



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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**FOR MORE INFORMATION**  
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## **March is Self-Harm Awareness Month**

Cutting may be the best-known type of self-harm, but there are others

### **(Dixon, IL)**

March is **Self-Harm Awareness Month**. There are countless ways that people deal with pain, trauma, mental illness, and the challenges of life. One way that people, especially adolescents and young adults, try to regain control and find release is through physical self-harm. However, this habit can become cyclical and difficult to manage. But there IS hope, treatment for self-harm is available. This is the main message during Self-Harm Awareness Month.

“The **most common form of self-harm is cutting**,” said Sinnissippi Centers President and CEO Stacie Kemp. “Self-Harm **can also include** many other methods such as head-banging/hitting your head, burning, scratching, or pulling hair. It **also includes doing things that cause internal damage**, such as ingesting poisonous or toxic substances, or consuming too much alcohol or drugs.” It’s important to know that **this isn’t usually an attempt at suicide** but rather a way to deal with emotional distress and release painful emotions.

“Self-harm may provide a sense of release or control for a moment, but it typically leads to negative feelings and shame, causing a **destructive cycle**,” said Kemp. “It’s a **pattern** that can be difficult to get out of if someone becomes dependent on self-harm.”

### **Some signs of self-harm are external and more obvious, such as:**

- Scars, often in patterns
- Fresh cuts, scratches, burns, or other wounds
- Burns created from excessive rubbing
- Missing patches of hair

### **Other signs can be less obvious or physical but still point to self-harm:**

- Wearing long sleeves or pants in hot weather
- Keeping sharp objects around for no apparent reason
- Reporting accidental injuries often
- Having difficulty with relationships
- Acting behaviorally and emotionally unstable or impulsive
- Saying they feel hopeless or worthless

“Self-harm is not uncommon and is treatable, help is available,” said Kemp. “Reach out to 988 if you are in crisis. For treatment and support you can contact Sinnissippi Centers for an initial assessment.” Sinnissippi Centers’ offices can be reached at 815-284-6611. You can visit online at [www.sinnissippi.org](http://www.sinnissippi.org) for more information.

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