

Self-Harming Behaviours Policy



The Hazard – Self-Harming Behaviour

Self-harming behaviour (also known as ‘deliberate self-harm’ or DSH) is when someone deliberately hurts or injures themselves. This can include:

- Cutting;
- Taking overdoses of tablets or medicines;
- Punching oneself;
- Throwing one’s body against something;
- Pulling out hair or eyelashes;
- Scratching, picking or tearing at one’s skin causing sores and scarring;
- Burning;
- Inhaling or sniffing harmful substances; and
- Engaging in risk taking behaviours.

It is important to understand that people who self-harm are not attention-seeking and it is often a coping mechanism for dealing with anxiety or painful feelings.

Self-harm and suicidal thinking can go together, and self-harming behaviour can precede a suicide attempt although there is not necessarily a link between the two. People who self-harm usually do so without any intention of killing themselves.

Lavalla Catholic College’s Policy

Lavalla Catholic College is committed to providing an environment that reduces the risk of self-harming behaviours by students.

We are focused on the identification, early intervention and prevention of self-harming behaviours amongst our students. It is our policy that:

- We provide an environment which promotes student well-being through general education programmes that increase self-esteem and address adolescent issues;
- We implement policies and practices that promote emotional well-being and provide students with access to counsellors;
- Our staff are trained to recognise signs of self-harming behaviours and are able to identify at-risk students;
- We establish procedures for responding to incidents of self-harm and suspected self-harm amongst our students; and
- We provide education, support and resources for staff, parents, students and the wider College community on the issue to assist in managing deliberate self-harm.

Implementation

This policy is implemented through a combination of:

- Staff training and supervision
- Maintenance of the student's Health Support Plan;
- Effective incident notification procedures;
- Effective communication procedures with the student's parents / guardians; and
- Initiation of corrective actions where necessary.

Related Policies

Accident Management Policy

Eating Disorders Policy

Medical Records (Student) Policy

Medication Administration Policy