



# S.A.F.E. ALTERNATIVES®

*Self Abuse Finally Ends*



S.A.F.E. ALTERNATIVES® (Self Abuse Finally Ends), founded in 1986, is an internationally recognized provider of care for clients who engage in non-lethal, repetitive self-injurious behavior. In 2010, S.A.F.E. ALTERNATIVES® partnered with Great Circle to provide comprehensive services to students who self injure. Edgewood Children's Center, a Great Circle agency, has more than 175 years of experience in providing compassionate care and treatment to restore children and strengthen families through intensive therapy, special education, residential treatment, case management and support services. Edgewood is fully accredited by The Joint Commission.

## Who we serve

Candidates for treatment are males and females who desire to change their self-destructive behavior and are capable of handling intensive psychotherapy.

## What programs are available?

- ▶ **S.A.F.E. Intensive**® is a 30-day residential treatment program for clients who engage in repeated self-injurious behavior. A multidisciplinary treatment team uses individual, group and family therapies to support and empower individuals to make healthier choices when dealing with emotional distress.
- ▶ **S.A.F.E. Adolescent Expressions**® is an outpatient day hospital program for adolescents who self injure. This program can be utilized as early intervention for adolescents ambivalent about recovery and school-mandated treatment.
- ▶ **S.A.F.E Choice**® is a weekly outpatient group psychotherapy program that is offered in six-week segments. Appropriate clients are individuals who self injure and want to change the behavior.

## Treatment Philosophy

The S.A.F.E. ALTERNATIVES® philosophy and model of treatment focuses on shifting control to clients and empowering them to make healthier choices, including the choice to not self-injure. The biggest challenges faced when raising or working with teenagers is staying out of the power struggle and convincing a teenager that self-harm behavior is an unhealthy coping mechanism. Many teens have a hard time accepting that their self-destructive behavior is unhealthy and usually only see the intervention as one of “taking something away” that feels good. A fear sets in at the thought that nothing can replace the release that self-injury provides. Due to their belief that there are no other healthy ways to cope, the teenager denies that self-harm is destructive. S.A.F.E. ALTERNATIVES® helps clients understand the consequences of their choices and identify healthier ways to manage their distress.

## What we offer

- ▶ Comprehensive self-injury assessment
- ▶ Individual, family and group therapy
- ▶ Impulse control management
- ▶ Education and support
- ▶ Case management/aftercare planning
- ▶ Financial counseling/insurance assistance

## What is self injury?

Non-suicidal self-injury (NSSI), also known as “cutting”, self-harm or self-abuse is defined as the deliberate, self-inflicted destruction of body tissue without suicidal intent and for purposes not socially sanctioned. Self-injury includes but is not limited to:

- ▶ cutting
- ▶ scratching (breaking skin)
- ▶ ingesting or injecting toxic substances
- ▶ interfering with wound healing
- ▶ burning
- ▶ biting oneself
- ▶ punching self
- ▶ inserting or swallowing objects
- ▶ bruising or breaking bones
- ▶ some forms of hair-pulling

These behaviors, which pose serious risks, may be symptoms of a mental health problem.

*“Educators are often the first adults to know of a child’s self-destructive behavior. Early detection and intervention is key. With your assistance, we strive to help your students become healthy functioning members of society, free of self-destructive behaviors.”*

WENDY LADER, PH.D., M.ED., PRESIDENT & CLINICAL DIRECTOR, S.A.F.E. ALTERNATIVES®

## Warning Signs

- ▶ Unexplained frequent injuries
- ▶ Wearing long pants and sleeves in warm weather
- ▶ Low self-esteem
- ▶ Overwhelmed by feelings
- ▶ Inability to function at work, school or home
- ▶ Inability to maintain stable relationships

## When to Seek Specialized Treatment

- ▶ When outpatient or generalized inpatient therapy has failed to decrease the intensity and/or frequency of the self-destructive behavior.
- ▶ When the student is new to self-injury but the behavior is escalating rapidly and/or dangerously.
- ▶ When the destructive behavior negatively impacts one or more aspects of life (school, work, or relationships).
- ▶ When the student displays an inability to cope with daily stressors without resorting to poor coping skills such as self-injury.
- ▶ When the student has been working in treatment, voices a desire to change, but has been unable to enact any meaningful change in behavior or quality of life.

## Presentations

Presentations ranging from one hour (local presentations) to full day seminars are available. To schedule a presentation for school professionals as part of your staff development requirements, please contact us at 800-DONTCUT® (366-8288) or by e-mail at [info@selfinjury.com](mailto:info@selfinjury.com).



## Resources for School Professionals

### *Self-Injury: A Manual for School Professionals*

School professionals will learn to identify various forms and purposes of self-injury, the do's and don'ts for counselors, nurses and teachers, how to assess for self-injury and suicide, specific intervention techniques and tools, how to talk to parents about self-injury, to identify resources and referrals for self-injurers who are in need of services outside of school, how to create a smooth transition for students returning to school from hospitalization or other forms of intensive treatment, and much more.

### *Student Workbook*

This workbook is designed to accompany *Self-Injury: A Manual for School Professionals*. It can be used as an individual intervention e.g., given to a student to complete on his or her own and then reviewed with a staff member, or as a format for a more in-depth individual session with a counselor or in a group setting. The exercises can be used randomly or in order. It is possible to select the parts of exercises that are relevant at a given time.

**Please visit the store at [www.selfinjury.com](http://www.selfinjury.com) for other resources and a current list of prices.**

### *Can You See My Pain?*

DVD includes personal stories as told by self-injurers themselves along with expert commentary by Karen Conterio and Wendy Lader, Ph.D., founders of S.A.F.E. ALTERNATIVES.®

### *CUT: Teens and Self-Injury*

DVD of award-winning documentary featuring Karen Conterio. Provides an intimate look at a largely unacknowledged problem that affects thousands of young people, their families and friends.

### *Bodily Harm: The Breakthrough Healing Program for Self-Injurers*

By Karen Conterio and Wendy Lader, Ph.D. This is an authoritative examination of the behavior of self-injury. It clearly defines what self-injury is and explains the kind of emotional trauma that can lead to self-injurious behaviors.

**(Spanish edition also available)**

## Contact us

For more information or to make a referral: 800-DONTCUT® (800.366.8288) or [www.selfinjury.com](http://www.selfinjury.com).



# Great Circle

Edgewood Children's Center | 330 North Gore Avenue | St. Louis, MO 63119  
phone: 314.968.2060 | admissions: 314.610.5872 | [www.eccstl.org](http://www.eccstl.org) | [www.great-circle.org](http://www.great-circle.org)

