



# LifeSIGNS

Registered Charity No. 1114661

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Male SI Factsheet 2007 V1

## Self Injury Guidance & Network Support

**Self injury is a coping mechanism. An individual harms their physical self to deal with emotional pain, or to break feelings of numbness by arousing sensation.**

### Bottled Up and Coping Alone

People cope with things in different ways, and how we express ourselves depends on how our families and the culture we grow up in, expects us to behave.

The stereotype of the 'strong silent male' still has some sway in many societies, and so we can understand that men of all ages prefer to keep things to themselves, cope alone, and just 'deal with things' rather than seek help, or even talk about stuff.

### Hurting to Cope

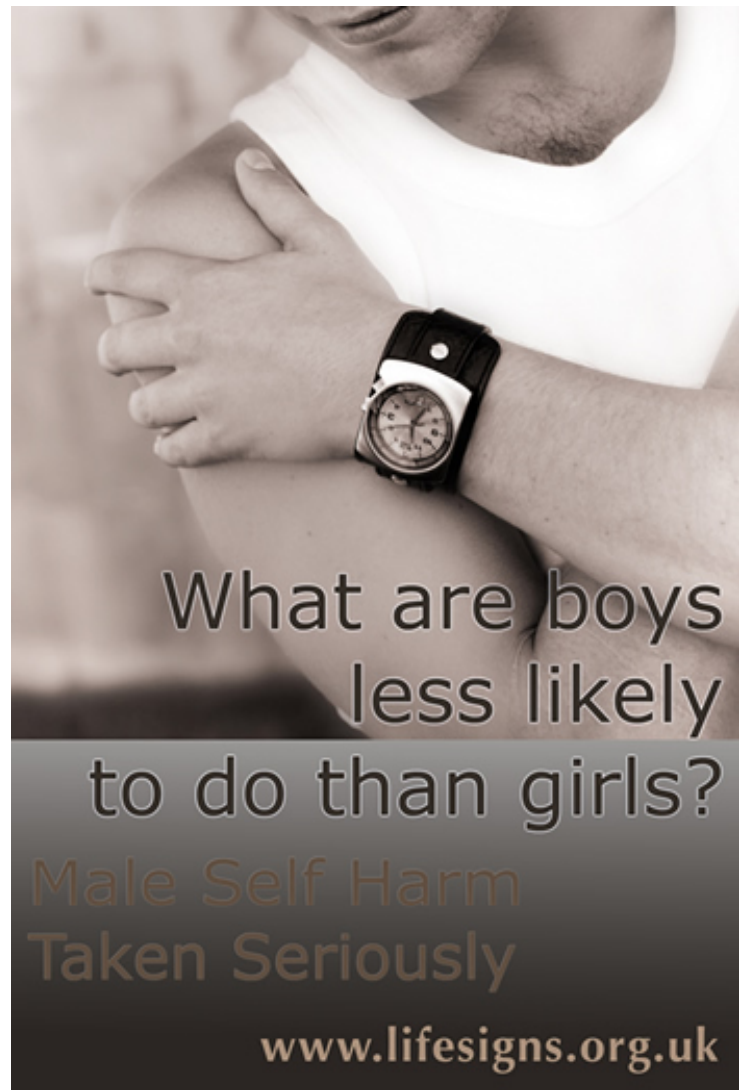
Hurting yourself to distract yourself from how you're feeling is something that a lot of men do. It's easy to ignore self-injury and your emotions and claim that *it's not a problem*, but self-injury should be a clear message that **something** is going wrong.

Self-injury is not usually indicative of suicidal feelings, and it's certainly not done to seek attention – it's a private and personal coping mechanism; it's something a person relies on in periods of deep unhappiness and stress.

Physical pain can be easier to deal with than emotional pain; it can seem 'more real', so a cycle of self-harm is created.

LifeSIGNS recognises that self-injury is a way of coping with distressing experiences and difficult emotions; we also appreciate how bewildering self-injurious behaviour may seem to other people. We encourage people to explore alternatives to self-injury and to come to understand what drives them to hurt themselves, but we never judge a person or tell them what to do.

**Punching a wall in frustration is a form of self-injury – but it's only a major concern if you're frequently punching things.**



**"Guys are less likely to talk about their emotions, or their SI."**

Guys may feel awkward discussing their emotions, and so avoid getting help.

**You** can break the cycle and get in control of your life; you may benefit from talking to someone, or reading more information about self-injury and coping mechanisms from [www.lifesigns.org.uk](http://www.lifesigns.org.uk)

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