

# FAMILY SUPPORT

Services and support networks for parents and carers whose children have been sexually abused.



Free sexual abuse counselling



# We are here to support you.

**Finding out your child, relative or someone you care for has gone through sexual trauma can be a very overwhelming and painful experience. Knowing what to do, how best to support your child or young person and where to find help can be confusing.**

The purpose of this leaflet is to:

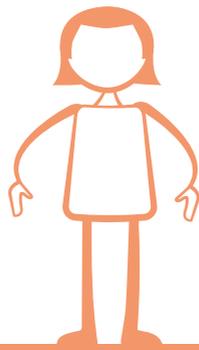
- Explain what support The Green House can offer
- Answer some of the most commonly asked questions we hear from parents and carers
- Provide information on what other services are available

The second part of this leaflet contains a directory of organisations both nationally and locally offering advice and support for families.

Please remember many resources will often present general accounts around many possible impacts. Try to balance your own situation and what has happened with what you are reading.

## Things to remember

- Believe your child and reassure them that they have done the right thing by telling someone what has happened and that you love them.
- Gather your own support both practical and emotional if possible in order to support your child. If needed seek professional support for yourself and your challenges. Any help you get for yourself will in turn help your child.
- Trust your own instincts about what your child needs, whether they need to talk or have space.
- Try to keep your lives as normal as you can, maintaining usual parenting/ family routines and boundaries as far as possible, whilst having empathy for what has happened. Remember your main job is to continue to parent your children giving love, reassurance, guidance, boundaries, and building self-esteem as best you can.



## Our care is excellent.

### Who are The Green House?

We are a local Bristol-based charity dedicated to helping people affected by sexual abuse. We provide free, specialist therapy for adults, children and young people of all ages and backgrounds who have experienced, or been affected by, sexual trauma.

More information about our services can be found on our website. If you have any questions or you would like to discuss more fully any areas mentioned in this booklet please give us a call for free, confidential advice.

**Telephone: 0117 903 1707**

**[www.the-green-house.org.uk](http://www.the-green-house.org.uk)**

### Who will my child see?

Working as part of our Children and Young People's Service are a small team of highly skilled therapists. They each have extensive experience in working therapeutically with children and young people affected by 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.



## Is therapy always necessary?

**Some children may seem very young or may not be presenting any 'issues' and the thought of seeking therapy for them seems unnecessary.**

If you are in this situation it may be helpful for you as the carer to seek some advice and support in order to make this judgement. Not all children will need professional therapy. However, they will need empathy, understanding and a person to talk to about what has happened when they are able to, they will also need to relearn boundaries in order to stay safe in the future.

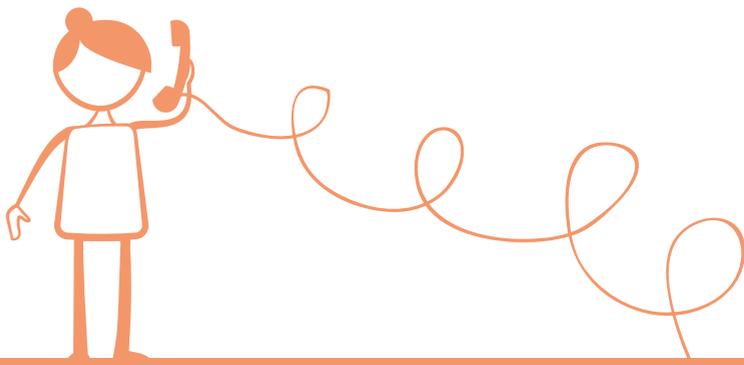
Some children will require professional therapy in light of traumatic experiences in order to move forward from what has happened to them. Therapeutic work with children and young people conducted at The Green House is led by the child at a pace which feels comfortable for them. Our therapists use a range of creative techniques including play, art, and drama to help children and young people express their inner world and build their sense of self. In most cases parents/carers are consulted during the assessment process and are kept informed about the work being carried out with their children at all stages of therapy.

## What if there is a criminal investigation?

In some families there will be an ongoing criminal investigation which may lead to a trial. This can be a very stressful experience for many families and seeking emotional support at this time may help. The various victim support services available can often help at this time, alongside The Green House's carer support service.

