

## Our Support

We provide a specialised counselling service for children and young people aged between 5-18, called **Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (TF-CBT)**. This form of therapy specifically supports those who have experienced trauma such as sexual abuse, and therapy often includes sessions with parents and carers. Please refer to our TF-CBT information sheets for further details.

We also provide specialist Children's Independent **Sexual Violence Advisors (ISVAs) who are there to offer practical and emotional support to children and their parents at every step of the criminal justice process, from considering whether to report to the police, right through to the court case should it progress to court.** ISVAs will talk through your rights and options to help you make decisions, and can advocate on your behalf.

## Helplines and Support

- WeStand** Support for non-abusing parents  
**0800 980 1958 / [www.westand.org.uk](http://www.westand.org.uk)**
- YoungMinds** Information on child and adolescent mental health services for parents and professionals  
**0808 802 5544 / [www.youngminds.org.uk](http://www.youngminds.org.uk)**
- Samaritans** Confidential support for people experiencing feelings of distress or despair  
**116 123 (freephone 24-hour helpline)**  
**[www.samaritans.org.uk](http://www.samaritans.org.uk)**
- ChildNet** Helping to make the internet a safe place for children, plus information / support for parents  
**[www.childalert.co.uk](http://www.childalert.co.uk)**
- NSPCC** If you're worried about a child, you can contact the adult helpline for advice and support  
**0808 800 5000 / [www.nspcc.org.uk](http://www.nspcc.org.uk)**
- Kidscape: Why my child?** A guide for parents of children who have been sexually abused  
**[www.kidscape.org.uk](http://www.kidscape.org.uk)**

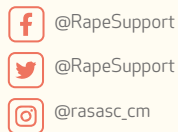


**"I will tell you what I need to, if and when I'm ready."**

To make a referral, or for advice and information, you can visit us online, email, or call on

**0330 363 0063**

**[www.rapecentre.org.uk](http://www.rapecentre.org.uk)**  
**[support@rapecentre.org.uk](mailto:support@rapecentre.org.uk)**



### Complaints:

If you are unhappy with any part of the service, please try to address this with the worker first. If this is not possible, you can speak to the Operations Director or write to us at RASASC, P.O Box 35, Warrington, WA1 1DW.



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## Support and Information for Parents/Carers

of children and young people between the ages of 5-18 who have experienced sexual violence.

**rasasc**  **Rape and Sexual Abuse Support Centre**  
for adults, children and young people in Cheshire and Merseyside

Finding out...

## When your child discloses that they have been sexually abused, life changes suddenly, without warning.

One minute your life feels 'normal', and the next you are in a whirlwind of very potent and confusing feelings: shock, anger, guilt, shame, numbness, inadequacy, confusion. Perhaps it has brought up issues that you had when you were younger too.

If it was your family, partner, or friend who abused your child, you will also be trying to come to terms with the fact that someone you trusted and loved has done something so horrific. You may have feelings of guilt for not knowing your child was being abused and not being there to protect them. However, people who abuse children are devious, manipulative, and skilful at covering up what they **are doing. You must not blame yourself for being** taken-in by an abuser. It will not help to go over the past or to blame yourself. Your child needs you be strong for them and to make them feel safe and loved so that they can recover and heal.

**It is important at this time to get some support yourself, and find someone whom you can talk to about your feelings during this experience.**

“As a mother trying to help her daughters, RASASC has been a great support to me and my children.”



There are no set rules for how someone will feel as a result of their abuse, however being sensitive and non-judgemental at this time will go a long way in helping a young person resolve these very powerful feelings.

What young people want their parents to know but don't feel able to tell them yet...

**Don't treat me like I'm 'fragile'.**

**Try to keep things as 'normal' as possible.**  
(regular routines, don't treat me differently than usual)

**Don't pester me for details.**

**I will tell you what I need to, if and when I'm ready. Being around for me when I want to talk is enough for now.**

**Please don't judge me, just believe me.**

**Don't blame yourself!**

Young people react very differently to sexual abuse, ranging from depression, suicidal thoughts, low self-esteem, self-harming, risk taking, crying, and seeming 'up' one minute and then 'down' the next.

Young people may need more support to help them attend sessions; perhaps discussions with schools regarding time off, transportation to and from sessions, encouragement, and also supporting them after their sessions when they may feel particularly vulnerable, angry or sensitive.

Be aware that any prosecution may take months to reach a conclusion. Young people will need support and care during this difficult time.