

PARENT / CARER CONTRACT

For the counselling/therapy to be as effective and safe as possible, we need your commitment, motivation and consent.



Free sexual abuse counselling



Our care is excellent.

The Green House has provided a safe, non-judgemental space for us to explore the difficulties we've been experiencing in our lives.

I have the tools I need to make a practical difference to my life.

It has been brilliant. A real life changer for me.

What does The Green House do?

The Green House is a registered charity formerly known as Avon Sexual Abuse Centre (ASAC). We provide free, confidential, specialist counselling/therapy and support for men, women, young people (14+) and children who have experienced or been affected by sexual trauma at any point in their lives.

Who will my child / young person see?

Working as part of our Children & Young People's Service is a small team of counsellors/therapists who have extensive experience working therapeutically with children and young people who have experienced trauma. Our therapists use a combination of verbal and non-verbal techniques including art therapy and drama therapy to provide a variety of opportunities to explore and express experiences in a way which feels right.

All our staff undergo a criminal and enhanced disclosure records check from the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).

How can we help?

We recognise that for you as a parent or carer, the discovery that your child has experienced sexual abuse can be distressing, complex and stressful. We would like to do everything we can to support and empower you, and your child through this difficult time. For the counselling/therapy to be as effective and safe as possible, we need your commitment, motivation and consent. **Please read the following pages carefully, then sign and return the consent form to begin the counselling process.**



We're here to support you.

The Initial Assessment

In many cases, where children (under 14) have been referred, their parent/s or carer/s will be invited to The Green House to attend an initial appointment for assessment with one of our therapists.

The assessment is an opportunity for us to build a detailed picture of the child or young person's needs, the family background and the nature of the abuse. Practical information such as transport and timing of sessions will also be discussed. This is a good opportunity to ask any questions you may have about how the therapy works. If you are struggling to get to sessions, please discuss this with your therapist.

Parental consent for therapy will also be obtained at this stage. When young people (14+) are referred, their case is considered on a more individual basis. Although we prefer to work with young people where parental consent is obtained, we recognise that this is not possible in every case and sometimes it is appropriate to invite young people along to an assessment appointment independent of their parent/s or carer/s. The young person's competence to consent to their own therapy will be assessed at this stage.

How long before starting?

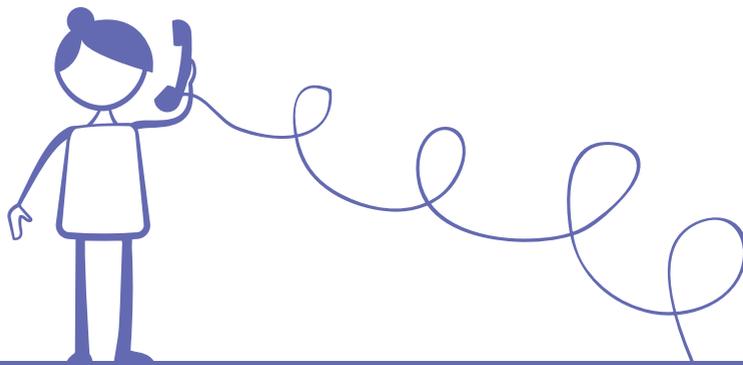
After the initial appointment, your child/young person may be offered a therapy session appointment straight away, however there may also be a short waiting period before a therapy space is available. We will call or send you a letter to keep you informed as to what the process will be and you will be able to access support during this period, through our Family Support Practitioner.

The counsellor's skill and patience have helped me make progress.

The Family Support Practitioner is a qualified social worker available to provide emotional support to parents/carers during this process.

Regular attendance is important

At your initial appointment session the therapist will also recommend an initial number of sessions, and these sessions will be reviewed regularly. Your child will be given a weekly time slot lasting 50 minutes that will be kept just for them. It is essential that your child/young person attends these sessions as regularly as possible, and on time. Missed or delayed sessions, interrupt and dilute the therapy process, making it less effective.



Cancellations & School Holidays

We understand that occasionally a session has to be cancelled unexpectedly. We ask that you please give us as much notice as possible. If you have to cancel on the day, please contact the Counsellor/therapist directly by phone call or text.

Contact details:

If you do not attend two counselling sessions without prior communication with us, we will presume that the child/young person has 'opted-out' of the service and the counselling contract will come to an end.

Sessions may be offered during school holidays and these arrangements can be worked out in conjunction with the Counsellor /therapist your child/young person is working with. Please inform your Counsellor/therapist of any planned holidays well in advance.

Reviews, Feedback & Worries

From time to time the Counsellor/therapist will invite you to attend a review meeting. This is an opportunity to pause to reflect on the work which has taken place and jointly discuss how the counselling is progressing or if there are any concerns.

You may also have times when you feel particularly concerned or distressed about your child, or you may feel that the counselling is not helping. If this is the case, you can ask to see the Counsellor/therapist or Family Support Practitioner to discuss your concerns or questions. We ask that at these challenging times you don't suddenly end the counselling as this may be detrimental to your child's wellbeing.