Pre-trial therapy can also be accessed where families feel this is needed. However, the consent of the lead police officer would first be required and the same confidentiality boundaries cannot be offered. The police are given access to the therapeutic notes prior to the trial.

The nature of the work pre-trial is also different because it is more about managing and holding than moving forward. Families need to consider carefully whether pre-trial therapy is needed or whether a child can wait and have therapy once the trial has finished.



## Emotional and therapeutic support available to parents and carers

At the Green House we have a Family Support Practitioner who works alongside the children and young people's therapeutic team. Their role is to offer emotional support, advice and guidance to the parents and carers of children and young people referred to us.

The service is flexible and aims to meet parents and carers at their point of need. Home visits can be arranged and telephone support is available.

This service aims to provide:

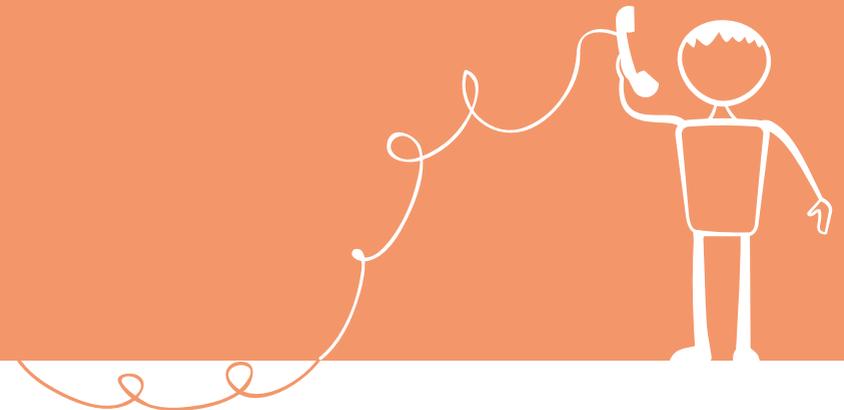
- A space for parents and carers to consider how they can support their child after the abuse they have experienced
- Information about sexual abuse and its potential impact on children, young people, and their families
- An opportunity for parents and carers to express and begin to process the personal impact on themselves of discovering their child/young person has been sexually abused.

### There are a number of options in terms of receiving this support:

- A one-off support and signposting session at the point of referral
- Two or three sessions of support whilst children or young people wait for therapy
- More regular, in-depth support whilst children/young people are engaged in therapy

Any of these options can be discussed with us in more detail at any time.

Where parents and carers identify their own need for a therapeutic service, a referral to The Green House Adult's Counselling Service is possible. This is something which could be discussed with our Family Support Practitioner.





# Directory.

## Book

### **Helping Your Child Recover from Sexual Abuse**

Caren Adams and Jennifer Fay/University of Washington Press

## National Organisations

### **MOSAC Mothers of Sexually Abused Children**

This is a London-based charity, however, they offer a national telephone support helpline. Their website has lots of useful information, book lists for children and carers, legal guides, and details of other useful organisations. They also provide an email support service and carers blog.

**0800 980 1958**  
[www.mosac.org.uk](http://www.mosac.org.uk)

### **NSPCC**

A whole range of information and advice can be accessed on their website covering issues such as: preventing sexual abuse, signs, symptoms and effects of abuse, keeping children safe, grooming, the underwear rule, and the child protection system.

**0808 800 5000**  
[www.nspcc.org.uk](http://www.nspcc.org.uk)

### **Childline**

A confidential service for children and young people up to 19 years old offering support on the phone and online.

**0800 1111**  
[www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)

### **National Domestic Violence Helpline**

This 24 hour helpline offers support and information for families affected by domestic abuse.

**0808 2000 247**  
[www.nationaldomesticviolencehelpline.org.uk](http://www.nationaldomesticviolencehelpline.org.uk)

### **Victim Support**

This is a national charity supporting anyone who has been a victim of crime. They can offer help through the court process and information particularly around supporting child witnesses.

