

Reporting abuse you experienced as a child.



There are different ways in which children can experience abuse, all of which are serious and can have an effect on a child. This can include further long-term effects on both their physical and mental health as they grow older.

One of the dilemmas survivors face during adulthood is the decision to disclose or conceal the abuse.

This leaflet is designed to help those who have experienced sexual abuse as a child and provide information about how to get support and help, and if you choose how to report what has happened to you.

Support

Sexual Assault Referral Centres (SARCs) can offer emotional and practical support and can explain available options. This can include access to a specially trained crisis worker, information, and support regarding contacting the Police.

Irrespective of whether you wish the Police to investigate or not, 'Rape Crisis' can offer counselling, practical and emotional support to all those who have experienced sexual violence of any kind at any time in their lives.

Victim Support can also be contacted, whether or not a report of the disclosure has been made to the Police.

At the end of this leaflet you will find contact details for some of the support services available to you.

Are you ready to report what happened to you?

Taking the decision to report the abuse you experienced as a child to the police or social services can be a difficult process, which can raise all sorts of worries for people.

If you decide that you want to proceed with reporting your abuse, there are options available to you:

Reporting your abuse to the police

Any adult who has experienced abuse as a child can report what they have suffered to the police for them to investigate with your wishes in mind.



There is no time limit to report the abuse, but if it happened a long time ago there may be limitations on the amount of evidence the police can collect. There are also legal rules about the evidence which can be used in court, which may mean that in some cases a prosecution can't happen. Police will support you throughout this process.

If you feel that you or others are at imminent risk Police can be contacted via the 999 number. If it is not an emergency, you can contact the police by calling 101, you can visit your nearest police station in person, or via the online report a crime form

[\(https://www.hampshire.police.uk/ro/report/ocr/af/how-to-report-a-crime/\)](https://www.hampshire.police.uk/ro/report/ocr/af/how-to-report-a-crime/)

You should be prepared to provide the following details:

- Your name
- Your address
- Details of the abuse
- Name of the person/people who abused you, if you know this

Once you have reported the abuse, you will be given a reference number relating to this report and you will need to keep a record of this for any future communication.

What happens once you report your abuse to the police?

After the abuse is reported, your complaint/report will be given to an officer to look at in detail and decide how best to proceed.

All sexual offences reported to the Hampshire & the Isle of Wight Police, will be investigated with the victim's wishes in mind and in line with the [Code of Practice for Victims of Crime in England and Wales \(Victims' Code\)](#)

The relevant specialist police officers will contact you to provide support, explain the options around the police investigation and take a formal statement. This usually happens within days of the report being made.

As part of the investigation police officers will, if possible, speak to the person you have accused, and this may be done under caution, or they may arrest them.

Police may look to see if other reports have been made against the person you have accused and they will link in with other agencies to review their records.

Police may also liaise with other relevant agencies such as the Local Authority (Childrens Social Care; Adults Social Care and Health).

If the police feel there is enough evidence to proceed with the case, they will pass your case over to the Crown Prosecution Service who are responsible for prosecuting.

They will then be ultimately responsible for deciding whether or not to prosecute. Throughout the process the specially trained officers will support you.

I want to share what happened to me with the police, but don't want to pursue an official complaint?

It is possible to report your abuse to the police and it not be taken forward as an investigation if that is what you wish. In most cases this will be honoured however it is not possible to give a 100% guarantee that the police will not proceed with a criminal investigation, as they would need to assess if they felt that there were any immediate actions needed to keep people safe from harm.

This decision would not be made without consultation with you, and your wishes in mind, ensuring that you are not at risk of further harm.

Even if you do not wish for any action to be taken at the time you report the abuse, the information will still be recorded on the police systems and allocated a reference number. If you should choose to change your mind at a later date, you can refer to this.

Reporting your abuse anonymously

You can call 101 the non-emergency police number, stating that this happened to you as a child, that you do not want to proceed with a criminal complaint or want anyone arrested, but wish to share the information.

Crimestoppers

If you want to report what has happened to you, but you don't want to speak to the police, you can speak to or email the charity Crimestoppers.



Crimestoppers allows you to report any offence anonymously. This can also be carried out by a family member, friend or someone who supports you.

Crimestoppers guarantee anonymity. The only way anybody will know you contacted Crimestoppers is if you tell somebody.

This allows you to report the offence and provide information to the police, but it will not lead to a police investigation.

If you think this would be best for you, contact Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.

Can someone else report the abuse on my behalf?

A family member, friend or a professional can make a call to 101 for you. They should state that they are making the call on your behalf, and it is a third party report. They would need to be clear how you wish to proceed.

What if I reported the abuse in the past but I'm unhappy how it was investigated and/or I have new information not known at the time?

It does not matter how long ago the investigation took place, if you do not feel the abuse was investigated properly or you have new information that was not shared at the time, you can speak to the police at any time.

Either you, a friend, family member or support worker can call the non-emergency police number 101 and discuss how this can be taken forward. The police will respond to your concerns and/or new information.

What if I have disclosed the abuse to a professional, but do not want it reported to Police, will it be reported without my knowledge?

Whenever possible information will be shared with your knowledge and consent, but in some circumstances,

professional will have a duty to share information without your knowledge and consent. This could be because of a potential risk to others, including children, because of who carried out the abuse, where the abuse occurred or because it undermines any further investigation. Information would only be shared with the relevant agencies such as Police and or Local Authority (Childrens Social Care; Adults Social Care and Health).

What if a child is currently at risk?

