**Appendix 2**

**DOs and DON’Ts for Staff**

<table>
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<th><strong>Do</strong></th>
<th><strong>Don’t</strong></th>
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| Stay Calm – do not show anxiety, disapproval or disgust. Be prepared to be shocked and mindful of the possible severity of the incident, then.....
| Panic – Unfortunately many young people self-harm – it is a complex issue and each young person will have a different reason or story behind their behaviour – panicking will not help the young person feel safe and contained.  
| Listen – just being listened to can be a great support and bring real relief to someone; particularly if they have never spoken to anyone about their self-harming before.  
| Send the young person away – make some time for them – either help them find other ways of coping or help them to get the right kind of support.  
| Listen intently – calmly ask any relevant questions – try and build rapport with the young person, whilst you ascertain what is happening for them, the severity, frequency and duration of the self-harm.  
| Be judgemental – keep an open mind about the behaviour and don’t refer to it as “attention seeking”.  
| Listening does not just require ears - Observe the young person’s non-verbal clues – look at their body language – does what they say and what you see match up? What is the underlying mood state – is it anger? Sadness? Frustration?  
| Work Alone: you may still see a young person alone, but you will need to offload with an appropriate staff member or colleague from another agency.  
| Think carefully before you act – what is in the best interest of the young person?  
| Be judgemental – keep an open mind about the behaviour and don’t refer to it as “attention seeking”.  
| Remember that most episodes of self-harm have nothing to do with suicide. However, the easiest way to differentiate between suicide and self-harm is by asking the young person what was their intention behind the self-harm behaviours.  
| Treat a suicide intention as an emergency, do not leave the young person alone or in a vulnerable environment – get help and support as soon as possible and remain calm.  
| Offer to take the young person to your home environment, don’t give them your mobile number or house number – or get into texting the young person. It is more appropriate and professional for you to help the young person identify their supportive network, than for you to take this upon yourself. Self-harming behaviours can be extremely concerning, but you cannot offer objective support when enmeshed within the young person’s difficulty. |