**0808 168 9111**  
[www.victimsupport.org.uk](http://www.victimsupport.org.uk)

### **Stop It Now**

This is a UK charity dedicated to reducing the risk of children being sexually abused. Their website provides information and advice on helping to keep children safe and they run a helpline for friends and relatives of people arrested for sexual offending or with concerns about someone's sexual behaviour.

**0808 1000 900**  
[www.stopitnow.org.uk](http://www.stopitnow.org.uk)

### **Rape Crisis England and Wales**

This is a national organisation offering

specialist support for women and girls who have experienced rape or any kind of sexual violence.

**0808 802 9999**  
[www.rapecrisis.org.uk](http://www.rapecrisis.org.uk)

### **Family Lives**

Provides information and support on different aspects of parenting and family life with a free helpline for parents, online forums, and parenting videos.

**0808 800 2222 (24 hours)**  
[www.familylives.org.uk](http://www.familylives.org.uk)

### **Young Minds**

A national charity committed to improving the emotional wellbeing and mental health of children and young people. They offer a range of services, including information guides on mental health and a helpline for parents.

**0808 802 5544**  
[www.youngminds.org.uk](http://www.youngminds.org.uk)

## Local Organisations

Below is a list of specific sexual abuse services in Bristol and the surrounding areas.

A very useful place to start exploring what is available more locally is the Survivor Pathway website. Here you will find easy links to the local support organisations in your area and what they can offer. Some are services for adults, others for children and young people, ranging from practical advice through to therapy and counselling.

[www.survivorpathway.org.uk](http://www.survivorpathway.org.uk)

### **SARSAS (Somerset & Avon Rape & Sexual Abuse Support)**

Offer specialist support services for local people who have experienced sexual violence at any point in their lives.

**0808 801 0456**

(women and girls helpline)

**0808 801 0464**

(men and boys helpline)

[www.sarsas.org.uk](http://www.sarsas.org.uk)

### **Womankind**

Run a helpline, befriending service, one-to-one counselling and group therapy for women in the Bristol area.

**0117 916 6461**

[www.womankindbristol.org.uk](http://www.womankindbristol.org.uk)

### **Kinergy**

A professional, confidential counselling service for survivors of sexual abuse and rape, based in Bristol.

**0117 908 7712**

[www.kinergy.org.uk](http://www.kinergy.org.uk)

### **The Bridge**

Provide medical care, emotional and psychological support to anyone who has been raped or sexually assaulted.

**0117 342 6999**

[www.thebridgecanhelp.org.uk](http://www.thebridgecanhelp.org.uk)

### **Safe Link**

Free and confidential service to victims of sexual assault or rape.

**0333 323 1543**

[www.safelinksupport.co.uk](http://www.safelinksupport.co.uk)

### **Somerset Phoenix Project**

Provide training and consultancy for professionals as well as one-to-one support and counselling for children and young people.

**07590 627 693**

[www.barnardos.org.uk/somersetphoenixproject](http://www.barnardos.org.uk/somersetphoenixproject)

### **BASE**

Work with children and young people at risk of sexual exploitation.

[www.barnardos.org.uk/basebristol](http://www.barnardos.org.uk/basebristol)

## General counselling for children and young people

### **Child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS)**

Based across Bristol at various locations. They offer support with acute mental health issues. Referrals can only be made by GPs, schools and social services.

Children and young people may need help with a wide range of issues at different points in their lives. Parents and carers may also need help and advice to deal with behavioural or other problems their child is experiencing. Parents, carers and young people can receive direct support through CAMHS.

### **What are specialist CAMHS?**

Specialist CAMHS are NHS mental health services that focus on the needs of children and young people. They are multidisciplinary teams that often consist of:

- Psychological therapists – this may include child psychotherapists, family psychotherapists, play therapists and creative art therapists, social workers, and support workers
- Nurses
- Occupational therapists
- Primary mental health link workers
- Specialist substance misuse workers

### **How do I get help from specialist CAMHS?**

Getting help from a specialist CAMHS service is different depending on where you live. Waiting times can vary, too. Most CAMHS have their own website, which will have information about access, referrals and more, including phone numbers, so you can get in touch directly for detailed advice.