If a child is identified as being currently at risk, a referral will need to be made to children's social care; this can either be done by yourself if you feel able to, or it can be completed by Police or a healthcare professional.

If Police or healthcare professional are aware that a child is potentially at risk they have a professional responsibility to act.

What if the abuse occurred outside of the UK?

Where the abuse occurred outside of the United Kingdom, a referral to the Police and the Local Authority (Childrens Social Care; Adults Social Care and Health) can still be made.

Is there any support I can get?

Whether or not you decide to report an incident or series of incidents, there are places you can go to seek support and advice to help you come to terms with what has happened to you, including your GP and other healthcare professionals involved with you.

Below is a list of agencies that can provide you with support.

These are independent organisations and therefore we can not vouch for their governance arrangements:

Local Support:

Yellow Door

If you are in the South of Hampshire, Southampton and Isle of Wight, you can access this service.

Yellow Door offers a range of free services and support to meet your needs in response to your experiences.

Online: yellowdoor.org.uk

Phone: 02380 636312

Email: info@yellowdoor.org.uk

Portsmouth Abuse and Rape Counselling Service (PARCS)

If you are in Portsmouth or South East Hampshire, you can access this service.

PARCS offer free specialist counselling and psychotherapy for people who have experienced sexual and/or domestic abuse.

Online: [PARCS / https://family-action.org.uk/services/parcs-sexual-and-domestic-abuse-counselling/](https://family-action.org.uk/services/parcs-sexual-and-domestic-abuse-counselling/)

Phone: 02392 669513 (Monday 11.00-14.00 and Tuesday and Thursday 16.30-20.00)

Email: parcs@family-action.org.uk

Treetops Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC)- Portsmouth

This service is based in Cosham, Portsmouth and is a service offered by Solent NHS Trust.

Treetops offer medical care and practical help to anyone who has been raped or sexually assaulted, as well as signposting to services for emotional support.

Phone: 0300 123 6616 (phone line is open 24 hours a day all year round)

Email: snhs.admin.treetops@nhs.net

Sexual Trauma and Abuse Restorative Therapies- (START)

This service is available to anyone living in Basingstoke, Andover, Winchester, Hart, Rushmoor and East Hampshire.

The core service offered by START is a confidential, specialist counselling and support service for anyone who has experienced sexual abuse and/or sexual assault, resulting in sexual trauma. The services are offered to everyone, regardless of age, gender, sexuality, ethnicity, cultural or religious background.

Online: start-org.uk

Phone: 01962 807037 (Monday-Friday 09.30-15.30)

Email: START@cfirst.org.uk

National Support:

CIS'ters (for women)

CIS'ters are a peer based, emotional support small charity for females age 18+ who as female children were sexually abused within a family environment, by a member of their immediate/extended family.

Online: www.cisters.org.uk

Phone: 02380 338080 (24 hours answer phone- phone is monitored daily during the working week).

Email: helpme@cisters.org.uk

Safeline (for men)

Safeline provide dedicated specialist support services for male survivors of sexual abuse (adults, teenagers and

children) and those who support them living in England and Wales.

Online: safeline.org.uk (this includes live chat option)

Phone: 0808 800 5005 (Monday-Friday 09.00-20.00 and Saturday-Sunday 10.00-14.00)

Male Survivor SMS Text Service: text 07860 065187 (texts are charged at your standard rate).

Email: support@safeline.org.uk

Victim Support

Victim Support help anyone affected by crime. They are an independent charity and you can talk to them whether or not you've reported the crime to the police. If you want, they can support you without the involvement of the criminal justice system, and they won't contact Police about you unless they feel someone is at risk.

Online: www.victimsupport.org.uk (this includes live chat option)

Phone: 0808 1689111

Survivors UK

Support male and non-binary survivors of sexual violence, providing counselling, practical help and community.

Online: www.survivorsuk.org

Phone: 02035983898

Email: help@survivorsuk.org

The Survivors Trust

The Survivors Trust is a UK-wide national umbrella agency for 141 specialist organisations for support for the impact of rape, sexual violence and childhood sexual abuse throughout the UK and Ireland.

Online: www.thesurvivorstrust.org

NSPCC

The NSPCC give support to those who have experienced child abuse in the past, or for those who are concerned about a child in the present.

Online: www.nspcc.org.uk

Phone: 0808 800 5000

Email: help@nspcc.org.uk

Text: 88858

NAPAC

NAPAC is the National Association for People Abused in Childhood, providing a helpline and support to people who experienced past abuse.

Online: www.napac.org.uk

Phone: 0800 085 3330 (times vary on different days - see website for details and for freephone numbers for different mobile phone networks)

Stop It Now!

Stop It Now! is an organisation run by Lucy Faithful House that is at the forefront of activity to prevent child sexual abuse.

Online: www.stopitnow.org.uk

Links to other helpful information:

Hampshire and IOW Police

Online: www.hampshire.police.uk

Citizens Advice

National charity and network of local charities offer confidential advice online, over the phone, and in person, for free

Online: www.citizensadvice.org.uk

Rights of Women

Rights of Women is a charity that provides free confidential legal advice and information to women on the law in England and Wales with a specific focus on Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG). We also campaign for access to justice and safety for all women.

Online www.rightsofwomen.org.uk

Ministry of Justice

[Victims of crime: Understanding your rights](#)

Criminal Injuries Compensation Scheme

The Criminal Injuries Compensation Scheme is a government funded scheme designed to compensate blameless victims of violent crime in Great Britain, to be eligible it requires all incidents to be reported to the police

[Criminal injuries compensation: a guide - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

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