

# SCHOLARLY PAPER REVIEW

---

Wood, Susannah M., & Craigen, Laurie M. (2011). Self-Injurious Behavior in Gifted and Talented Youth: What Every Educator Should Know. *Journal for the Education of the Gifted*, 34(6), 839-859.

## SUMMARY

---

- Self-injury includes a wide variety of behaviors where one causes harm to him- or herself; no universal definition
- Deliberate harm without suicidal intent
- Self-injury coincides with a great deal of shame
- Gifted students do not seek help because they feel guidance is for academically challenged
- Variety of reasons and factors influence self-injury decisions

## SUMMARY

---

- **Reasons**
  - Increase feelings of “being real”
  - Create tangible physical pain when psychological pain is overwhelming
  - Prevent conscious traumatic memories
  - Effect support and concern from others
  - Self-control
  - Punish self for “bad” feelings and beliefs
  - Release of negative emotions

## SUMMARY

---

- **Factors**
  - **Environmental:** family, peers
  - **Psychological:** grounding, sense of control, adaptive to failure, release tension of psychological pain, coping, prevent suicidal ideation
  - **Biological:** neurotransmitters suppress and regulate emotions, induce pleasure, coping to regulate emotions
  - **Life Factors:** stressors, bereavement, illness, gifted characteristics, academic pressures

## SUMMARY

---

- Self-injury rarely isolated
- May indicate psychological/emotional problems
- SIB and suicide are distinct phenomena
  - Intent for each is different
  - **SIB:** release tension
  - **Suicide:** escape overwhelming feelings; end life
  - Can coexist; SIB students 18 times more likely than general population to complete suicide
- New thinking: SIB and suicide exist on opposite extremes of same spectrum of self-harm

## SUMMARY

---

- **Best Practices:**
  - Educator awareness
  - Do not categorize SIB individuals
  - Students are unique individuals
- **Mental Health Issue or “School Issue”**
  - Affects school and environment
  - School facilitates SIB contagion
  - SIB not done in isolation (substance abuse, aggression)

## SUMMARY

---

- **Assessment & Intervention**
  - Establish protocols
  - Confidentiality with minors who self-injure
  - Establishes agreement among staff
    - Recognize warnings
    - Distinguish SIB from suicide
    - Reporting requirements while protecting privacy
    - Treatment referrals
    - Critical response when immediate attention required

## SUMMARY

---

- **Identify SIB student**
  - Teacher may be first point of contact
  - Be prepared for student reveal
  - Recognize warning signs:
    - Unexplained cuts or injuries
    - Excuses for cuts
    - Changes in mood
    - Concealing clothing in warm weather
    - Unusual possession of sharp objects or razors
    - Defensive about SIB topic
    - Isolation or detached
    - Substance use or abuse



## SUMMARY

---

- **Communication with SIB student**
  - Nonjudgmental, empathic
  - Willing to learn about student (hobbies, family, life events, accomplishments)
  - Identify wounds and pain
  - Express assistance and concern
  - **LISTEN** without judgment
  - Teacher needs to be aware of their own reaction
  - Focus on *the student*

## SUMMARY

---

- **Ethical Considerations**
  - Legal responsibilities (mandated reporters)
  - Discuss responsibility to take action and warn
  - Uncertain guidelines about SIB reporting
  - Be transparent with student
  - Accompany student to school counselor
  - Consult with professional
  - Professional assumes role to assess and refer to mental health community

## SUMMARY

---

- **Support**
  - If appropriate, school professionals obtain release of information with community mental health treatment
  - Family and student should advocate for teacher involvement in intervention
  - Implement classroom strategies

## SUMMARY

---

- **Intervention**
  - Safety plan, safe people
  - Activities to identify and express feelings
  - A 504 plan for counseling, care, and private time
  - Teach healthy problem solving
  - Maintain impulse-control log; theorize meaning of impulse
  - Education plan that includes support, internships, college
  - Art or visual representation to describe SIB feelings
  - Group counseling with other gifted students

## SUMMARY

---

- **Professional development**
  - SIB is emerging in gifted population
  - Specific training for gifted students who self-injure
  - Cooperative comprehensive training with school counselor or psychologist
  - Collaborate with parents and community resources

## SUMMARY

---

- **Educator self-care**
  - Be aware of own feelings and emotions in response
  - Plan for student disclosure
  - Consult with trusted professional
  - Personal counseling
  - Journaling
  - Time away from building to process experience
- **Conclusion**
  - SIB in gifted students will occur
  - Both a mental health issue and a school issue

## IMPLICATIONS

---

As a Master of Education student in Youth Development Leadership, this paper encourages me to...