You may also find it helpful to speak to:

- Your GP
- Someone you trust at school or college – for example, a teacher, pastoral lead, school nurse, or special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO)
- Health visitors
- Children's centres
- If you or your child is being supported by social services or the youth offending team, your key worker will be able to refer your child for an appointment with someone in specialist CAMHS

## General Counselling for children & young people continued...

### **Bristol Mind**

Offers a useful list of mental health resources and counselling services.

[www.bristolmind.org.uk](http://www.bristolmind.org.uk)

### **Trauma Recovery Centre**

Based in Bath and Bristol offering therapeutic support to traumatised children and young people.

[www.trc-uk.org](http://www.trc-uk.org)

### **Butterfly**

Counselling support to children and young people.

[www.butterflyonline.co.uk](http://www.butterflyonline.co.uk)

### **The Bridge Foundation**

Offers counselling and psychotherapy to individuals, children, and families.

[www.bridgefoundation.org.uk](http://www.bridgefoundation.org.uk)

### **Off the Record Bristol**

Provide a range of mental health services across Bristol for young people aged 11-25 years.

[www.otrbristol.org.uk](http://www.otrbristol.org.uk)

### **Off the Record Bath**

Provide a range of mental health services for young people across BANES aged 11-25 years.

[www.offtherecord-banes.co.uk](http://www.offtherecord-banes.co.uk)

### **HELP Counselling**

Counselling for young people aged 9-25 years.

[www.help-counselling.org.uk](http://www.help-counselling.org.uk)

### **Kooth**

Free online counselling and support for young people.

[www.kooth.com](http://www.kooth.com)

### **TESS**

Text and email support service for girls and women under 25 affected by self-harm.

[www.selfinjurysupport.org.uk](http://www.selfinjurysupport.org.uk)

### **Wellspring Counselling**

Counselling for young people 11-18 years in Nailsea and North Somerset.

[www.wellspringcounselling.org.uk](http://www.wellspringcounselling.org.uk)

### **Be Safe**

Work with children and young people displaying sexually harmful behaviour aged 4-17 years old.

[www.cchp.nhs.uk/cchp/explore-cchp/be-safe](http://www.cchp.nhs.uk/cchp/explore-cchp/be-safe)

### **Wish for a Brighter Future**

Offer various support services to 11-17 year olds living in Bristol who have been affected by parental abuse.

[www.wishforabrighterfuture.org.uk](http://www.wishforabrighterfuture.org.uk)

## Other services that may be useful

### **Next Link**

Provide local domestic abuse support services.

[www.nextlinkhousing.co.uk](http://www.nextlinkhousing.co.uk)

### **Lighthouse Victim and Witness Care**

Police based Victim Support service to guide, advise, and support victims and witnesses.

[www.lighthousevictimcare.org](http://www.lighthousevictimcare.org)

### **Young Victims Service**

Work with children and young people aged 5-18 years old in Avon and Somerset who have been victims of crime. Their team of advocates provide a range of online, telephone and face to face support.

[www.youngvictims.wordpress.com](http://www.youngvictims.wordpress.com)

### **Local Family Justice website**

Provide information about the family courts process.

[www.familycourtinfo.org.uk](http://www.familycourtinfo.org.uk)

### **You and Co**

Their website offers support for young people going through the court process.

[www.youandco.org.uk](http://www.youandco.org.uk)

### **Rights of Women**

Provide legal guides and advice for women on the criminal justice process and a wide range of issues including domestic violence and sexual abuse.

[www.rightsofwomen.org.uk](http://www.rightsofwomen.org.uk)

### **Citizens Advice**

Provide advice and resources on a broad range of issues such as, welfare benefits, debt, housing and immigration.

[www.citizensadvice.org.uk](http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk)

**Help make our work possible by donating:**  
[www.the-green-house.org.uk/donate](http://www.the-green-house.org.uk/donate)

**The Green House**

**Tel: 0117 935 1707**

**Email: [info@the-green-house.org.uk](mailto:info@the-green-house.org.uk)**

**Website: [www.the-green-house.org.uk](http://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. 169416).

The Green House adheres to The Survivors Trust National Standards.

