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We have noticed that a large number of adolescents who seek help for mental problems show some form of self-harm (SH) behaviour. We explored the psychopathological characteristics of adolescents with a special focus on adolescents who self harm, compared to those who do not exhibit such behavior. We have defined self-harm as direct or indirect auto-aggression without suicidal intent. We present the results of data processing of 150 subjects, 14-18 years old, the median age 17, 54% of female adolescents, 46 % of male adolescents. 52 % of subjects do self-harm (69.6% of female adolescents, 30.4% of male adolescents). Since this is the population that is in the process of development, we have observed active defense mechanisms. It turned out that they mostly use immature defense mechanisms, male adolescents resort to autistic fantasies, rationalization and isolation, while female adolescents resort to acting out, autistic fantasies and somatization. Over 60 % of respondents of both genders show the characteristics of alexithymia, whereas difficulties in identifying and describing feelings are dominant in patients who self harm.

Over 96% of respondents claim that during the self-harm they were not influenced by psychoactive substances (alcohol, drugs).

Disconcerting data are that even 20% of adolescents who self-harm declared that some of the episodes of self-harm were also a suicide attempt, and that only 18% sought help for self-harm. Furthermore, 54% of respondents feel that their treatment could greatly or significantly help them, but even 17% do not know whether they can be helped.