

# Responding to a self-harm incident that requires immediate emergency assistance

Some instances of self-harm require urgent medical attention. In the school environment, **an urgent response** is required, if the student:

- has taken an overdose or consumed poison – see: [Victorian Poisons Information Centre \(131 126\)](#)
- is confused, disoriented or unconscious
- has bleeding that is rapid or pulsing.

Some actions outlined below may occur simultaneously by different staff members.

## Actions required

- Call an ambulance (**000**) immediately.
- Take all reasonable steps to **ensure the safety of all concerned**, including requesting that the student hand over any instrument that may assist them to self-harm. Do not try to disarm the student against their will – this may result in you being injured. In the event they refuse, contact the appropriate emergency services to ensure safety of the student and staff. For more information, see: [Restraint and Seclusion: Policy](#).
- **Do not leave the class unattended** to coordinate additional support for the student who has self-harmed. Use the school's existing emergency alert processes (e.g. use your mobile phone to call for help and/or send two other students together to seek help).
- **Do not send the self-harming student anywhere alone.** This includes to the school nurse. If you are on yard duty, **call for help** using your mobile phone or, where this is not available, send **two other students** together to get help from the nurse or another member of staff.
- **Stay with the student** until you secure other adult supervision.
- **Get assistance** to check on the safety and wellbeing of students who may have witnessed or informed staff of the incident.
- **Notify the leadership team.** It is a requirement of the Department that all incidents of self-harm, suicidal ideation and attempted suicides are reported to ISOC **1800 126 126**.
- **Contact parents or carers.** This contact requires sensitivity and compassion. Refer to [Communicating with parents/carers](#) for more information and suggestions regarding how to manage this communication. In most circumstances, a member of the school leadership or wellbeing team will manage this communication.
- **Seek advice and professional assistance** from SSS. Support and advice is also available from [headspace](#), CYMHS or CAMHS. For more information, see: [Child and adolescent mental health services](#).
- Consider a **Worksafe Notification** (13 23 60).
- Ensure there is a **debrief for all staff involved** in responding to the incident and that they are provided with information about self-care and the supports available to them.
- Consider the **post-incident follow-up** that is required, including ongoing support for staff and students.