- Recognize youth as unique individuals
- Provide appropriate and timely disclosure of reporting requirements
- Be a resource for colleagues with less training
- Expect the unexpected
- **LISTEN**
- Focus on the student

## STRENGTHS

---

- This paper addresses self-injurious behavior from both teacher and student perspectives
- Thorough assessment of student needs and teacher responsibilities
- Focuses on the student
- Encourages team approach in the best interest of the student
- Provides guidance for professional development



## WEAKNESSES

---

- Portrays a sense of “handing off” the student to others for treatment
  - However, does encourage on-going teacher involvement
- Does not clarify how SIB in gifted students differs from other students
- Does not identify potential influence of gifted characteristics on SIB
- Does not address prevention

# EVALUATION

---

This paper is very relevant. A growing number of students are encountering SIB and suicidal ideation. The authors provide details that all teachers should embrace for the safety and well-being of all students, gifted or otherwise. I found the article to be very straightforward. It defines SIB, explains theories as to why students self-injure, identifies reasons and influential factors, and outlines the needs of the student. Teachers are provided with helpful strategies to identify, intervene, and work with students. Through a cooperative approach with school professional counselors and psychologists, a referral to an appropriate community mental health resource can be made to provide the student with the best treatment options. The paper also prepares teachers for an encounter they may otherwise not expect. It encourages collaborative professional development to formulate school policies.

# REFERENCES

---

## **Reviewed Article**

Wood, Susannah M., & Craigen, Laurie M. (2011). Self-Injurious Behavior in Gifted and Talented Youth: What Every Educator Should Know. *Journal for the Education of the Gifted*, 34(6), 839-859.

## **References from Article**

Ackerman, C. M., & Paulus, L. E. (1997). Identifying gifted adolescents using personality characteristics: Dabrowski's overexcitability. *Roeper Review*, 19, 229-237.

# REFERENCES

---

Alderman, T. (1997). *The Scarred Soul: Understanding and ending self-inflicted violence*. Oakland, CA: New Harbinger.

Alsop, G. (1997). Coping or counseling: Families of intellectually gifted students. *Roeper Review*, 20, 28-35.

Austin, A. B., & Draper, D. C. (1981). Peer relationships of the academically gifted: A review. *Gifted Child Quarterly*, 25, 129-133.

Bauman, S. (2008). *Essential topics for the helping profession*. Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon.

# REFERENCES

---

Bourdeau, B., & Thomas, V. (2003). Counseling gifted clients and their families: Comparing clients' and counselors' perspectives. *Journal of Secondary Gifted Education, 14*, 114-126.

Brown, B. B., & Steinberg, L. (1990). Academic achievement and social acceptance: Skirting the “brain-nerd” connection. *Education Digest, 55*(7), 55-60.

Byrne, S., Morgan, S., Fitzpatrick, C., Boylan, C., Crowley, S., Gahan, H., . . . Guerin, S. (2008). Deliberate self-harm in children and adolescents: A qualitative study exploring the needs of parents and caregivers. *Clinical Child Psychology and Psychiatry, 13*, 493-504.

# REFERENCES

---

Clemons, T. L. (2008). Life events. In J. A. Plucker & C. M. Callahan (Eds.), *Critical issues and practices in gifted education: What the research says* (pp. 335-344). Waco, TX: Prufrock Press.

Colangelo, N. (2003). Counseling gifted students. In N. Colangelo, & G. A. Davis (Eds.), *Handbook of gifted education* (3rd ed., pp. 373-387). Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon.

Colangelo, N., & Dettmann, D. F. (1983). A review of research on parents and families of gifted children. *Exceptional Children*, 50(1), 20-27.

