

Where Do I Start If My Child Shows Self-Injury?

Taken from the Cerebra Guide on Self-Injury

It is important to establish what the cause of self-injury is for a child with intellectual disability before moving on to intervention. A useful starting point for establishing cause is the **PEACE** acronym. To find out more about any of these points, please scan the QR code to access a Cerebra Guide on Pain, Sleep, Cognitive Differences or Anxiety.

P

PAIN

Children with intellectual disability are more likely to experience **health problems, pain and discomfort**. Consult your child's GP, particularly if the self-injury has begun **recently and suddenly**, and seems unrelated to the **environment** around the child.

E

ENVIRONMENT

What happens before and after self-injury can help us to understand the meaning of behaviour. **ABC charts** can assess of the cause of self-injury, including its **Antecedents** (what happens before the self-injury), **Behaviours** (the self-injury) and **Consequences** (what happens after the self-injury).

A

ANXIETY

Children with an intellectual disability may have **difficulties or differences communicating** their internal feelings. As such, **anxiety may present as changes to behaviour**, such as an increase in self-injury.

C

CONTROL

Having **difficulties controlling or stopping and starting behaviour** is another important factor in understanding children's self-injury. Children who show **impulsive behaviour** may **show self-injury more easily** in the presence of a trigger, and **find it more difficult to stop** their self-injury once it gets going.

E

EXHAUSTION

Sleep disruption or poor sleep may be a cause of self-injury. Exhaustion can make children **more likely to show self-injury**.



Scan this QR code to check out our full guide on self-injury. You will also find a list of other guides that may be useful.