



# National Self-Injury Awareness Day

American Self-Harm Information Clearinghouse

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Mayor Greg Nickels  
600 Fourth Avenue, 12th Floor  
Seattle, WA 98104-1873

Dear Mayor Nickels:

Approximately 1% of the United States population engages in self-harm. Although far from rare, this condition is poorly understood and surrounded by myths and misunderstanding. Self-harm is often viewed as suicidal behavior, for instance, when many studies have shown that it in fact can be a way for someone who has learned no other coping mechanisms to *avoid* suicide.

Since 1999, we've been distributing fact sheets, giving talks, and disseminating accurate, factual information about self-harm, information that comes both from peer-reviewed research studies and from the personal experiences of those who struggle to find more effective coping mechanisms.

March 1, 2002, will be our fourth National Self-Injury Awareness Day. On that date, people across the country are going to distribute brochures and information sheets, targeting hospital emergency rooms and psychiatric wards, school guidance counselors, university resident assistants and counseling services, therapists, and crisis lines. Some of our committee members have made plans to give talks on that date, and we are preparing a press kit we will send to major media outlets in cities where we have participants. As of today, we have more than 100 people from 30 states and five countries participating in this year's events.

We've enclosed copies of our facts sheets and a sample proclamation. Please issue a proclamation declaring March 1, 2002, Self-Injury Awareness Day in the city of Seattle. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Deb Martinson