# REFERENCES

---

Conterio, K., Lader, W., & Bloom, J. (1998). *Bodily harm: The breakthrough healing program for self-injurers*. New York, NY: Hyperion.

Craigen, L., & Foster, V. (2009). A qualitative investigation of the counseling experiences of adolescent women with a history of self-injury. *Journal of Mental Health Counseling, 31*, 76-94.

Craigen, L. M., Healey, A. C., Walley, C.T., Byrd, R., & Schuster, J. (2010). Assessment and self-injury: Implications for counselors. *Measurement and Evaluation in Counseling and Development, 43*(1), 3-15.

# REFERENCES

---

Craigen, L., & Milliken, T. F. (2010). The self-injury experiences of young adult women: Implications for counseling. *Journal of Humanistic Counseling, Education and Development, 49*(1), 112-126.

Croft, L. (2003). Teachers of the gifted: Gifted teachers. In N. Colangelo, & G. A. Davis (Eds.), *Handbook of gifted education* (3rd ed., pp. 3558-3571). Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon.

Cross, T. (2004). *On the social and emotional lives of gifted children: Issues and factors in their psychological development* (2nd ed.). Waco, TX: Prufrock Press.



# REFERENCES

---

Cross, T. (2007). Self-mutilation and gifted children. *Gifted Child Today*, 30(3), 49-50, 65.

Cross, T., Coleman, L., & Terhaar-Yonkers, M. (1991). The social cognition of gifted adolescents in schools: Managing the stigma of giftedness. *Journal for the Education of the Gifted*, 15, 44-55.

Dai, D. Y. (2008). Thinking and learning styles. In J. A. Plucker, & C. M. Callahan (Eds.), *Critical issues and practices in gifted education: What the research says* (pp. 695-606). Waco, TX: Prufrock Press.

# REFERENCES

---

Derouin, A., & Bravender, T. (2004). Living on the edge: The current phenomenon of selfmutilation in adolescents. *American Journal of Maternal/Child Nursing, 29*, 12-18.

Dixon, F. A., Lapsley, D. K., & Hanchon, T. A. (2004). An empirical typology of perfectionism in gifted adolescent. *Gifted Child Quarterly, 48*, 95-106.

Doctors, S. (1999). Further thoughts on “self-cutting”: The intersubjective context of self-experience and the vulnerability to self-loss. *Psychoanalytic Review, 86*, 733-744.

Dykes, M., Specian, V., Nelson, M., & Gray, N. (2006, July 18). Self-injurious behavior: Characteristics and innovative treatment strategies. *Journal of School Counseling, 4*(15). Retrieved from <http://jsc.montana.edu/articles/v4n15.pdf>

# REFERENCES

---

Ettinger, S. L. (1992). *Transforming psychic pain: The meaning and function of self-injury in women's lives* (Unpublished master's thesis). Smith College School for Social Work, Northampton, MA.

Favaro, A., & Santonastaso, P. (2002). The spectrum of self-injurious behavior in eating disorders. *Eating Disorders: The Journal of Treatment & Prevention*, *10*, 215-225.

Favazza, A. R. (1989). Why patients mutilate themselves. *Hospital and Community Psychiatry*, *40*, 137-145.

Favazza, A. R. (1998). The coming age of self-mutilation. *Journal of Nervous and Mental Disease*, *186*, 259-268.

# REFERENCES

---

Favazza, A. R., & Conterio, K. (1988). The plight of chronic self-mutilators. *Journal of Community Mental Health, 24*, 22-30.

Favazza, A. R., & Rosenthal, R. J. (1990). Varieties of pathological self-mutilation. *Behavioural Neurology, 3*, 77-85.

Fawcett, J. A., Scheftner, W., Clark, D., Hedeker, D., Gibbons, R., & Coryell, W. (1987). Clinical predictors of suicide in patients with major affective disorders: A controlled prospective study. *American Journal of Psychiatry, 144*, 35-40.

Froeschle, J., & Moyer, M. (2004). Just cut it out: Legal and ethical challenges in counseling students who self-mutilate. *Professional School Counseling, 7*, 231-235.

