

# Self-Harm amongst Female Offenders in Custody: Lessons from the Literature

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**Summary:** The prison population is extremely vulnerable to committing acts of self-harm and female prisoners are more likely to self-harm than their male counterparts. The National Suicide Research Foundation (2004) recorded that 22.2% of the cases of self-harm that occurred in Irish prisons in 2002 involved females, even though women comprised only 3.1% of the total prison population. This article examines international research and trends to consider why self-harm is so prevalent amongst female prisoners, how self-harm can be prevented and what the best response is to those who self-harm.