



THERE ARE SOME IMPORTANT PIECES TO KNOW ABOUT SELF-HARM:

- Self-harm is a coping strategy people use to deal with intense feelings. Pain, intoxication, or risk-taking may help someone process complicated emotions.
- Self-harm is rarely attention-seeking behaviour (most people try to hide it). When folks are open about their self-harm, it's often to seek support or connection.
- Self-harm does not mean someone is suicidal. Self-harm as a coping strategy might be what's keeping someone alive.
- Labelling coping strategies as "healthy" or "unhealthy" further stigmatizes coping behaviours.
- These might be the only coping tools this person can access right now and are what's keeping them here.

HARM-REDUCTION RESOURCES

**Coalition of Harm Reduction
at MacEwan University (CHARM)**
sites.macewan.ca/charm
charm@macewan.ca

Street Works Needle Exchange
Radius Community Health and Healing
(Formerly Boyle McCauley Health Centre)
10628 96 Street NW
780.422.7333 ext. 6 • radiushealth.ca

Alberta Health Services
Harm Reduction Services
albertahealthservices.ca/info/
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**The Queer & Trans Health
Collective (QTHC)**
Peer N Peer Substance Use Program
QTHC, #202, 10526 Jasper Ave NW
ourhealthyeg.ca/peer-n-peer
587.599.7290 • connect@peernpeer.ca

To access additional support resources or
to book an appointment with a trained
Peer Support volunteer visit:

samu.ca/peersupport



samu.ca/peersupport

@SA_macewan /SAMacewan
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The Students' Association of
MacEwan University (SAMU) is a
non-profit organization working
independently from MacEwan
University to support students.

BROUGHT TO YOU BY YOUR



STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION

DELVING INTO SELF-HARM & HARM-REDUCTION



Self-harm is a coping strategy and
harm reduction is an approach
that encourages well-being and
meets folks where they are at.

PEER SUPPORT

Self-Harm can be any behaviour someone engages in that results in harm to their person. Learning about Self-Harm and Harm-Reduction can help us support ourselves and others.

RECOGNIZING SELF-HARM

We might not recognize that the person smoking a cigarette outside the café or sitting at the bar drinking beer may be self-harming. Self-harming behaviours are more common than we often realize.

A COUPLE OF EXAMPLES OF SELF-HARM INCLUDE:

- Self-Injury (cutting, burning, picking, pinching, biting, etc).
- Substance use (alcohol, drugs, smoking cigarettes, self-poisoning, etc).
- Excessive exercise (running, lifting, swimming, etc).
- Gambling or reckless behavior (unprotected sex, running into traffic, etc).

WHAT IS HARM-REDUCTION?

Harm-reduction is an approach to addressing self-harm that doesn't demand individuals abstain from the behaviour but instead meets people where they are at. Harm-reduction aims to provide supports that keep an individual as safe and healthy as possible while they engage in self-harming behaviour.

We don't always realize it, but many engage in harm-reduction everyday.

SOME EXAMPLES OF EVERYDAY HARM-REDUCTION INCLUDE:

- Hard hats and steel-toed boots on construction sites.
- Seat belts in vehicles.
- Wearing sunscreen while outside.
- Wearing oven mitts when taking hot items out of the oven.
- Wearing condoms (internal or external) when having sex.

If we or someone we know is self-harming, we can support them by listening to them and discussing ways they would feel comfortable making that behaviour safer.

SOME EXAMPLES OF HARM-REDUCTION FOR INDIVIDUALS CAN INCLUDE:

- Drinking a lower alcohol percentage type of alcoholic beverage.
- Getting a Narcan kit from a pharmacy if they use opiates (Naloxone is an opiate reversal drug).
- Establishing a check-in person before and after they self-harm so that someone knows they are okay afterwards.
- Getting testing for STDs/STIs and using contraception.
- Getting their drugs tested and using a safe consumption site.
- Using sterile equipment.