# REFERENCES

---

Goddard, N., Subotsky, F., & Frombonne, E. (1996). Ethnicity and adolescent deliberate selfharm. *Journal of Adolescence*, *19*, 513-521.

Gratz, K. L. (2001). Measurement of deliberate self-harm: Preliminary data on the deliberate self-harm inventory. *Journal of Psychopathology and Behavioral Assessment*, *23*, 253-263.

Grobman, J. (2006). Underachievement in exceptionally gifted adolescents and young adults: A psychiatrist's view. *Journal of Secondary Gifted Education*, *27*, 199-210.

Hackney, H. (1981). The gifted child, the family and the school. *Gifted Child Quarterly*, *25*, 51-54.

# REFERENCES

---

Haines, J., & Williams, C. L. (1997). Coping and problem solving of self-mutilators. *Journal of Clinical Psychology, 53*, 177-186.

Hamacheck, D. E. (1978). Psychodynamics of normal and neurotic perfectionism. *Psychology, 15*, 177-197.

Hawton, R., Rodham, K., Evans, E., & Weatherall, R. (2002). Deliberate self-harm in adolescents: Self-report survey in schools in England. *British Medical Journal, 325*, 1207-1211.

Himber, J. (1994). Blood rituals: Self-cutting in female psychiatric inpatients. *Psychotherapy, 31*, 620-631.

# REFERENCES

---

Hodgson, S. (2004). Cutting through the silence: A sociological construction of self-injury. *Sociological Inquiry, 74*, 162-179.

Kalbfleisch, M. L. (2008). Getting to the heart of the brain: Using cognitive neuroscience to explore the nature of human ability and performance. *Roeper Review, 30*, 162-170.

Keirouz, K. S. (1990). Concerns of parents of gifted children: A research review. *Gifted Child Quarterly, 34*, 56-63.

Kerr, B., Colangelo, N., & Gaeth, J. (1988). Gifted adolescents' attitudes towards their giftedness. *Gifted Child Quarterly, 32*, 245-247.

# REFERENCES

---

Laye-Gindhu, A., & Schonert-Reichl, K. A. (2005). Nonsuicidal self-harm among community adolescents: Understanding the “whats” and “whys” of self-harm. *Journal of Youth and Adolescents, 34*, 447-457.

Levenkron, S. (1998). *Understanding and overcoming self-mutilation*. New York, NY: Norton.

LoCicero, K. A., & Ashby, J. S. (2000). Multidimensional perfectionism in middle school age gifted students: A comparison to peers from the general cohort. *Roeper Review, 22*, 182-185.



# REFERENCES

---

Manaster, G., Chan, J., Watt, C., & Wiehe, J. (1994). Gifted adolescents' attitudes toward their giftedness: A partial replication. *Gifted Child Quarterly, 28*, 176-178.

McAllister, M. (2003). Multiple meanings of self-harm: A critical review. *International Journal of Mental Health Nursing, 12*, 175-185.

Moyer, M., & Nelson, K. W. (2007). Investigating and understanding self-mutilation: The student voice. *Professional School Counseling, 11*, 42-48.

Muehlenkamp, J. (2005). Self-injurious behavior as a separate clinical syndrome. *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry, 75*, 324-333.

# REFERENCES

---

Nock, M. K., & Prinstein, M. J. (2005). Contextual features and behavioral functions of selfmutilation among adolescents. *Journal of Abnormal Psychology, 114*, 140-146.

Onacki, M. (2005). Kids who cut: A protocol for public schools. *Journal of School Health, 75*, 400-401.

Pacht, A. R. (1984). Reflections on perfectionism. *American Psychologist, 39*, 386-390.

Parker, W., & Adkins, K. (1995). Perfectionism and the gifted. *Roepers Review, 2*, 173-175.

Parker, W. D., & Mills, C. J. (1996). The incidence of perfectionism in gifted students. *Gifted Child Quarterly, 40*, 194-199.

# REFERENCES

---

Pattison, E. M., & Kahan, J. (1983). The deliberate self-harm syndrome. *American Journal of Psychiatry*, *140*, 867-872.

