



## “In Harm’s Way” Play + Interactive Workshop Plan

*Chairs arranged in traverse (2 rectangles, facing a space in the middle.)  
Actors are seating the students as they come in.*

### Pre-Lecture (15 mins)

**INTRO** Who we are  
What we’re talking about today – Mental Health & Self-harm

#### Part 1 – Facts and myths

##### Activity – Myth Workshop

The actors pick 2 volunteers from the audience. They read statements about mental health and the volunteers must clarify if the statement is true or false. *Designed to explore facts in an active and fun way. Breaking down barriers, giving the audience permission to be involved.*

#### Part 2 – Introduce Characters

The actors represent 3 year 9 characters (2 girls, 1 boy.) The characters are introduced, and questions are posed.

*Gives the students some context and triggers key questions, which will be explored in the play.*

### Play (50 mins)

The play follows the lives of 3 school friends, who all experience and experiment with different forms of self-harm. The protagonist, Tash, struggles with low self-esteem and is constantly comparing herself to her friends and their impressive social media lives. As the play continues, Tash begins to cut herself. A friend tells her mum and as a result, Tash is able to get the help she needs. She starts a course of therapy and by the end of the play, Tash is beginning to recover. Her story is the only one that ‘completes’; and questions she poses include ‘what is normal’ and ‘does she have positive relationships with her friends.’ Her story also highlights the importance of telling a trusted adult if someone is self-harming.

The character of Callum excels academically and has the potential to be a semi-professional footballer. He has external pressure from his father’s high expectations but rises to the challenge; until a broken leg jeopardises his bright future. Callum spirals into a deep slump, which he cannot identify as depression because he is not able to express his feelings. He begins to put himself in risky situations such as fighting and skipping school. Callum’s character explores mental health conditions in young men and the importance of acknowledging and talking about emotional well-being.

The final character of Sophie 'doesn't have any self-harm issues.' She is popular, sociable and confident. As the friends' grow, Sophie experiments with legal highs, drugs and alcohol. Her role is designed to encourage the students to see other forms of self-harm; any risky behaviour that could put them in danger is self-harm.

Using music, props and some physical theatre, the performance is engaging and dynamic.

## **Post-Lecture (25 mins)**

### **Part 1 – Callum**

The students are invited to articulate how Callum is feeling at the end of the play, then asked if he talks about his feelings. The actors replay scenes within the play where Callum chooses to repress his feelings of sadness and frustration.

#### **Activity – Forum Theatre**

- . Determine the characters objectives
- . Take suggestions characters things to say to their friend to achieve their objective.
- . Actors return to the scene, using the advice they've just been given by their group
- . Process is repeated until the characters have achieved their objective/we've explored the scene & the issues.

### **Part 2 – Sophie**

The actors replay scenes within the play where Sophie engages in an online relationship and agrees to meet him.

#### **Activity i – Continuation of the Scene**

- . The actors play out the worst case scenario

#### **Activity ii – Hot Seat**

- . Students are invited to offer Sophie advice about her life choices.

### **Part 3 – Tash**

#### **Activity – Q & A**

Students are able to ask Tash's character questions about her journey from self-harming to her current and ongoing treatment and recovery.

### **Part 4 – Help Available**

Services and help available.

### **Conclusion**

If we have time, we are able to answer questions/allow the students to have a discussion.