Ending the Work

Our Counsellor/therapists will ensure that your child/young person and yourself are carefully prepared for the end of the series of counselling/therapy sessions. It is very important for you to ensure that the child attends the closing sessions as these consolidate all the valuable work that has taken place.





Trust and confidentiality are very important to us.

Data Protection and Archiving

In line with the Data Protection Act 1998, all your family's identifiable details, whether handwritten, computer based, artworks or other artefacts created as part of sessions, will be kept confidential within our agency.

Accurate and appropriate notes are recorded from each contact we have with you, and therapeutic records are kept after each session. These are securely stored and, where appropriate, made anonymous. Once the counselling is complete they are securely archived for seven years, and then destroyed.

Accessing Therapeutic Records

All therapeutic notes and contact notes belong to The Green House. Our clients have the right to access their own notes. However, in line with our confidentiality policy, a parent/carer would not be able to view the child/young person's notes without the informed consent of the child/young person. The child/young person has the right to access their own therapeutic notes with a member of The Green House staff present, during the course of the counselling/therapy and up to seven years afterwards.

Requests for access to Therapeutic Records

Because we work with children and young people who are regarded by the court as witnesses in criminal investigations, our therapeutic records are sometimes requested by the police and court/justice system. We will initially try to inform you about the court request and obtain your consent before submitting the notes. However, if this is not possible, we ask for your prior consent to disclose therapeutic records.

Confidentiality and its limits

In order to build trust and a sense of safety with your child/young person, the Counsellor/therapist will not disclose to you the nature or content of the counselling/therapy with your child/young person. However, we cannot guarantee complete confidentiality. The following limits to our confidentiality apply :

If a child/young person discloses that they are at further risk of harm we have a duty of care to report this to the appropriate service, usually Social Services or the Police.

If any previously undisclosed concerns of harm about any child/young person are revealed during the process, we have a duty of care to report this as above.

Whilst children/ young people are engaged in therapy it may be important for us to liaise with other agencies/ professionals who are also involved in your child/ young persons care. This is to ensure that all professionals are working together to best support your child/ young person and that any concerns are shared. This will usually be discussed and agreed in the initial assessment with you.

If a child/young person has a Social Worker or other support we may be asked to provide information for Child Protection Case Conferences and "Looked After Children" reviews. We will usually discuss this with you and obtain your consent in advance.

Our Counsellors/therapists may be requested to provide a court report or appear as a witness in the court investigation. If this is the case we will inform you and the child/young person in advance.



How effective is the service?

The Counsellor/therapist will ask the child/young person to complete some questionnaires at the beginning and during counselling/therapy. With your consent, we may also contact you after the counselling/therapy is complete to find out about your experience of the overall service. This helps to ensure that we are providing the best possible service for our clients and is vital to securing future funding.

Complaints

Complaints should be made in the first instance to your Counsellor/therapist, either verbally or in written form. If the matter is not a satisfactorily resolved you should express your concern to the Director of The Green House, either in writing or by phone. See contact details to the right.

As an organisational member of The British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP), The Green House adheres to The Professional Conduct Procedure. If you do not feel that your complaint has been satisfactorily responded to, then a formal complaint can be made to the BACP.

Getting in touch

For more information please contact our Family Support Practitioner (Lisa Kirkland) on 0117 935 1707 or 0751 221 0491, alternatively Lisa can be contacted via email at: lisa.kirkland@the-green-house.org.uk

Messages will be replied to at the earliest opportunity. Please note we are not a crisis service and therefore cannot respond to emergency situations.

Consent Form & Contract

As Parent/Carer with parental responsibility for
Child or Young person's full name:

- I provide my full consent for the above-named child/young person to receive weekly counselling/therapy provided by The Green House.
- I consent to The Green House sharing information with appropriate agencies/professionals as described in the 'Confidentiality and its limits' section.
- I consent to The Green House providing the court or police with requested therapeutic and contact records described in the 'Police and Court Requests' section.
- I am willing to be contacted by The Green House to provide feedback about my experience of the overall service after the counselling/therapy is complete.

Parent/Carer Signature

Parent/Carer Name

Date

Counsellor/therapist Signature

Counsellor/therapist Name

Date

Please help us by donating at:
www.the-green-house.org.uk/donate

The Green House

44 Mina Road, St Werburghs, BS2 9XH.

Tel: 0117 935 1707

Email: info@the-green-house.org.uk

Website: www.the-green-house.org.uk

The Green House is a registered charity. Registered Charity Number 800806.

The Green House is a company limited by guarantee. Registered in England 2414332

The Green House adheres to the BACP Ethical Framework for Good Practice in Counselling and Psychotherapy BACP Organisational member (No. 735998)

The Green House adheres to The Survivors Trust National Standards