Paul, T., Schroeter, M., Dahme, B., & Nutzinger, D. (2002). Self-injurious behavior in women with eating disorders. *American Journal of Psychiatry*, *159*, 408-411.

Peterson, J. S. (2003). An argument for proactive attention to affective concerns of gifted adolescents. *Journal for Secondary Gifted Education*, *14*, 62-71.

Peterson, J. S. (2006). Addressing counseling needs of gifted students. *Professional School Counseling*, *10*, 43-51.

# REFERENCES

---

Peterson, J. S., & Ray, K. E. (2006). Bullying and the gifted: Victims, perpetrators, prevalence, and effects. *Gifted Child Quarterly, 50*, 148-168.

Podovoll, E. M. (1969). Self-mutilation within a hospital setting: A study of identity and social compliance. *British Journal of Medical Psychology, 42*, 213-221.

Psychology Today. (2009). *Find a therapist*. Retrieved from [http://therapists.psychologytoday.com/rms/prof\\_search.php](http://therapists.psychologytoday.com/rms/prof_search.php)

Rao, R. (2006). Wounding to heal: The role of the body in self-cutting. *Qualitative Research in Psychology, 3*(1), 45-58.

# REFERENCES

---

Rimm, S. (2002). Peer pressures and social acceptance of gifted students. In M. Neihart, S. Reis, N. Robinson, & S. Moon (Eds.), *The social and emotional development of gifted children: What do we know?* (pp. 251-266). Waco, TX: Prufrock Press.

Roberts-Dobie, S., & Donatelle, R. J. (2007). School counselors and student self-injury. *Journal of School Health, 77*, 257-264.

Roberts, S. M., & Lovett, S. B. (1994). Examining the “F” in gifted: Academically gifted adolescents’ psychological and affective responses to scholastic failure. *Journal for the Education of the Gifted, 17*, 241-259.

Robinson, N. M. (2002). Individual differences in gifted students’ attributions for academic performances. In M. Neihart, S. Reis, N. Robinson, & S. Moon (Eds.), *The social and emotional development of gifted children: What do we know?* (pp. 61-70). Waco, TX: Prufrock Press.

# REFERENCES

---

Rodham, D., Hawton, K., & Evans, E. (2004). Reasons for deliberate self-harm: Comparisons of self-poisoners and self-cutters in a community sample of adolescents. *Journal of the American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry, 43*, 80-88.

Ross, A. O. (1979). The gifted child in the family. In N. Colangelo & R. Zaffran (Eds.), *New voices in counseling the gifted* (pp. 402-407). Dubuque, IA: Kendall/Hunt.

Ross, S., & Heath, N. (2002). A study of the frequency of self-mutilation in a community sample of adolescents. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence, 31*, 67-77.

Ryan, J., Clemmett, S., & Snelson, A. (1997). Role of a psychiatric liaison nurse in an A & E department. *Accident and Emergency Nursing, 5*, 152-155.

# REFERENCES

---

Schuler, P. (2002). Perfectionism in gifted children and adolescents. In M. Neihart, S. Reis, N. Robinson & S. Moon (Eds.), *The social and emotional development of gifted children: What do we know?* (pp. 71-79). Waco, TX: Prufrock Press.

Self-abuse pervasive in Ivy League. (2006, June). CBS News. Retrieved from <http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2006/06/05/health/printable1680820.shtml>

Shapiro, S. (2008). Addressing self-injury in the school setting. *Journal of School Nursing*, 24, 124-130.

Shaw, N. (2002). Shifting conversations on girls' and women's self-injury: An analysis of the clinical literature in historical context. *Feminism & Psychology*, 12, 191-219.

# REFERENCES

---

Simeon, D., Stanley, B., Frances, A., Mann, J. J., Winchel, R., & Stanley, M. (1992). Selfmutilation in personality disorders: Psychological and biological correlates. *American Journal of Psychiatry*, *149*, 221-226.

Solomon, Y., & Farrand, J. (1996). “Why don’t you do it properly?” Young women who selfinjure. *Journal of Adolescence*, *19*, 111-119.

