GOTH, PUNK) WILL INCREASE CHANCES OF THE YOUNG PERSON DOING IT AS WELL. TRUE — It is held that self-harm is more common in some youth sub-

cultures. This could be explained by young people emulating cultural icons or peers who self-harm. Alternatively, it could be explained by selection, in which young people with a particular propensity to self-harm are attracted to the subculture.

7 THE MORE SERIOUS THE INJURY, THE MORE SERIOUS THE PROBLEM. FALSE — The nature and severity of the self-harm does not reflect the nature or severity of the problem.

8 RECENT STATISTICS SHOW THAT YOUNG MEN WHO SELF-HARM NOW OUTNUMBER YOUNG WOMEN. FALSE — It is more common in young women than young men. However, it is important to note that males may engage in different forms of self-harm that could be easier to conceal, potentially accounting for the degree of apparent difference between genders.

9 SELF-HARM IS DUE TO THE IMPACT THE INTERNET HAS ON YOUNG PEOPLE. FALSE — Self-harm has been kicking around much longer than the Internet. People have struggled to express how they feel or come to terms with difficulties since the dawn of time, not just post-www. There are, however, unregulated websites and mainstream forums that permit that stuff to happen. Those sites fuel self-harm and make it harder for those affected to enter recovery. They create a community where people feel they belong, but the underlying message isn't one of recovery, but one of just accepting that self-harm is as good as life is going to get — THAT is the damaging message. THAT is what makes a website cross the line from helpful to dangerous.

10 SELF-HARM IS MORE WIDESPREAD TODAY THAN 30 / 40 YEARS AGO. UNSURE — Reports indicate that the number of young people disclosing self-harm has risen steadily since the mid-1990s, although heightened awareness of the issue by both young people and professionals may be responsible for some of the increase.

11 A YOUNG PERSON TAKING 30 PARACETAMOL CLEARLY HAS INTENT TO DIE. FALSE — As in Q1 the amount has no relation to the intent.

12 SELF-HARM IS MAINLY DONE BY YOUNG PEOPLE (12-18 YEARS). FALSE — People of all ages self-harm. It becomes more common after the age of 16, but is still prevalent among teenagers.

13 IF YOU HAVE A YOUNG PERSON THAT SELF-HARMS THEN YOU SHOULD LOCK AWAY ALL POTENTIALLY HARMFUL SUBSTANCES AND THE POTENTIAL CUTTING INSTRUMENTS. TRUE — In environments in which a young person is not supervised all medicines and potentially harmful substances should be locked away. Knives, razors and other potential cutting instruments should be removed or kept in a place where adults can monitor their use.

14 YOUNG PEOPLE WHO SELF-HARM HAVE MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEMS. FALSE — Self-harm in itself is not a diagnosis. It is not a mental disorder, it is an emotional difficulty. So they may be distressed but may not reach the criteria for a mental health diagnosis. Some people who have a diagnosed mental health condition may have associated self-harming behaviours as part of the diagnosis. Studies have shown that a high prevalence of self-harm was found among children suffering from depression, conduct disorder and anxiety disorder. However, for the vast majority of young people who self-harm, it is an expression of difficult or unbearable emotions.

15 SELF-HARM IS OFTEN AN ATTEMPT TO DRAW ATTENTION TO UNDERLYING DISTRESS/CRISIS. TRUE — As in Q2, self-harm is a way of expressing very deep distress

Answer sourced from the following websites: www.selfharm.co.uk www.samaritans.org www.nice.org.uk www.mentalhealth.org.uk/publications/truth-about-self-harm www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK56385/