

17 October 2011

Re: Self-Harm Information Session for Parents & Teachers

Dear Principal,

I would appreciate your adding the attached notice to your next school newsletter and passing copies along to your guidance counsellor and student services office.

Among today's troubled youth, self-harm (often referred to as "cutting") has taken on new significance, greater prevalence, and even a sub-cultural dimension. For parents and school professionals, this often spooky and unsettling phenomenon puzzles and frustrates. Self-harm affects a student's academic life, along with their emotional and family lives. Many youth who self-harm connect with the self-harm subculture at school. Thus, schools are uniquely equipped but also socially responsible for helping youth and their families connect with services.

As a psychologist, I am looking for ways to reach youth and families who struggle with this problem. As self-harm is generally misunderstood, I am hoping I can enlist your help to educate parents and teachers. Learning about how our natural reactions to self-harm can actually worsen the problem is the first step to better identification.

I am also available to present teacher inservice on this topic. I have consulted widely to schools throughout my career and am happy to equip staff with the knowledge to address many psychologically- and learning-based difficulties. I welcome suggestions or conversations to determine the nature of a need or goal within your school.

While I would love to also present to students, care is needed to ensure that the youth are addressed in very large groups. This will prevent youth who self-harm from "social networking," as some youth belong to a subculture glamourizing self-harm behaviour. Thus, inviting only students who are interested to a smaller meeting may worsen the problem.

Feel free to contact us with any questions, comments, or proposals. I routinely tailor my outreach to individual school needs & look forward to working together to address an important source of underachievement.

Regards,

Tanya Spencer

Tanya D. Spencer, Ph.D., R.Psych.(AB), C.Psych.(ON)
Psychologist and Senior Associate

Encl.



Psychological Services

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Dear Student Services coordinator,

I would appreciate your adding the attached notice to your next school newsletter and passing copies along to your guidance counsellor and student services office.

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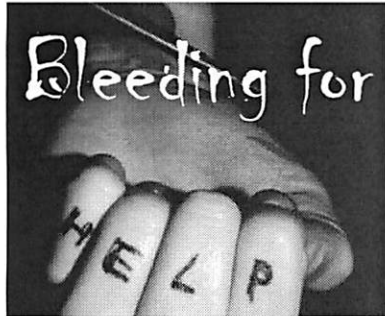
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Regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Tanya D. Spencer".

Tanya D. Spencer, Ph.D., R.Psych.(AB), C.Psych.(ON)
Psychologist and Senior Associate

Encl.



DO'S & DON'TS OF TEEN SELF-HARM: INFORMATION FOR PARENTS & TEACHERS

Dr. Tanya Spencer, registered clinical psychologist, invites parents and teachers to an evening of information about youth self-harm. Learn:

- How does self-harm differ from suicide?
- Why self-harm is not just a manipulative “cry for help”
- What is the youth self-harm subculture? When does “emo” mean “emo?”
- How our natural reactions to self-harm can worsen outcomes
- How parents and teachers can detect and help a youth who self-harms
- When is professional intervention advised?

Attending this session will not only help parents and teachers become informed, but also serve as a gateway to any needed services. Time for discussion and questions is included.

When: 6:30-8:00 p.m. – Thursday November 17 **or** Wednesday November 30, 2011
Where: ARCH Psychological Services, 39 Commonwealth Building, 9912 – 106 Street

Free registration: Please call 428-9223 to reserve your seat or register online.

For more information, to reserve online, and Dr. Spencer’s background, please visit
<www.archpsychological.com>.