Stanley, B., Gameroff, M. J., Michalsen, V., & Mann, J. (2001). Are suicide attempters who selfmutilate a unique population? *American Journal of Psychiatry*, *158*, 427-432.

Stone, J. A., & Sias, S. M. (2003). Self-injurious behavior: A bi-modal treatment approach to working with adolescent females. *Journal of Mental Health Counseling*, *25*, 112-125.



# REFERENCES

---

Strong, M. (1998). *A bright red scream: Self-mutilation and the language of pain*. New York, NY: Penguin.

Suyemoto, K. (1998). The functions of self-mutilation. *Clinical Psychology Review, 18*, 531-554.

Suyemoto, K., & MacDonald, M. L. (1995). Self-cutting in female adolescents. *Psychotherapy, 32*, 162-171.

Tieso, C. L. (2007). Overexcitabilities: A new way to think about talent? *Roeper Review, 29*, 232-239.

# REFERENCES

---

Trepal, H. C., & Wester, K. L. (2006, September 5). School counselors and self-injurious behaviors: Assessing perceptions, prevalence, and training issues. *Journal of School Counseling, 4*(18). Retrieved from <http://jsc.montana.edu/articles/v4n18.pdf>

Trepal, H. C., & Wester, K. L. (2007). Self-injurious behaviors, diagnoses, and treatment methods: What mental health professionals are reporting. *Journal of Mental Health Counseling, 29*, 363-375.

Tulloch, A. L., Blizzard, L., & Pinkus, Z. (1997). Adolescent-parent communication in selfharm. *Journal of Adolescent Health, 21*, 267-275.

Van der Kolk, B. A., Perry, J. C., & Herman, J. L. (1991). Childhood origins of self-destructive behavior. *American Journal of Psychiatry, 148*, 1665-1671.

# REFERENCES

---

- Vivekananda, K. (2000). Integrating models for understanding self-injury. *Psychotherapy in Australia, 7*, 18-25.
- Walsh, B. W. (2006). *Treating self-injury*. New York, NY: Guilford.
- Walsh, B. W., & Rosen, P. M. (1988). *Self-mutilation: Theory, research and treatment*. New York, NY: Guilford.
- Webb, L. (2002). Deliberate self-harm in adolescence: A systematic review of psychological and psychosocial factors. *Journal of Advanced Nursing, 38*, 235-244.
- Welsch, S. S. (2001). A review of the literature on the epidemiology of parasuicide in the general population. *Psychiatric Services, 52*, 368-375.

# REFERENCES

---

Wester, K. L., & Trepal, H. C. (2005). Working with clients who self-injure: Providing alternatives. *Journal of College Counseling, 8*, 180-189.

White Kress, V. E. (2003). Self-injurious behaviors: Assessment and diagnosis. *Journal of Counseling and Development, 81*, 490-496.

White Kress, V. E., Drouhard, N., & Costin, A. (2006). Students who self-injure: School counselor ethical and legal considerations. *Professional School Counseling, 10*, 203-209.

White Kress, V. E., Gibson, D. M., & Reynolds, C. A. (2004). Adolescents who self-injure: Implications and strategies for school counselors. *Professional School Counseling, 7*, 195-201.

# REFERENCES

---

White, V. E., McCormick, L. J., & Kelly, B. L. (2003). Counseling clients who self-injure: Ethical considerations. *Counseling and Values, 47*, 220-229.

White, V. E., Trepal-Wollenzier, H., & Nolan, J. M. (2002). College students and self-injury: Intervention strategies for counselors. *Journal of College Counseling, 5*, 105-113.

Whitlock, S., Eckenrode, J., & Silverman, D. (2006). Self-injurious behaviors in a college population. *Pediatrics, 117*, 1939-1948.

Winchel, R. A., & Stanley, M. (1991). Self-injurious behavior: A review of the behavior and biology of self-mutilation. *American Journal of Psychiatry, 148*, 306-316.

Zila, L. M., & Kiselica, M. S. (2001). Understanding and counseling self-mutilation in female adolescents and young adults. *Journal of Counseling and Development, 79*, 46-52.